

NATURALLY CLEAN & BEAUTIFUL

*The Big DIY Handbook – Over 15 Household
Ingredients, 300+ Uses & 100 Recipes for Home,
Body & Soul*

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Introduction

Most of us have been misled. For years, we've bought into the idea that store shelves hold the solutions to cleaner homes, glowing skin, and fresh-smelling laundry. Bright labels. Big promises. But take a closer look, and you'll see something unsettling, long ingredient lists packed with unpronounceable chemicals, unnecessary plastics, inflated prices, and silent damage to your health and the planet.

This book is your way out. Out of dependency. Out of waste. Out of cluttered cabinets and endless spending. And into something better: natural, affordable, and shockingly simple living.

Why Natural Ingredients Are Better Than Store-Bought Products

Switching to natural isn't about jumping on a trend. It's about going back to basics—and getting smarter with what we allow into our homes and onto our skin.

Commercial products are often filled with synthetic fragrances, preservatives, dyes, stabilizers, and harsh detergents. Many of these ingredients are known skin irritants, hormone disruptors, or allergens. Others are still under scientific review, but they're already everywhere: in your shampoo, your dish soap, your deodorant. And for what? A few extra bubbles? A longer shelf life?

Natural ingredients, on the other hand, do the job without the fallout. Baking soda neutralizes odors better than most air fresheners. Vinegar cuts through grease without leaving chemical residue. Coconut oil nourishes skin and hair. Essential oils can disinfect, deodorize, and boost your mood—all at once.

This isn't about sacrificing effectiveness. It's about removing the unnecessary. About trusting ingredients that have stood the test of time and science. You don't need 100 bottles for 100 tasks. You need a core set of reliable, multi-use ingredients that work with your body and the environment—not against them.

And yes, natural ingredients *do* work. Sometimes even better than store-bought ones. You just need to know how to use them: safely, smartly, and creatively.

Living Sustainably – Natural, Affordable, and Easy

Sustainable living sounds like a big project. But at its heart, it's about small, doable choices that add up. Replacing your \$12 bottle of all-purpose cleaner with a 30¢ DIY spray made from vinegar and essential oil? That's a start. Swapping out your plastic-packaged body scrub for one you made in five minutes from sugar and olive oil? That's a win.

What we use every day—cleaning sprays, laundry detergent, toothpaste, moisturizers—is often overlooked. But it's these exact products that contribute to our waste, chemical exposure, and daily expenses.

This book isn't just about natural alternatives. It's about streamlining your routine, reducing your impact, and regaining control. You'll learn how to:

- Make your own household and beauty products for a fraction of the cost.
- Drastically reduce plastic and packaging waste.
- Simplify your cabinets with just 15–20 versatile ingredients.
- Create a home that's cleaner, calmer, and more connected to nature.

You don't need to go off-grid to live sustainably. You don't need to throw out everything overnight. You just need to start with one recipe. One ingredient. One switch. Then keep going.

How to Use This Book

This handbook is designed to be your natural living companion—something you'll reach for again and again. Whether you're a total beginner or someone already deep into the DIY world, there's something here for every level.

Here's how it's structured:

- **Part 1: Household Ingredients at a Glance.** This section introduces your natural toolkit: 15+ powerhouse ingredients like vinegar, clay, beeswax, coconut oil, essential oils, and more. Each entry explains what it does, how it works, and what you can use it for.
- **Part 2: Naturally Clean Home.** Learn to make effective DIY cleaners for every room—kitchen, bathroom, laundry, and more. From simple sprays to scrub powders and toilet fizzies, it's all covered.
- **Part 3: DIY Body Care & Cosmetics.** Here's where things get personal. Discover how to make gentle, chemical-free body products like toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant, masks, and skin treatments.

- **Part 4: Natural Well-being & Wellness.** Dive into soothing remedies, scent blends, and rituals that support relaxation, immunity, and self-care using only natural ingredients.
- **Part 5: Sustainable Living & Resource Saving.** Go deeper into the eco-lifestyle with tips on saving money, reducing waste, and building sustainable habits in your kitchen and bathroom.
- **Part 6: Recipes & Applications at a Glance.** This is your quick-access section with over 300 practical uses, recipe summaries, mixing guides, checklists, and planners. Ideal for when you're short on time but need a fast solution.
- **Appendix.** Includes a handy glossary, shelf-life charts, measuring conversions, and ingredient sources to keep everything easy and clear.

You don't need to read cover-to-cover. Feel free to jump to the sections that fit your current goals, whether that's making your first DIY glass cleaner or crafting a natural lip balm for gifts.

Overview of the Essential Ingredients

The heart of this book is its ingredients—many of which you probably already have. But together, they form a powerful natural arsenal. They're chosen not only for effectiveness, but also because they're:

- Easy to find
- Budget-friendly
- Multi-purpose
- Safe when used correctly

Here's a preview of what you'll be working with:

1. **Baking soda:** For cleaning, deodorizing, exfoliating, and more.
2. **Washing soda:** A stronger alkaline cleaner for heavy-duty jobs.
3. **Vinegar:** For cutting grease, softening fabrics, and disinfecting surfaces.
4. **Citric acid:** For descaling, freshening, and preserving.
5. **Pure soap (castile or soap flakes):** A gentle, biodegradable cleanser for everything from floors to faces.
6. **Rubbing alcohol (or vodka):** For sanitizing, preserving, and evaporative cleaning.
7. **Cornstarch:** For soothing skin, absorbing oils, and making deodorant.
8. **Coconut oil:** For moisturizing, cleansing, and polishing.

Important Safety, Storage, and Shelf Life Notes

While natural ingredients are safer than many synthetic products, *safe doesn't mean careless*. A few practical guidelines go a long way to keep your DIY journey smooth and worry-free.

1. Test First. Always. When trying a new product—especially on your skin—do a small patch test. Just because it's natural doesn't mean you can't have a reaction. Essential oils, for example, are potent and can cause irritation if used undiluted.

2. Label Everything. Once you make a recipe, label it with the name and the date you made it. Use waterproof labels or a wax pencil. You'll thank yourself later.

3. Store Properly. Most DIY recipes don't contain chemical preservatives. That means they need cool, dry, dark conditions to stay fresh. Use clean, airtight containers—preferably glass or metal. Avoid reusing plastic unless you're sure it's clean and safe.

4. Watch for Spoilage. If a product changes color, smell, or texture unexpectedly—don't use it. It's better to toss and remake than to risk it.

5. Understand Shelf Life. DIY products vary in how long they last:

- Vinegar-based sprays: 6–12 months
- Oil-based balms: 6–9 months
- Water-based products: 1–2 weeks without a preservative (keep in fridge)
- Essential oils: 1–3 years depending on type

Check the Appendix for a full shelf-life chart and tips on using natural preservatives if you want to extend your recipes.

6. Be Cautious with Essential Oils. They are highly concentrated plant extracts. Use them sparingly. Don't ingest unless under professional guidance. Pregnant or nursing? Check first. Making recipes for kids or pets? Choose oils carefully—they're not all safe for little lungs or paws.

What You'll Gain

By the end of this book, you'll be able to:

- Cut your cleaning and body care expenses by up to 75%
- Create over 100 custom products for your home, skin, hair, and well-being
- Feel confident reading labels and understanding what you really need
- Keep your home free of toxins, waste, and chemical clutter
- Live more intentionally, with less overwhelm and more ease

This isn't about perfection. It's about progress—creating better habits, making better choices, and feeling good about what you're putting out into the world.

Ready? Your natural, clean, beautiful life starts now. Turn the page and let's get to it.

PART 1 – HOUSEHOLD INGREDIENTS AT A GLANCE

Baking Soda: The Versatile All-Purpose Remedy



Baking soda, or **sodium bicarbonate**, is a naturally occurring compound found in mineral deposits and created through a simple chemical reaction involving soda ash (sodium carbonate) and carbon dioxide. It's been used for over 150 years as a cleaning aid, odor neutralizer, and personal care staple. In its pure form, it's a fine white powder that's non-toxic, biodegradable, and safe for nearly all surfaces.

Its gentle abrasiveness makes it an excellent scrubbing agent, and its alkaline pH helps neutralize acids, odors, and even bacteria. According to a study published, baking soda works by buffering pH and reacting with acids to produce mild cleaning effects without harsh residues¹. It's a go-to in green living circles because it's simple, cheap, safe, and incredibly adaptable.

Common Uses

In a natural lifestyle, baking soda covers cleaning, deodorizing, personal care, and even health support. It's the quiet hero in most DIY blends.

- **Odor Neutralizer:** Absorbs smells in shoes, fridges, carpets, and bins.
- **Gentle Abrasive:** Scrubs sinks, tubs, grout, and stovetops without scratching.

- **Laundry Booster:** Softens water, lifts dirt, and enhances detergent power.
- **Tooth & Mouth Care:** Naturally whitens teeth and freshens breath.
- **Soothing Soak:** Calms skin irritations and softens bath water.
- **Fire Suppressant:** Small amounts can put out grease fires.
- **Drain Cleaner Base:** Reacts with vinegar or citric acid for fizzy, clearing action.

Pair It With	Safety Note	Storage & Shelf Life
Vinegar – for fizzy cleaning power in drains or ovens	Avoid contact with eyes or inhaling large amounts of dust. Test before skin use.	Store in an airtight container, cool, dry place. Lasts 2+ years.
Hydrogen Peroxide – for whitening laundry or stains	Can be drying to skin if overused. Rinse thoroughly after cleaning.	Keep lid tightly sealed to prevent clumping.
Essential Oils – for odor control in fresheners	Safe for pets in small amounts. Avoid combining with citrus oils around cats.	Label clearly; baking soda can absorb scents over time.

Real-Life Case Study: Odor Reduction in Kitchen Waste Using Baking Soda

A local municipality in Singapore/Asia investigated odor control for food-waste bins stored for seven days. A study found that applying **50 g of Sodium bicarbonate (baking soda) at the bottom of an 8 L bin** reduced mal-odor by about 70 %.

Before: The bins stored moist food-waste for a week, producing volatile compounds (ammonia, acids) that created strong unpleasant smells.

While using: Baking soda was sprinkled across the bin base immediately after waste was placed. Over the storage period, the pH and chemical composition of odor-causing gases were modified by the alkaline baking soda, reducing their volatility.

After: Observers reported significantly reduced foul smell compared to control bins without baking soda. The study noted that applying more than 100 g was not better (and may raise pH too high, causing ammonia release).

Key takeaway: Baking soda provided a practical, low-toxicity intervention in a real household-scale setting (food-waste bin) to reduce odors, supporting its value as a natural cleaning/refreshing aid.

Washing Soda: A Powerful Cleaner for Kitchen & Bathroom



Washing soda, or **sodium carbonate**, is a highly alkaline mineral compound often found in nature as a component of evaporated lake beds and plant ashes. While it's chemically related to baking soda, washing soda is more potent, with a higher pH that makes it ideal for tough cleaning jobs. Commercially, it's typically made by processing natural trona ore or combining salt and limestone in a heating process, which mimics what happens in nature.

This mineral salt has been used in natural cleaning routines for generations and remains a favorite among eco-conscious households. It's biodegradable, non-toxic when used correctly, and safe for septic systems. According to the Environmental Working Group (EWG), sodium carbonate is rated as a low-hazard ingredient in household cleaning, praised for its effectiveness in degreasing, water softening, and breaking down residues without harsh chemical byproducts².

Washing soda supports greener living by eliminating the need for synthetic degreasers, drain openers, and chemical-based scrubbing agents, all with one potent powder.