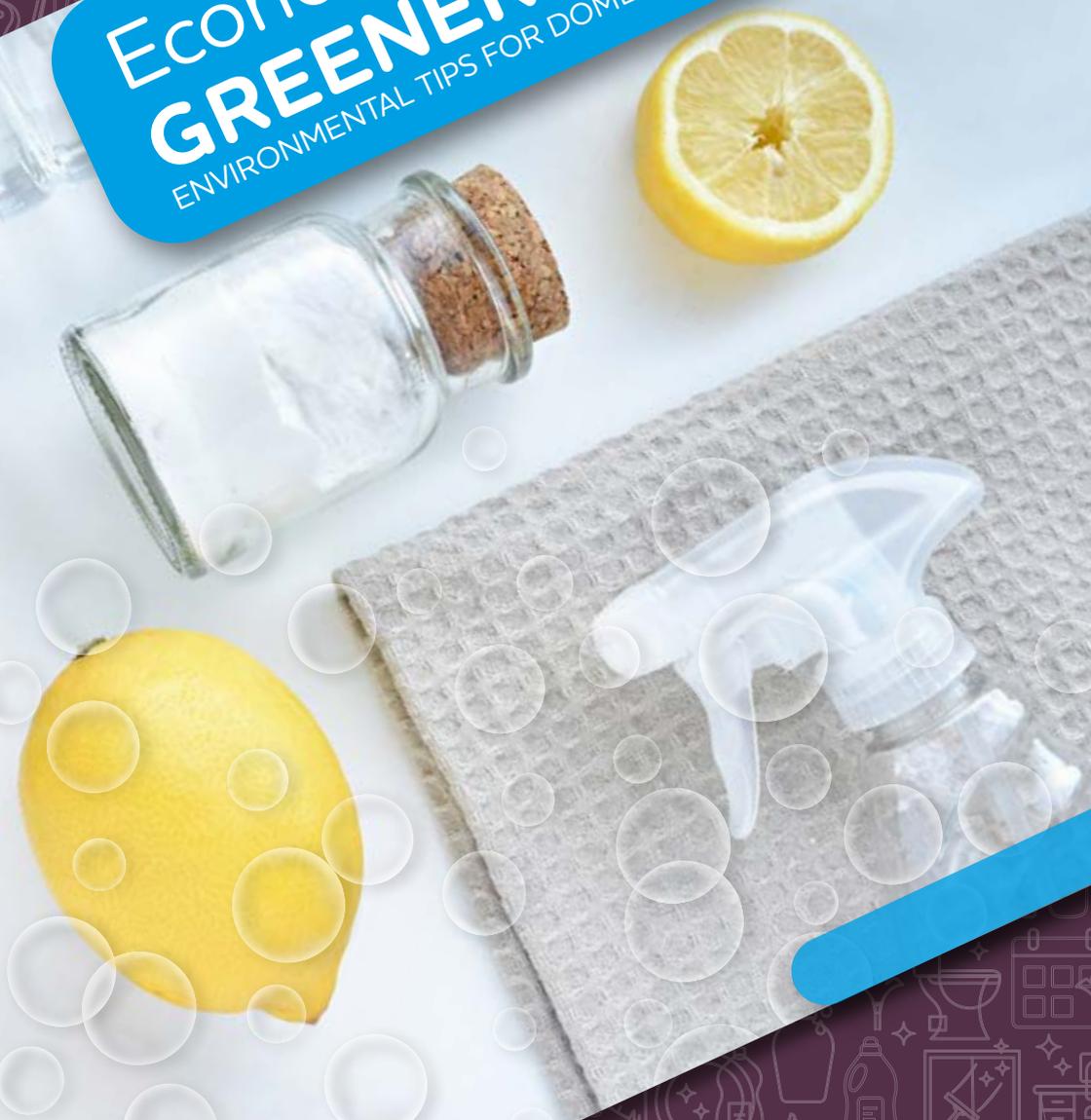


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Economical and easy **GREENER CLEANING**

ENVIRONMENTAL TIPS FOR DOMESTIC CLEANING AND HYGIENE



Introduction

Everyone wants a clean, pleasant-smelling house... right?

Keeping our homes clean plays a big part in most people's daily and weekly activities. Cleaning products also account for a significant portion of our monthly household budget. Across Europe, €50 billion per annum is spent on cleaning products and 50% of this spend is on laundry products.

Many Irish citizens are increasingly concerned about the use of chemicals and their negative impact on human health, and many are also motivated to reduce the amount of plastic packaging and single-use items (cleaning wipes) that are associated with cleaning.

Shop-bought cleaning products began to grow in popularity from the 1970's onwards and now shoppers are confronted with a fantastic array of products all claiming to work their magic which makes it difficult to consider an alternative.

Learning to clean from scratch, or at least without purchasing a commercial product is surprisingly easy once you take the time to understand some simple chemistry about how the more natural ingredients work.

Essentially, there are five ingredients that are recommended to be as effective as commercial products, are multi-functional and cheap in comparison to purchasing store bought solutions.

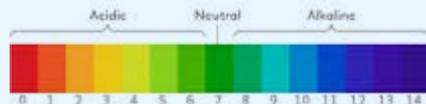
1. **Baking Soda – also known as Bread Soda or bicarbonate of soda**
2. **Soda Crystals also known as Washing Soda**
3. **White Vinegar**
4. **Lemon Juice**
5. **Salt**

Simple chemistry of common household substances



- 1 **Baking soda:** Is a slightly alkaline mineral made from soda ash. It's a great cleaner, deodoriser and it's mildly abrasive. It neutralises acid based odours in water and absorbs odours from the air. You will find it in the supermarket's home baking aisle.

The pH scale:



- 2 **Soda Crystals:** This is a chemical neighbour of baking soda. Its chemical name is sodium carbonate. It is a strong alkaline with a pH of around 11. It is a product, which contains no phosphates, enzymes or bleach. It could be described as an effective but gentle cleaner, but you should always wear gloves when using it because it is caustic by nature. Soda crystals cut grease, clean petroleum oil stains, remove wax or lipstick and neutralise odours in the same way that baking soda does. It is incredibly cheap and you will find it in the supermarket's laundry/cleaning aisle.



- 3 **White Vinegar:** White vinegar is acidic, so it is a great agent to use when you need to neutralise an alkaline substance such as scale from hard water. Use vinegar when you need to tackle a tough task, when you would ordinarily reach for bleach or a strong chemical cleaner. Acids such as vinegar dissolve greasy build-up, eat away tarnish, and remove dirt from wood surfaces. Again, it is very cheap and has a multitude of uses.



- 4 **Lemon Juice:** Lemon juice is also acidic and works in the same way as vinegar above. In addition, lemon peel or rind is great for using when making home air fresheners.



- 5 **Salt:** Salt works as an effective yet gentle scouring agent. Salt is super when mixed with other ingredients such as vinegar and lemon juice to boost cleaning and deodorising action.

The Kitchen

Here are some suggestions to get you started cleaning and maintaining your kitchen with fewer chemicals.

Cookers, ovens, hoods and lots more....

As bicarbonate of soda (baking soda) is granular, it can be used as a scrub to clean tough stains or dried-in dirt. Mixed with vinegar, baking soda cleans even the grimeiest oven and tackles baked-on grease.

Task	Salt	Vinegar	Lemon Juice	Soda Crystals	Baking Soda
Cookers, ovens and hoods		●			●



Kitchen Bins:

Baking soda is an effective odour eliminator; a sprinkle at the bottom of the bin will keep it fresh. Also, remember if you use a kitchen caddy for collecting food waste, fold some newspaper in the bottom of the bin to soak up moisture.

Task	Salt	Vinegar	Lemon Juice	Soda Crystals	Baking Soda
Kitchen Bin					●

Worktops, Sinks and Glass:

Vinegar's acidic properties will give an anti-bacterial clean to worktops and sinks. Wipe neat white distilled vinegar on a clean cloth and buff to shine. Vinegar can be used neat but can also be used as a cleaning spray by mixing one part of vinegar to two parts of water. It is also very effective as a scrub, by mixing with either salt or bread soda. For streak-free glass, vinegar works a treat and is easily buffed off with newspaper.

Task	Salt	Vinegar	Lemon Juice	Soda Crystals	Baking Soda
Worktops and Windows		●			

Sinks:

Salt is very abrasive and can be used to remove stains from ceramic and stainless steel sinks. Rust marks on stainless steel sinks will disappear when rubbed with a little salt and lemon juice. Leave for a few hours then rub off to remove the rust stain.

Task	Salt	Vinegar	Lemon Juice	Soda Crystals	Baking Soda
Sinks	●		●		

Living Rooms

Furniture Restorer

Mix three parts of olive oil to one part of vinegar to make a great furniture polish for wood.

Mix two parts of olive oil to one part vinegar to make a nourishing feed and polish for scuffed or worn leather sofas, seats and footstools.

Both of these recipes can be made in a jar. Make sure the lid is on tight and shake until the mixture resembles a salad dressing. Using a soft cloth, rub a very small amount on to the furniture then use a second cloth to buff off the excess. This goes a long way, so do not be tempted to use too much!

Task	Salt	Vinegar	Lemon Juice	Soda Crystals	Baking Soda
Furniture Restorer		•			

Carpets & Textiles

Bicarbonate of soda can be used dry to lift stains and odours from carpets. It can also be used to remove marks from surfaces.

Task	Salt	Vinegar	Lemon Juice	Soda Crystals	Baking Soda
Carpets and Textiles					•

Window Frames & Blinds

Painted or uPVC window frames and blinds will brighten up after a wipe down with a regular solution of soda crystals dissolved in warm water. This solution is also excellent for preparing bare wood before painting.

Task	Salt	Vinegar	Lemon Juice	Soda Crystals	Baking Soda
Window Frames and Blinds				•	

Windows & Glass

Vinegar is excellent for cleaning glass and mirrors. Buff off with scrunched up newspaper, for additional shine.

Task	Salt	Vinegar	Lemon Juice	Soda Crystals	Baking Soda
Windows and Glass		•			

Bathroom

Homemade Air Fresheners

Soda Crystals and salt are excellent bathroom cleaning agents

A liquid solution of soda crystals will bring a shine to both tiles and grouting.

A strong hot solution of soda crystals will help to keep waste pipes clean and fresh.

Flush soda crystals down the loo to help clean, freshen and prevent blockages. You can also use a solution of crystals to clean toilet brushes.

Salt is anti-bacterial and can be used to clean the sink and bath. Salt water will disinfect toilet bowls and sinks.

Task	Salt	Vinegar	Lemon Juice	Soda Crystals	Baking Soda
Bathroom	•			•	

Opening windows regularly to let fresh air in is important in maintaining your home.

If there is a persistent smell in the kitchen or utility, simmer white vinegar in a small saucepan on the hob for about 45 minutes. As the vinegar evaporates, it will help dissipate other smells.

Air fresheners are relatively easy to make, using an old spray bottle combine a few drops of vanilla or almond extract with a cup of water and spritz. Essential oils are great too. These are expensive to buy but you only need to add a drop or two sprinkled on a cloth, added to a bowl of water or spritzed with a mister.

Simmering any spice, herb or fruit in water will create a very pleasant natural aroma. You can experiment with cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla, apple peel, ginger, rosemary or basil. Remember never throw away citrus zest; instead simmer it in water with a teaspoon of cinnamon, and the aroma will waft through your home.

Task	Salt	Vinegar	Lemon Juice	Soda Crystals	Baking Soda
Homemade Air Fresheners		•			



Taking Care of Your Clothing and Laundry

Sunlight acts as a bleaching agent and can work wonders on cotton items such as nappies and tea towels.

Diluted tea tree oil is an effective deodoriser. Use an old spray bottle and then spritz the diluted tea tree oil on musty household textiles or garden cushions that are stored away over the winter months. Tea tree oil is both an antiseptic and a disinfectant.

Adding half a cup of soda crystals to the wash load softens the water, so not as much detergent is needed. Remember to treat stains before washing so that the stain does not bind to the fabric. A liquid solution of soda crystals can shift grease, blood, ink, tea and coffee, red wine and even grass stains from cotton and linen.

Task	Salt	Vinegar	Lemon Juice	Soda Crystals	Baking Soda
Laundry and Clothing				•	

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connacht-ulster
waste region



eastern-midlands
waste region



southern
waste region



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