


# Breathe Easy While Cleaning

Hazardous chemicals can often be found in common cleaning products. By reading product labels you can avoid buying cleaners that may harm your health. For example, products containing chlorine bleach or ammonia are highly irritating to the lungs. Because companies are not required to list ingredients, you may not be able to tell if ingredients like these are in the product. **Protect yourself by looking for the signal words on product labels.** Below is a chart to help you understand what the signal words mean. There are less hazardous alternatives to many cleaning products available in most stores, or you can make your own. See the back of this card for recipes for healthy cleaning solutions that you can make at home.

Danger Level	Signal Word	What the Product Label Means
↓ MOST DANGEROUS	POISON	Highly toxic
↓	DANGER	Extremely flammable, corrosive or highly toxic
↓	WARNING	Moderate hazard
LEAST DANGEROUS	CAUTION	Mild or moderate hazard




For more recipes, such as furniture polish and drain cleaner, visit [www.ct.gov/dep/p2](http://www.ct.gov/dep/p2) and search for "Household alternatives". Department of Environmental Protection, Pollution Prevention, 79 Elm St., Hartford, CT 06106-5127, (860) 424-3297 Revised 10/2007.

## Recipes for Healthy Cleaners

**All Purpose Cleaner** - Pour 3 Tablespoons vinegar, 1 teaspoon borax and 2 cups hot water into a spray bottle. Shake until dissolved. Then add 1 teaspoon liquid soap (or dishwashing liquid) to the bottle and shake it again. Spray on surface and then wipe clean. For tough dirt, leave cleaner on for a few minutes and then wipe off.



**Glass Cleaner** - Pour 2 Tablespoons of vinegar and 2 cups of water into a spray bottle. Add 2 drops of liquid soap (or dishwashing liquid) and shake to mix. Spray on glass and wipe with lint-free cloth. Dry off with a second lint-free cloth.

**Sink, Tub and Tile Cleaner** - Sprinkle on baking soda, rub with wet sponge or scrub cloth and rinse.

For mineral deposits, soak a cloth in vinegar and leave it on the deposit for about an hour and then clean off area. For soap scum deposits, spread liquid soap or clarifying shampoo on the surface and leave it for about an hour. The deposits will be softened and then can be cleaned away with a scrub cloth or a brush. For mold or mildew, make a paste of borax and water and put it on the surface to be cleaned. Leave paste on the area for about an hour and then scrub it off.



**Toilet Bowl Cleaner** - Squirt vinegar from squeeze bottle under the rim. Pour about  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup borax into the toilet and use a toilet brush to clean the bowl. For mineral deposits, leave mixture in toilet for at least an hour. Then use the brush again to clean. Use the all-purpose cleaner and a sponge or scrub cloth to clean the seat and outside of the bowl.

**Oven Cleaner** - Make sure oven is turned off. Make a paste of baking soda and water and put on the sides and bottom of the oven. Let it set overnight. Scoop out baking soda and then wipe clean with damp cloth. Use scouring pad for tough spots.

