



# Green Home Cleaning

BY ALYSSA RUEDA

Many of the products we use on a daily basis actually pose risks to our health and the environment. I've researched common household toxins and suggest do-it-yourself alternatives (*listed on the right*) that help minimize harm.

**Bleach** is commonly used for disinfection and whitening, but it can be dangerous. A 2010 study revealed that bleach in spray bottles caused the most injuries among household cleaners for almost 270,000 children under five.

**Pesticides** are a significant concern as spring turns into summer. Surprisingly, the EPA reports that 80% of pesticide exposure occurs indoors. With the increase in insects and intrusions during this season, consider creating natural pest deterrents if you are concerned about insects.

**Room sprays** and **air fresheners** can irritate and introduce chemicals into our homes. Switching to safer alternatives can be easy and inexpensive.

Reducing toxic exposure is a personal achievement that can be easily accomplished. Join us in making our homes safer and healthier. Together, we can create a toxic free environment for ourselves and future generations!

## Cleaning

Boost your laundry detergent and brighten clothes by adding  $\frac{1}{2}$  **cup of baking soda** to the washer drum.

For surfaces, use hydrogen peroxide directly from the bottle. Or, create a personalized spray by funneling a **1:1 ratio of hydrogen peroxide and water** into an opaque spray bottle with **lemon juice** or essential oils for a pleasant aroma!

## Pest Solutions

Repel aphids and ants by mixing 5-7 drops of **peppermint oil**, 3-5 drops of **dish soap**, with **warm water** in a spray bottle. Spray along windows, doors, and plants.

## Air Fresheners

Make a **lemon basil** room spray by steeping dried basil in boiling water, filtering out the **basil**, adding distilled **water**, **vodka** (for preservation), and **lemon** juice or essential oil. Shake and spray as needed.