

# Helpful Cleaning Hints



## ALTERNATIVE HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS

**Baking Soda** is sodium bicarbonate. It has a number of useful properties. It can neutralize acid, scrub shiny materials without scratching, deodorize, and extinguish grease fires. It can be used as a deodorizer in the refrigerator, on smelly carpets, on upholstery and on vinyl. It can help deodorize drains. It can clean and polish aluminum, chrome, jewelry, plastic, porcelain, silver, stainless steel, and tin. It also softens fabrics and removes certain stains. Baking soda can soften hard water and makes a relaxing bath time soak; it can be used as an underarm deodorant and as toothpaste, too.

**Isopropyl Alcohol** is an excellent disinfectant.

**Vinegar** is made from soured apple juice, grain, or wine. It contains about 5 percent acetic acid, which makes it a mild acid. Vinegar can dissolve mineral deposits, grease, remove traces of soap, remove mildew or wax buildup, polish some metals, and deodorize. Vinegar can clean brick or stone, and is an ingredient in some natural carpet cleaning recipes. Use vinegar to clean out the metallic taste in coffeepots and to shine windows without streaking. Vinegar is normally used in a solution with water, but it can be used straight. An excellent way to scour copper and brass is 1/2 cup vinegar mixed with 1 tablespoon salt.

**Ammonia** diluted with 2 parts water in an empty spray bottle can be used to clean windows, appliances and counter tops. Full strength it can remove wax build-up from the kitchen floor.

**Lemon Juice**, which contains citric acid, is a deodorant and can be used to clean glass and remove stains from aluminum, clothes, and porcelain. It is a mild lightener or bleach if used with sunlight.



CARPET DEODORIZER ~ A house that smells fresh will give the impression of cleanliness. Leave baking soda on carpeting for the night to absorb musty odors, vacuum in the morning.

CARPETS ~ BEFORE SHAMPOOING/STEAM CLEANING: Spray with Windex, it helps loosing dirt and grime.

CRAYON ~ ON WALLS: Spray with WD-40, scrub well, wash wall with soap and water to remove any remaining residue. Always test on a small area first.

DUSTING ~ Slip your hands into a pair of socks. I always save the strays just for this purpose.

FLOORS ~ WOOD & TILE: Wash with a 1/30 vinegar and water solution. Then dry with a soft cloth.

HARD WATER STAINS ~ For those nasty hard water stains and build up, you can purchase a pumice stone (the kind you ladies use to remove the rough skin on your feet) and gently scour the buildup out of your porcelain tubs, sinks and toilets, using care not to damage the fixture.

HARD WATER STAINS ~ ON METAL SHOWER DOORS & FIXTURES: Lemon oil and a soft cloth will whisk them away.

HARD WATER STAINS ~ on bathroom fixtures: use a paste of baking soda and vinegar.

LOUVERED DOORS ~ Slip a cloth or sock over a ruler and spray as needed with dusting spray, and slide it between the slats.

MARKER, GREASE, JUICE & OTHER TOUGH STAINS ~ 'Awesome', a cleaner that used to be sold door to door for \$20 a bottle, now locally available at the \$1 store, a little squirt, and rub with a dry cloth, till stain comes loose. This stuff is "awesome" :)

MIRRORS ~ Remove hair spray from a mirror with a little rubbing alcohol on a soft cloth. Make your own Windex; ammonia diluted with 2 parts water in an empty spray bottle (you can even add a drop or two of food coloring, to make it more authentic).

MOLD/MILDEW ~ Clean with vinegar and warm water. The acid in the vinegar kills the mold/mildew.

SELF CLEANING OVENS ~ Don't use oven cleaner! Always a good idea to do this in the evening, as the oven gets very hot, and goes into a locked status until cooled. Good idea to do it twice.

STAINLESS STEEL & CHROME ~ Make a paste of baking soda and water. Rinse well. Works great on your sterling silver jewelry, too.

STICKERS ~ WALLS & MIRRORS: Isopropyl Alcohol.

RUST STAINS ~ Make a paste of cream of tartar and lemon juice. Scrub, and rinse as needed.

WAX ~ ON CARPETS & UPHOLSTERY: put a brown paper bag over the dried wax and run a hot iron over it. The bag will absorb the hot wax.

WAX ~ ON WOOD FLOORS: can be removed by softening the wax with a hair dryer, then removing with paper towels. Wash the spot down with a combination of vinegar and water.

WINDOWS ~ A neat trick for washing windows, is to squeegee/wipe in one direction for the outside (horizontal), and the opposite for the interior (vertical) so that you know which side you left a streak on. Windex Outdoors works well for cleaning exterior windows, and you get the screens done at the same time. Don't clean windows while they are in direct sunlight, your cleaning solution will dry too fast. Instead of paper towels, use newspaper for drying freshly washed windows, it's cheaper and leaves no lint behind.

**Disclaimer:** Any mention of a brand name or company is for the tenant's convenience and does not constitute endorsement by R.W. Dickerson Management Company. R.W. Dickerson is not responsible for any damage done, by using these cleaning hints. Tenant should always test the product on a small inconspicuous area before administering to a large area to test for product reaction.