



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Cortland County Health Department



## Healthy Neighborhoods Program

60 Central Ave, Room 115

Cortland, NY 13045

607-428-5410

### Tips for Cleaning with Baking Soda

We all recognize baking soda as a common ingredient in most recipes, but, next to vinegar, baking soda is also one of the most useful basic household cleansers. Not only is baking soda inexpensive, but it is also non-toxic and multi-purpose! It has great qualities as a scouring powder and is particularly good for deodorizing. Here are some suggestions for cleaning with baking soda.

- A box of baking soda in the refrigerator, freezer, or any cupboard will keep away unpleasant odors. Baking soda will keep away garbage odors; sprinkle the bottom of the pail, and then sprinkle again after you put a new bag in. Baking soda in the litterbox will help prevent odors.
- For burnt-on food in the bottom of pots, sprinkle with baking soda, then add hot water. Let the mixture soak overnight; the dried on food should come loose much more easily the next day.
- To remove stubborn stains from most surfaces, use a baking soda paste (3 parts baking soda, one part water). Apply, let stand, then scrub or wipe clean.
- To remove scents from a carpet, sprinkle with baking soda. Let stand for at least fifteen minutes, and then vacuum. Repeat as needed. To help remove spills, blot as much as possible. Then clean as you normally would. When finished, sprinkle with baking soda. Vacuum. This will decrease the chance that some of the spilled item will remain in the carpet and cause unpleasant odors later. Water stains on wooden floors can be removed with a sponge dampened in a solution of baking soda dissolved in water.
- For small cooking fires (frying pans, broilers, ovens, grills), turn off the gas or electricity if you can safely do so. Stand back and throw handfuls of baking soda at the base of the flame to help put out the fire and call the **FIRE Department** just to be safe.
- Children's Toys can be cleaned using  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup baking soda in 1 quart warm water. Submerge in this mixture (or wipe with a cloth dampened in it), then rinse with clear water. Safely clean your baby's area (play pen, changing table, crib, stroller and high chair) by sprinkling baking soda directly on a clean damp sponge, then rub the item clean. Rinse thoroughly and allow to dry.
- Dissolve a couple of tablespoons of baking soda in water in a microwave safe bowl, and then bring to a boil in your microwave. Allow to sit for a minute or two. You should easily be able to wipe out any baked on stains, plus your microwave will smell fresher too.
- To remove grease stains, either add baking soda to the wash load or pretreat the stains with a baking soda paste.
- To give your dishwasher a good cleaning, run it through a cycle and use baking soda instead of detergent
- Crayon Marks on walls? Try applying baking soda/water paste on an old toothbrush and lightly brush the affected area.

For More Information Visit: [www.greenlivingtips.com](http://www.greenlivingtips.com)



## Tips for Cleaning with White Distilled Vinegar

White distilled vinegar is an effective and inexpensive household cleanser that has been successfully used for generations. Vinegar is effective for killing most mold, bacteria, and germs, due to its level of acidity. Cleaning with white distilled vinegar is a smart way to avoid using harsh chemicals. You'll also be glad to know that it is environmentally friendly! Here are some suggestions for using vinegar:

- Clean and deodorize a drain by pouring in 1 cup baking soda, then one cup hot white distilled vinegar. Let this sit for five minutes, and then run hot water down the drain.
- Make your own scouring cleanser by combining  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup baking soda with 1 teaspoon liquid detergent. Add just enough white distilled vinegar to give it a thick but creamy texture.
- Clean counter tops with a cloth soaked in undiluted white vinegar.
- Clean the shelves and walls of a refrigerator with a half and half solution of water and white distilled vinegar.
- Remove the grime on top of the refrigerator with a paper towel or cloth and full-strength white distilled vinegar.
- To clean a grease splattered oven door, saturate it with full-strength white distilled vinegar. Keep the door open for 10-15 minutes before wiping with a sponge.
- Clean your mini blinds using a pair of white cotton gloves. Dip gloved fingers into a solution of equal parts vinegar and warm water, run your fingers across each side.
- Discourage ants by spraying undiluted white vinegar outside doorways and windowsills, around appliances and wherever you find ants coming inside.
- Clean out grout by applying full strength vinegar to the grout and letting it sit for a few minutes then scrubbing it with an old toothbrush.
- Kill germs all around the bathroom with a spray of full-strength white vinegar, then wipe clean with a clean cloth.
- To make cleaning the grill easier, spray a solution of half water and half vinegar on the cooking surface.
- To clean floors, mix a solution of 3 drops dishwashing liquid to  $\frac{1}{3}$  part vinegar,  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup rubbing alcohol, and  $\frac{1}{3}$  part water. Spray sparingly and mop.
- Take care of mildew and stale odors by wiping down walls with white vinegar on a cloth or damp sponge.
- Loosen soap scum on shower doors and walls by spraying them with vinegar. Let dry, then re-spray to dampen. Wipe clean.
- Shower curtains or liners can become dulled by soap film or plagued with mildew. Keep vinegar in a spray bottle near the shower, and squirt the shower curtains one or twice a week. No need to rinse.

For More Information Visit: [www.vinegartips.com](http://www.vinegartips.com)