

# Make your own Non-Toxic Household Cleaning Spray

## SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- Lemon rinds, or other citrus scraps – organic if possible!
- White vinegar (you could also substitute with over-brewed acidic kombucha\_vinegar!)
- A large glass jar or other container for steeping
- A spray bottle
- A fine-mesh strainer and/or cheesecloth
- Optional: fresh aromatic, antiseptic herbs such as lavender, rosemary, thyme, sage, or mint



## Step 1: Gather Lemon Rinds

Collect your spent lemon rinds (or other citrus peels) in a large glass container. We typically use a half-gallon Mason jar, but a pitcher, a couple of smaller jars, or even a vase would work! Also, it is definitely okay to have the membranes, pith, or seeds in there as well!

If you can't collect your rinds all at once, that's fine. Just keep the container of rinds in the refrigerator and add to it as you generate more.

If it is going to take you more than a week to build a nice little collection of citrus peels, add a little white vinegar to your jar by day 6 or 7. Pour in enough to submerge the lemon or citrus peels. This will prevent the citrus from molding while you continue to add more. If you do this, you can keep the jar out on the counter instead of in the fridge.

The amount of citrus rinds you collect isn't crucial. But the more citrus you have, the more wonderful the smell will be.

## Step 2: Soak & Wait

Once you have a good amount of lemon or citrus rinds collected, pour plain white vinegar into the container over them. Fill it all the way up, or at least until the peels are all submerged. Feel free to add a handful of fresh herbs (listed above) for increased natural aromatherapy and disinfecting power.

Soak the citrus in vinegar for at least one week, and up to three weeks. The container of steeping rinds can sit out on the counter at room temperature. To help encourage the infusion, you could give the container a shake every few days to mix things up.



### Step 3: Strain & Bottle

After it has finished steeping, it is time to separate the lemon rinds from the vinegar. The liquid may be cloudier, especially if you've been shaking or stirring it. We want to remove as many chunks and particles as possible, to avoid clogging the spray bottle! Therefore, you could pour the entire concoction into a very **fine-mesh strainer** perched over a bowl to catch it, as shown below. Another option is to pour the solution through **cheesecloth**. It may be worthwhile to strain the mixture twice before bottling.

Just squeeze and squish the citrus rinds a bit – ringing them out to extract as much vinegar and juice as possible.



Finally, pour the strained solution into a spray bottle. Grab a funnel if needed! You can use **these glass spray bottles**, but you can also rinse and reuse any other spray bottle you have around. If there is extra, simply store it in a jar until your bottle needs a refill.

Some recipes say to dilute it by mixing it with equal parts water. If you want to increase the volume of your batch, feel free to add some water! However, based on research, vinegar has the most effective disinfecting powers when it is used full-strength.



#### Step 4: Get Cleaning!

Check it out! You just created your own non-toxic citrus vinegar cleaning spray. Now you can clean and refresh your space. It really doesn't "go bad" in the bottle – you'll surely use it long before that is a concern!

Spray it on, allow it to sit for a minute to reach its full antimicrobial potential, and then rinse or wipe away – such as with a damp sponge or cloth. For a deeper clean and stain removal, such as on shower grout, allow the vinegar cleaning spray to sit for up to ten minutes. You can also add a splash into the dishwasher, or even in the washing machine to freshen up laundry! I especially love to add a splash with our gym clothes. Plain white vinegar can also be used to clean windows (even better than Windex!), yet the citrus may make it a little streaky? I honestly haven't tried.

\*Please note, that vinegar and citrus are very acidic! Therefore, it is not recommended to use this vinegar cleaning spray on granite, marble, or other sensitive stone surfaces. The acid can cause staining and etching to them. Avoid using vinegar on natural hardwood floors or wood furniture. On the other hand, we DO use this spray on our wood cutting boards. When in doubt, use caution and do some research on the surface in question before dousing it in lemon vinegar.