

1. Mark words phrases or sentences that confuse you. In other words what words phrases or sentences do you not understand? You can underline, circle or use a highlighter for this.
2. Show evidence of close reading; mark up the text with questions and/or comments
3. Be a skeptic! Read carefully. If the information you are offered that seems to go against your common sense or reason it may not be fact.

[Home](#) August 4, 2013 posted by [Wendy](#)

## **Make Your Own Chemical Free Cleaning Products**

When I'm cleaning my house I feel a bit uncomfortable wearing rubber gloves to protect my hands and potentially breathing in a plethora of chemicals marked with a big red and black cross, indicating they're hazardous to human health. I want my home to be clean, but at the same time I don't really want a cocktail of chemicals in the air that I breathe, or the surfaces that I touch or prepare food on.

There are all sorts of health and environmental dangers associated with using cleaning products, so over the past few years we've been trying to cut down on the amount of chemicals in our home. We first switched to Ecover about six years ago, then Method a couple of years ago, and now we're using a mix of Ecover (for dishwasher tablets and for toilet cleaner) and BioD products (for laundry, and for hand-washing dishes).

Where we can we've also started making our own natural cleaning products. You can make your own natural household cleaning products quite easily and cheaply, that are as effective as any shop bought chemical cleaner.

First up, select your arsenal of essential oils:

[Ecomarket](#) kindly sent me these organic Soil Association accredited ones to try out – I've got [lavender](#), [lemon](#), [sweet orange](#), [peppermint](#) and [tea tree](#). As well as smelling great, I like them because as they're organic I know there are no hidden chemicals in them from the growing process.

Next, you'll need a bottle or two of white vinegar. You can buy white vinegar in the supermarket that you can transfer into a spray bottle, but you can most likely find big bottles of spray vinegar in pound shops. I found mine in Poundland for, you've guessed it, £1. You get 750ml of vinegar which is much better value than the little bottles you find at the supermarket, and have the convenience of not having to find an empty spray bottle.

## **Kitchen Cleaner**

For my kitchen I added twenty drops of lemon oil and twenty drops of lavender oil to one bottle of spray vinegar. Lemon is a great degreaser and lavender has brilliant antibacterial properties:

My home-made spray made light work of my dirty worktops. Here you can see the before and after shots:

Sparkling clean, and germ free without any trace of chemicals! When you use the spray you do get a smell of vinegar, but that completely disappears once dry, and you're left with a very light and pleasant scent of the essential oils.

If you have any tough spots of grime, or dried in food then I find a light sprinkling of bicarbonate of soda, followed by a spray of your vinegar solution and a good rub helps remove the dirt. If it's particularly dried on or hard to shift try spraying it with a liberal amount of vinegar and leaving it to soak for 10 minutes before wiping.

## **Bathroom Cleaner**

I also made bathroom cleaning spray, again using another vinegar spray bottle. This time, to the vinegar I added 20 drops of lavender oil and 20 drops of tea tree oil. Tea tree oil has brilliant antiseptic and anti-fungal properties, making it brilliant for cleaning bathrooms:

I've been spraying it on my tiles after showering to inhibit the growth of mold and remove soap scum, and also using it to wipe down the sink and toilet and everything else. Again, it initially smells of vinegar but when it dries you can't smell it – only a very subtle aroma of tea tree and lavender.

## **Fabric Softener**

I've used vinegar for years as a fabric softener, but I've only just started adding essential oils to the vinegar. Simply fill an old jar with vinegar, and add 30 drops of orange oil to your vinegar for softened clothes and a delicate and clean aroma to your laundry, without a hint of vinegar, I promise! With regards to dosage I just fill up to the line on the fabric conditioner drawer of my machine and that seems to work a treat.

## **Dishwasher Rinse Aid**

Vinegar also makes a fantastic rinse aid in your dishwasher – leaving your glasses, cutlery and plates sparkling! I just use the same solution as I do for my fabric softener – making it fantastically multipurpose!