

Welcome to the new Homesteading course at SchoolhouseTeachers.com

Month One: Making Natural Cleaners

Welcome to this new course! I'm Lisa Barthuly and I'll be your teacher for this new course. We have many months planned, well into Fall 2014. Our "Homesteading" class will focus on a wide range of subjects with a long-term goal of learning new but "old" skills—utilizing the blessings of the times we live in!

So many basic skills of self-reliance, "DIY," and just plain common sense and skill have passed so many by. Past generations were brought up learning a lot of these things, work that was just part of living out each day for them. Too often these days, we think we've outgrown and don't need these skills any longer. Let's not let these skills pass us by, let us learn and pass them on to the next generation. Let us live a life that is focused on the work of our hands: simple, honest skills and knowledge for living each day together and serving one another. Preserving the past, for the future.

In each class, we'll focus on learning a new skill. I pray that you will find these classes informative and that they will bless you and your family. The class can be taught to your children or students, but you may find it the greater blessing to study the material together, either as a family or one parent with an eager student.

For the month of April 2014 we're going to learn the basics of making our own homemade cleaners. This is a great "starter" class, and it will show you just how simple the "do it yourself" lifestyle can be. Let's get started!

“Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you . . . “ (1 Thessalonians 4:11)

Somewhere along the way, it seems, we lost our gumption, the desire to make things for ourselves. Gone are the days of God's ways, and using what He gave us. We've changed our mind-set, and not for the better.

We've bound ourselves to the man-made, and to the ultra consumerism of our lost generation! There are a slew of retailers just waiting for us with anything and everything we could need—packaged up all pretty, with no thought or effort required. It is the manifestation of "progress" . . . right?

But I don't buy that.

I found that we are being led like sheep to the slaughter in so many areas of our “modern,” “convenient” lives, and most certainly in the area of “cleaning”—be it our homes or our bodies!

We have stores on every corner, we can flip open our laptops and have just about anything delivered right to our doors! We are an “on demand” society! We have no patience and we want things the easy way! Has there ever been a time in man’s history with so many modern medical “miracles” and advances . . . yet *so* many cancers, illnesses, and horrible diseases?!

In a nutshell, we’re killing ourselves, folks.

Let’s be honest, it *is* easier to toss a bottle of Pine Cleaner and chemical-laden body lotion in our shopping cart at the store than to make those things at home. It *does* take more effort on our parts to make things ourselves. However, we are all too happy to fill our homes with every man-made toxin ever created—in fact, we tell ourselves that “we *must* have them, we *deserve* them—we work *hard*, they make our lives easier . . . we’re soooo busy!”

The truth is, the almighty dollar of the companies producing these toxic products and our selfish nature has trumped anything else in life . . . we’re even sacrificing our children to it.

“Not so!” you say. Think again.

Why, when we **know** that formaldehyde, arsenic, phosphates, naphthalene, parabens, and so many more of these toxins and chemicals are in the products we use every day, are we bringing them into our homes and using them on our bodies and on our children!?

Much of what is housed in our local store’s cleaning aisle is just plain **overpriced, unhealthy, and flat-out unnecessary!**

If we knew how to change this and make our own products to replace the toxic, commercial ones . . . would we? Are we willing to put forth the effort required?

Join me as I show you how to simply make your own natural, homemade, handcrafted products that are not only less expensive but *truly better for our families, our homes, and God’s creation.*

Homemade Cleaners Starter Kit: Assemble Our Tools

I find it much easier to tackle a new skill when I have all my tools and information in one location. To get going on making your own homemade cleaners, let's gather all of our ingredients in one safe spot. This not only keeps you organized, but keeps your supplies together, thus making it simple when it comes time to make up a recipe (or a "receipt," as they were called back in the day), so that you have everything you need handy.

Be sure to mark all of your containers, spray bottles, and more with your permanent marker or labels, clearly stating the contents. Sometimes I'll even note my recipe on the bottle or label. You might want to start a section in your family recipe book to note your favorites!

(REMINDER: Although these items are natural ingredients, they still need to be treated with caution, just as with any toxic cleaner. Keep them all away from the young'uns and *never mix vinegar and bleach!*

Also, remember that some people have allergies; always test a small area before going all out!

To start out, where are you going to keep your supplies? I know some folks have a cupboard they keep all cleaning supplies in, up away from little ones. I keep all my supplies in the kitchen, with the exception of pots and containers; I keep those on shelves in my laundry room (up high—I don't want someone using my soap pot to boil spaghetti in!).

Once you start creating your homemade cleaners, where do you want to store them? Do you want them in a bucket or a plastic tote; find something to carry them along as you clean room to room.

Homemade Cleaners Starter Kit: Supplies and Ingredients

As you'll see, many of the ingredients in the recipes we're going to learn to make are things we already have on hand, in our homes, right now!

Baking soda

White vinegar

Arm & Hammer[®] washing soda (this one can be hard to find in some areas, and it's optional)

Borax

Fels Naptha bar soap (or your homemade bar soap; a bar of Ivory[®] will work too)

Olive oil

Salt

Lemon

Beeswax pastilles

Cornstarch

Arrowroot powder

Castille soap (Dr. Bronners[®])

Essential Oils* (I use doTerra[®] essential oils—I recommend Wild Orange, Lemon, and Lavender to have on hand, but as you'll see, you can get very creative here!)

Herbs **

Calendula

Lavender

Empty sprayer bottles

An old foaming hand soap bottle/pump

Old washcloths and rags

Old toothbrush

Green scrubbie pads

Old glass canning jars and old plastic containers (reuse those sour cream or cottage cheese containers!)

A permanent marker and/or labels

Coffee filters and /or cheesecloth

Scraps of flannel or calico in 10x10 or so squares

Ribbon

This week: gather together all of your supplies and then let's meet up next week, Week 2 of this course, and start learning how to make our own homemade, natural cleaners!

~ **Lisa**

* **Essential Oils** are fantastic for homemade, natural cleaners, and body products with their wonderful fragrance and antibacterial properties. Always make sure you are using pure oils—many are filled with toxins. Here is a list of the ones I use most:

Lavender

Wild orange

Lemon

Tea tree aka melaluca

Grapefruit

On Guard (this is an exclusive doTerra® blend that is excellent at killing germs!)

** **Herbs** are wonderful for adding antibacterial, healing, and medicinal properties to our homecrafted cleaners and body products; always make sure you are using organically grown herbs (no toxins!).

Here is a list of the ones I tend to use most often:

Lavender

Calendula

Rose petal

Chamomile

Comfrey

www.HomesteadOriginals.com

Lisa Barthuly 2014