

GUIDE TO CREATING A ECO FRIENDLY HOME ON A BUDGET



Abstract

Going green doesn't have to use every last one of your greenbacks. While building a fully green home typically costs 20 to 30 percent more than a traditional build, you can still get results by spending less, often as little as 2 to 4 percent over standard construction. Here, you will find useful info to make your new or existing home more eco-friendly without breaking the bank.

Let's get started...

1.Introduction

Many homeowners are looking for ways to make their homes more eco-friendly. Whether this stems from a wish to help the environment or a desire to cut heating and cooling costs, the steps are often the same. Some eco-friendly home improvements are small, simple, inexpensive steps. Others require more time, money and expertise.

Here, we'll look at the popular home-efficiency tips that can fit almost any budget. While the best combination for your home's needs may vary, these home-improvement options include a number of projects and possibilities that could mean energy and cost savings for you and your family.



2. Eco-friendly Home Construction Options for Any Budget

Today's homeowners are more aware than ever of the demands their appliances, lawns and heating and cooling needs have on the planet's limited supply of fossil fuels. Likewise, steady increases in the cost of those fuels mean that those homeowners often feel the cost of inefficient home energy use where it hurts the most: in their account balances after monthly energy bills are paid.

Find some effective ways to make your house eco friendly.

2.1. Know Your Home's Energy Weak Points

This is a tip almost any homeowner can follow, regardless of budget: Have a home energy audit. A home energy audit is essentially a thorough inspection of your home, in which you (or a professional inspector) examines such things as air leaks, sites where insulation could reduce energy transfer from outside and the efficiency of your appliances and electrical system. A professional energy audit, if it's in your budget, can include higher-tech assessments such as thermal imaging and precise airflow measurement. These tools refine the audit, helping the inspector pinpoint exactly where your home's energy weak spots are and how much they're costing you in terms of heating and cooling bills.

A home energy audit is a wise first step in making your home eco-friendly. Whether you hire a contractor or do it yourself, the audit will help you develop an effective gameplan of projects that can cut your energy needs and save money.

2.2. Control the Airflow

Drafts around doors and windows can waste a tremendous amount of energy.

For an older house with poor seals under the doors or old, ill-fitting windows, the costs can be much higher. If you're on a budget and want to find a project that will make a big difference in your heating and cooling bills, controlling airflow is an excellent place to start.

Warm or cool air leaking into or out of your house is not the only airflow problem that can cost energy. Air creeping in from a cool room, such as your basement, or from a warm area to a cooler one, can cause additional problems. Interior doors, improperly sealed ductwork and even small gaps around switches and electrical

outlets can lead to energy-consuming air leaks. Be sure to check these areas as well.

Repairing these air leaks requires a variety of techniques and tools. Caulking can seal gaps that don't need to be opened. Something as simple as a draft-catcher placed under a door or along the base of a leaky window can help control airflow through these openings

2.3.Watch the Windows

If your budget allows, upgrading windows to better-sealed and better-insulated models can pay huge dividends in the fight against high energy costs. Energy-efficient windows typically use a number of features to separate the climate-controlled air in your home from outside air. Your budget may allow you to install multipane windows, in which the space between panes is filled with an insulating gas, such as argon. Insulating windows in this manner improves their U-factor, a measure of how well the windows prevent heat from escaping. A lower U-factor number identifies a more efficient window

The glass on these efficient windows is often tinted or treated with a glazing material that reduces the solar energy allowed into the home. This not only reduces glare, but also improves the windows' Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC), a measure of how the windows prevent sunlight from raising the home's indoor temperature. As with U-factor, a lower SHGC value identifies a more efficient window.



Often, multipane and tinting or glazing technologies are combined to produce custom windows that meet the specific insulation needs of a given house. If your budget doesn't leave room for the top end of the efficient window spectrum, something as simple as selecting windows with nonmetallic frames (the metal transmits heat through the wall) can provide some savings at a more reasonable cost.

2.4.A Positive Reflection

The sun's effect on your home's energy usage doesn't stop at the windows. If you live in a home that heats up too much in the warm, sunny months, reflective insulation may be a cost-saving upgrade to put high on your to-do list.

Reflective insulation is designed to control solar radiation, the sun's heat-producing energy, which passes through your roof and walls to heat the air inside your home. Some types of reflective insulation can prevent wayward airflow inside, while others simply bounce the solar energy away from the interior (hence the "reflective" label). Reflective insulation is often a thinner material than the thermal insulation used to keep heat from escaping from the home. It usually consists of a reflective material, such as aluminum, bonded to thin wood or another type of backing. It's typically used along with thermal insulation as part of a comprehensive project: Combining this type of insulation with the options described in the following section can provide year-round protection from the outside temperature.

2.5. Insulation Basics

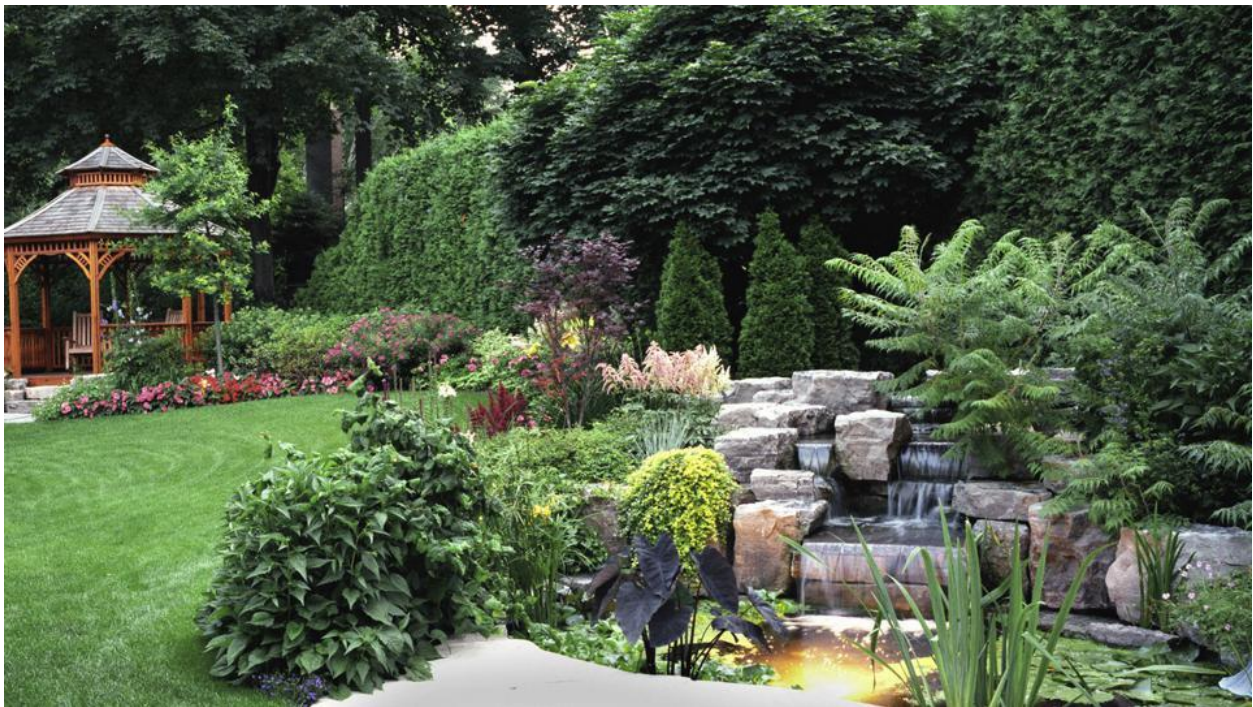
Battling, blown fill and rigid sheets of insulation provide energy-conscious homeowners with a number of benefits. These materials prevent the heat transfer that can occur through building materials such as wood, drywall and masonry. They can be installed to act as air dams, preventing airflow inside walls and energy-stealing drafts in attics and crawlspaces. And they provide some of the easiest DIY projects for improving the eco-friendliness of your.

Installing insulation can be as simple as unrolling fiberglass batting between rafters in your attic or studs in an unfinished garage wall. Covering blown fill with sheets of lighter insulation can be an effective way to insulate an overhead crawlspace. The use of a reflective barrier as an outer envelope against the inside

of a wall or roof adds to the insulation's effectiveness without adding significant time and cost to the installation. More complex installations, like blowing cellulose fill into the space between studs of a finished wall, takes more specialized equipment, and may be best left to contractors.

Regardless of whether you install insulation yourself or hire someone to do it, it's wise to consider the chosen insulation's R-value when planning your project. R-value is a measure of an insulation product's ability to insulate. The higher the R-value, the less energy is transmitted through the material.

2.6.Grow a Low-impact Lawn



Think for a moment about the energy that goes into a typical home's yard. Fossil fuel powers lawn mowers and string trimmers, creating harmful emissions. Fertilizers used to grow lush green lawns and bountiful gardens leach into groundwater, creating a pollution problem that can affect drinking water quality. And poorly managed rain runoff can lead to sewer overflows and flooding.

One of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to grow an eco-friendly lawn is to use native plants as ground cover, rather than bagged grass seed. Try changing your landscaping to frame a small lawn with beds of native wildflowers, rather than growing a lawn big enough for a soccer pitch. The reduced water and

fertilizer needs of the native plants will reduce the amount of chemicals you release into the environment, saving both the groundwater and your lawn care budget.

With a smaller amount of grass, you may be able to upgrade from a gas-powered lawnmower to an electric or manual model, which can save in fuel costs and emissions.

Smart, eco-friendly landscaping can have a positive effect on your home's energy use, as well. By strategically placing shade trees, you may be able to protect your home from excessive solar heating on sunny days.

2.7. Install Pervious Pavers

Uncontrolled rain runoff can cause serious problems for your community's environment. Impervious surfaces such as roofs, streets and driveways don't allow soil to absorb rainwater. Instead, the water gets channeled through often-aging sewers and culverts, then dumps into local waterways that evolved to accommodate much lower amounts of water during rain. As a result, erosion from excess runoff damages local streams and rivers, and low-lying communities become more prone to flooding.

Some pervious pavement materials can be poured like concrete, while others are modular bricks or tiles that you can arrange into attractive patterns. The type of material you choose depends on the amount and type of use the surface will see, as well as your taste and budget. A tiled patio may be a weekend project within your reach, while replacing your asphalt driveway with a pervious one may be best left to a professional contractor. Either way, you'll finish the project with the satisfaction of knowing you've put the soil under your property to a very important public use.

2.8. Watch the Water

Some estimates suggest that heating water accounts for roughly a third of a home's energy consumption. Whether you're building a new house or trying to make your current home more eco-friendly, improving your water heater's efficiency can be an effective investment.

Understand one thing, though: This type of home improvement can be an expensive undertaking. Tankless water heaters, which heat water as needed rather than storing it in an insulated chamber, are some of the most efficient heaters available. However, they can cost two to five times as much as a traditional tank water heater, and installing one in an existing house can require costly upgrades. Still, if you want a very efficient water heater and can afford it, a tankless water heater is a good option.

For homeowners on a tighter budget, there are other ways to save on water-heating energy costs. For starters, make sure your water heater is the right size for your home. While a too-small heater may not meet your needs, an oversized water heater will waste energy. Check the heater's First Hour Rating (FHR), a measure of its ability to produce water during high-demand situations, to get a sense of how well it meets your needs.

Another measure to consider is the heater's Energy Factor (EF). This standard measurement can give you a sense of how efficient one heater is when compared to another. The higher the EF, the more efficient the heater.

2.9. Timing is Everything

Imagine having a personal assistant who made sure you had hot water just in time for your morning shower, warmed or cooled your house to the perfect temperature at the end of every day and monitored the cost of energy to make sure you only ran your power-gobbling appliances when gas and electricity were at their cheapest, non-peak rates. Thanks to a new generation of "smart" thermostats, this level of control is increasingly available to tech-savvy homeowners.

Thermostats have become much more than temperature-activated switches for heating and cooling systems. Many models can now monitor factors such as the energy use of individual appliances, the cost of energy at a given time of day and the functionality of appliances. Some of the more advanced models are able to contact you via e-mail if something goes wrong with an appliance, and they can be adjusted from your office computer or mobile device.

2.10. Work Efficiently

Home appliances are tools. And like any tool, your washer, dryer, water heater and dishwasher will eventually wear out and need to be replaced. This fact of homeownership is also a great opportunity: When a major appliance wears out, some smart shopping can lead to major energy savings with an efficient new model.

The first step to making an energy-conscious appliance purchase involves learning how efficiency is measured for that appliance. Knowing what an appliance's ratings mean can help you shop smarter and faster.

Likewise, make sure you know what size appliance you need. Buying an air conditioner that's too small will lead to hot summers and a constantly running appliance. But a too-large air conditioner might not adequately remove humidity in your home and will waste energy when it's running.

Once you've found your new appliance, check to see if there are ways you can save energy through better installation. Can your water heater be moved to shorten the length of your hot water pipes? Are your air conditioning ducts properly sealed and insulated? Now is the time to address these issues and maximize your energy savings.

New, efficient appliances aren't always cheap. But evaluating your needs and researching your options can help you strike a balance between price and performance that will improve your home's eco-friendliness, regardless of your budget.

2 (A). Building Green on a Budget

Saving money can be a natural outcome of your home project.

1. Think "refresh," not "remodel"

You don't need to go throw out what you've already got to go green.

If you buy a home with hardwood floors, for instance, it would be better to leave the original surface than to replace it with eco-friendly flooring. Since old-growth trees have already been cut down to make the floor, it would be wasteful to throw it out and use additional resources.

The most eco-friendly approach is to try to work with what you already have. You'll create less waste with your construction project and save money on new materials. Using existing elements will also make the project move faster, which translates into lower labor costs.

2. Use salvaged materials

Using recycled supplies can often reduce your building costs and environmental impact. Look for secondhand lumber, plumbing fixtures or hardware. Depending on the age of the materials, make sure they're tested for asbestos, lead paint and contaminants. Once supplies are cleared, they'll add low-cost character to your home.

3. Build a smaller home



Smaller, more space-efficient buildings use fewer resources during construction, and they are cheaper to heat and cool. Plus, smaller homes are less disruptive to their home site and leave more of your property open for plant and animal life.

4. Let the sun be your friend

Letting the sun shine in -- in the right places -- can drastically reduce your heating, cooling and electricity bills. It costs little, if anything, to shuffle the window arrangement during the design process.

To maximize the sun's effects, add the most windows to the south side of your home. Add fewer windows on the east and west facades to reduce cooling costs.

5. Save water

Adding water-saving features to your home during construction won't cost you much coin, but it'll make a big difference in you bills down the road. There is little, if any, additional cost to substitute standard water equipment with energy-efficient models. So why not install a low-flow showerhead or water aerator now?

6. Get energy-saving appliances

Your appliances have two price tags: the one on the sticker at the store and the one you get in the mail every month for utility fees. Efficient appliances might cost a little more off the shelf, but they're worth the savings later.

Appliances approved by the Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star program use 10 to 50 percent less energy and water than standard models, reducing energy costs.

7. Trash the garbage disposal

Disposals might be convenient, but they're definitely not energy-efficient. They use a lot of water and send lots of organic material down the drain. Take your food scraps out back to a compost pile instead. You won't miss the disposal when your food scraps turn into nutrient-rich topsoil that's the perfect fertilizer for a garden.

8. Recycle construction extras

When your sparkling, new home is done, don't forget to salvage the leftover materials. Some extras can be sold, while others can be recycled. You'll save big on landfill expenses, and you'll keep your project from contributing to another trash heap.

3. Indoor Plants That Are Easy To Care For

If you've ever looked around a room and thought it just needed something extra, the missing ingredient could very well be an indoor plant. Indoor plants really are the best - and not just when it comes to making a house feel like a home. Studies have shown time and time again that plants can boost wellbeing, purify the air and even prevent snoring!

Uncertain about which indoor plant is best for your home? First, take inspiration from the spot in your home you'd like to fill. Does it receive plenty of natural light? Or is it humid, like a bathroom? Perhaps you're styling a shelf and want a plant that will trail down elegantly.

Next, consider your lifestyle. Do you need a plant that you can 'set and forget'? Or would you prefer the challenge of a pernickety plant that likes every condition just so?



Now it's time to peruse these 4 easy care indoor plants and find the one that is best suited to your home.

1. Swiss cheese plant (*Monstera deliciosa*)

There's no doubt you've seen the "swiss cheese plant" all over Pinterest as they're one of the most popular indoor plants. Monstera plants prefer a warm climate away from direct sunlight and they benefit from regular cleaning with a soft, damp cloth.

It's important to let the top 4cm of soil dry out between waterings as over-watering may lead to root rot. Signs of root rot include yellowing or wilting leaves.

Monsteras should enjoy conditions that are fairly humid, so avoid placing them near air vents or any area with artificial heating or cooling. To keep potted monsteras in tip-top condition, ensure you feed them a good quality indoor plant fertiliser in spring and summer.

Monsteras also like to climb, so provide them with some kind of stake or trellis for support.

2. Devil's Ivy (*Epipremnum aureum*)

Devil's ivy, also known as golden pothos or pothos, is a fast-growing vine that is very forgiving to grow. It is suited to almost any position in the house, whether potted in a hanging basket or placed in glass vase.

The leaves are waxy, heart shaped and colouring depends on cultivar – Wilcoxii are a mottled white and green, Marble Queen have more of a cream and grayish-green colouring, Neon is a shade of bright, light greeny-yellow and Tricolor have green leaves with yellow, light green and cream dappling.

They're highly drought tolerant and don't require regular fertilisation. Water Devil's Ivy deeply once a week and cut back to every other week in winter. Spring and summer is the best time to prune and propagate devil's ivy, placing the cuttings in glass jars of water to encourage rooting.

3. Imperial bromeliad (*Alcantarea imperialis 'rubra'*)

Don't be intimidated by the Bromeliad. Although once regarded as a plant for the advanced gardener, these beautifully coloured rosette-forming perennials make for easy, low maintenance houseplants.

When indoors, they need medium to bright light (but not direct sunlight) and do well in shallow pots with fast drainage. You can water the plant by filling the central cup (otherwise known as the tank) of the plant once a week during the warmer months and less during winter.

Make sure you flush it on a regular basis to prevent water stagnation. As they are not heavy feeders, you can drop a slow-release fertiliser into the cup of the plant or mix it into the soil, once a season.

4. Peace lily (*Spathiphyllum wallisii*)



Spathiphyllum, commonly known as the Peace Lily, has long been a popular house and office plant. It was even included in NASA's list of the best air purifying plants.

It has glossy, dark green foliage and stunning white flowers, usually growing between 45 to 65 centimetres tall. These tropical plants thrive in bright, indirect light, they can handle low light but that may cause them to bloom poorly.

A peace lily will usually only need to be watered and misted once a week in warmer months, less often in winter. They hate soggy or wet soil and they're prone to root rot so let the plants dry out between waterings.

Be sure to wipe down the foliage to prevent dust from building up. Make sure it is kept away from pets or children who may be tempted to chew it. Peace lily is a poisonous plant that may cause severe discomfort if ingested.

4. Cleaning Naturally with Lemons, Vinegar, and Baking Soda

You don't have to walk down a cleaning aisle to find your best options for cleaning your home—just open your pantry. Vinegar, lemons, baking soda, and other natural homemade cleaners do a fabulous job of cleaning, disinfecting, removing stains, and more.

Using Vinegar to Clean

Vinegar cleans and deodorizes almost as well as most all-purpose cleaners. The recipe calls for mixing equal parts of water and vinegar in a spray bottle. Use this solution to clean most areas of your home. Don't worry about your home smelling like vinegar. The smell disappears when it dries.

- **Bathrooms:** Clean the bathtub, toilet, sink, and countertops with the 1-to-1 vinegar and water spray solution. The solution will clean away soap scum and hard water stains on your fixtures and tile, leaving them shiny and beautiful. You can also mop the floor in the bathroom by mixing vinegar and water. If you have unsightly rings in the toilet bowl, use pure vinegar. Flush the toilet to allow the water level to go down before pouring the undiluted vinegar around the inside of the rim. Scrub down the bowl.
- **Kitchens:** Clean the top of the stove, appliances, and countertop surfaces with equal parts vinegar and water. Use vinegar to clean floors and be amazed at the fresh shiny results.

- Laundry rooms: Use vinegar as a natural fabric softener, which can be especially helpful for families with sensitive skin issues—add 1/2 cup of vinegar to the rinse cycle in place of store-bought fabric softener.

Cleaning With Lemons

Lemon juice is another natural substance that can be used to clean your home. You can use it to dissolve soap scum and hard water deposits, and it's great for shining brass and copper. You can also use lemon juice to treat stains, given its natural bleaching qualities, but that can also be a drawback. It's a good idea to test it out on a hidden area first.¹

Lemon cleaning applications include:

- Cleaning paste: Mix lemon juice with baking soda.
- Dishes, surfaces, stains: Cut a lemon in half and sprinkle baking soda on the cut section of the lemon. Use it like you would a sponge.
- Furniture polish: Mix 1 cup olive oil with 1/2 cup lemon juice for a natural furniture polish for hardwood furniture.
- Garbage disposal drain odors: Put a whole lemon peel or orange peel through the garbage disposal; it freshens the drain and the kitchen.

Cleaning With Baking Soda



Baking soda is one of the most versatile cleaners. You can use it to scrub surfaces in much the same way as commercial non-abrasive cleansers. Baking soda is also

great as a deodorizer. Place a box in the refrigerator and freezer to absorb odors. Put it anywhere you need deodorizing action: trash cans, laundry, and even your family's super smelly sneakers.

Mix baking soda and hydrogen peroxide to make an excellent household cleaner. It's particularly effective on tile grout. Use 1/4 cup baking soda in a small glass bowl and add hydrogen peroxide to create a thick paste.

Baking soda and vinegar are often used together for their chemical reaction that helps lift dirt, cut through grease, and remove odors:

- Unclog slow drains: Use 1 cup of baking soda, followed by 1 cup of heated vinegar
- Oven cleaner and remove caked-on grease on pans: Sprinkle baking soda on metal pans or surfaces and top with boiling vinegar. Let the mixture sit for 30 minutes. Wipe with a wet sponge.
- Kill mildew in laundry, particularly towels: Add half a cup of baking soda with the laundry detergent. For the rinse cycle, add one cup of vinegar to kill bacteria and soften the fabric.

Using Other Natural Cleaners

There are quite a few other options for natural cleaners. You might be surprised to learn that things like ketchup, rice, coffee grounds, and other kitchen ingredients can do a fantastic job cleaning the house.

5. DIY Home Cleaners To Remove Stains And Odours

Hundreds and thousands of household cleaners are in the market, but most of these products have harmful chemicals. When you use them to clean your household surfaces, they worsen the indoor air quality and lead to various health issues.

Therefore, you should always use eco-friendly products to clean your home. Many companies that offer reliable end of lease cleaning Adelaide have started following green cleaning.

Tenants usually hire them to clean a rental house after the end of the lease period, but you can contact them anytime to clean your home. To clean on your own, you must have the proper knowledge. Natural ingredients are not only safe

and cheap but also very effective, so they can give you excellent results. Moreover, preparing them is quite easy.

Here are some DIY home cleaners to remove stains and odours.

How To Make DIY All-Purpose Cleaner

A DIY all-purpose cleaner can be extremely useful for removing stains and odours from numerous household areas such as tiles, countertops and so on. With the help of this homemade cleaner, you can get rid of dirt and freshen up your home. It contains vinegar, which removes stains and bad smells, as well as essential oils, which keep your home germ-free.

Ingredients

- Water – 3 cups
- White vinegar – 1 cup
- Eucalyptus essential oil – 3 to 4 drops
- Tea tree essential oil – 3 to 4 drops

Method:

Pour water and vinegar into the spray bottle and mix properly. After that, add essential oil to the bottle and shake it again. Then spray the solution on the surface that you want to clean and wipe it with a piece of cloth.

How To Make DIY Window & Glass Cleaner

People use costly store-bought products to keep their windows sparkling clean, but you don't need chemical-laden cleaning products. A natural DIY window cleaner can get the job done effectively. Vinegar and cornstarch are two essential ingredients you need to prepare this cleaner.

Ingredients

- Water -2 cups
- Cornstarch – 1 tablespoon
- White vinegar -1/2 cup
- Lemon essential oil – 2 to 3 drops
- Grapefruit essential oil – 2 to 3 drops



Method:

Add vinegar, cornstarch and water in a spray bottle and mix it well. After that, add the essential oils into the bottle and shake again. Spray the solution on the glass surface and scrub with a soft sponge. Finally, rinse it with water and wipe it with a squeegee. You won't find any dirt or stains on the surface.

How To Make DIY Soft Scrub Cleaner

Various harmful chemicals are present in the soft scrub cleaners that are available in the market.

As a result, you should use natural products to remove stains and odours in your bathtub and shower. The homemade soft scrub cleaner can clean areas such as your bathroom more quickly and effectively. Vinegar is an essential component of this cleaner because it dissolves hard mineral deposits and removes soap scum.

Ingredients

- Water – 2 tablespoons

- Liquid Castile soap – 1/2 cup
- White vinegar – 2 tablespoons
- Tea tree essential oil – 4 to 5 drops

Method:

Pour liquid castile soap, water and vinegar into a spray bottle. Shake the bottle well, so all the ingredients mix appropriately. After that, add a few drops of essential oil into the bottle and shake again. Apply the solution on the spot and scrub with a sponge or brush before wiping the area.

How To Make A DIY Oven Cleaner

A dirty oven can reduce the efficiency of the appliance, produce a lot of smoke and increase the chance of an accident. So you must clean it from time to time and use natural ingredients. If you want to clean your oven professionally, hire trained cleaners who offer end of lease cleaning in Adelaide, South Australia.

Ingredients

- Water – 1 cup
- Salt – 1/2 cup
- Vinegar – 1 cup
- Baking soda -2 cups
- Essential oils – 3 to 4 drops

Method:

To begin, combine baking soda, essential oil, salt, and water to make a paste. Then, using a brush, apply the paste inside the oven and leave it for a few hours. Use a damp rag to wipe off the surface to remove stains and bad odour. It is one of the simple oven cleaning hacks you should never forget.

How To Make DIY Toilet Cleaner

Most toilet cleaners available in the market use chemicals like chlorine bleach that can irritate the throat and eyes. Prepare a DIY cleaner, which will be as effective as a branded product but safe.

Ingredients

- Water -2 cups
- Baking soda – 2 tablespoons
- Liquid Castile soap -1/3 cup
- Essential oil (Lemon, Eucalyptus or Lavender)

Method:

Mix all the ingredients into a spray bottle and spray the solution inside the toilet bowl. Leave it for some time, and then use your toilet brush to scrub the surface appropriately. At last, flush the toilet, so it sparkles.

Preparing home cleaners to remove stains and odours could be challenging if you haven't done it before. The next time you decide to clean your household surfaces to improve the hygiene of the house, try the recipes of the cleaners mentioned above.

To avoid the hassles of preparing the cleaners and save time, hire professionals who offer the best end of lease cleaning in Adelaide. They will give you the best possible result.

Conclusion

Hope you like this guide!! We have shared useful info that can help you to make your house eco friendly and how to maintain its cleaning.

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