

3 Steps to a Healthy Home

Pests need water, food, and shelter to live, just like you. Here's what you and your landlord can do to get rid of them and prevent them from invading your home.



1. Inside your home: take away pests' food, water, and shelter

- Clean grease, crumbs, and spills and don't leave dishes in the sink overnight.
- Store food in sealed containers. Pests can chew through paper, cardboard and thin plastic.
- Remove clutter and put away all clothes, shoes, and food.
- Take out garbage frequently; rinse food containers before recycling.
- At night, put away or put a lid on your pet's food and water.
- Avoid sprays, foggers or bombs; they don't reach hiding places and push pests into walls.
- Reduce exposure to chemicals by cleaning with less-toxic products.



2. Reduce humidity and moisture to prevent roaches and mold

- Open curtains and windows and use ventilation fans when cooking and bathing.
- Dry moisture from windows and walls after bathing.
- Separate furniture and appliances, including refrigerator, from walls.



3. Outside your home: ask your landlord to help keep pests out

- Install door sweeps or other barriers.
- Screen all vents, windows and entryways and repair broken screens.
- Remove cardboard boxes, crates, used tires, and piles of wood.
- Thin out dense trees and overgrown plants that shelter rats, mice and mosquitoes.
- Seal all cracks, crevices and holes in walls and ceiling.
- Fix drips and leaks; seal cracks and holes around pipes and electrical outlets.
- Maintain interior and exterior water, drainage and sewage systems.
- Clean out drains and rain gutters.
- Rinse common garbage and recycling bins frequently.
- Consider hiring a safe pest control expert: [Ecowise Certified](#), [GreenPro Certified](#), [Green Shield Certified](#).

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Safer Cleaning for Your Home

With simple, affordable ingredients

What You Need

Lemon juice or white vinegar

Cuts grease and grime (don't use undiluted vinegar if you have asthma)



Liquid soap

Free of antibacterial (triclosan) or sodium lauryl sulfate (detergent). Castile soap is a good option.



Baking soda

Removes stains and grime, acts like scouring powder



Hydrogen peroxide

(3%) solution

Works like a disinfectant and removes stains



Microfiber cloth

Damp microfiber removes dirt AND germs



Scrub brush

Helps remove stains and grime



More info:

smchealth.org/healthyhome

womensvoices.org

Recipes

All-purpose cleaner: countertops, floors, appliances, walls and more

- Liquid soap and warm water; lemon juice optional.
- Liquid soap, 1 tbsp. baking soda, lemon juice and water.
- 1 part white vinegar and 1 part water.

Windows, glass and mirrors

- Wipe with a damp microfiber cloth.
- 1 part white vinegar or lemon juice and 1 part water.

Sink, tub and tile

- Creamy scrub: 2 cups baking soda, half cup liquid soap and some lemon juice.
- Mix liquid soap, baking soda and 2 capfuls of hydrogen peroxide (3% solution).
- Soapy water and a good scrub brush.

Toilet

- Sprinkle bowl with baking soda, then drizzle with vinegar, let soak for 30 minutes and scrub with brush.
- Wipe toilet seat with hydrogen peroxide (3% solution).

Mold and mildew remover

- Allow white vinegar to sit on moldy surface, then clean with hot soapy water.
- Mix liquid soap, baking soda, and 2 capfuls of hydrogen peroxide. Apply to surface for 30 minutes, then clean with soapy water.

Air freshener

- Ventilate well, especially when cooking, bathing and cleaning. Use kitchen and bathroom fans.
- Stick cloves into an orange.
- Sprinkle baking soda in bottom of garbage cans.
- Simmer cinnamon sticks, water and orange peel or cloves.

Drain Cleaner

- Pour half cup baking soda down drain and follow with half cup vinegar. After 15-30 minutes, follow with 2 quarts boiling water.

Oven Cleaner

- Apply paste of 1/4 cup baking soda, 2 tbsp. salt and hot water and let sit 5 minutes, then clean with scrub brush.