

# THE DOZEN THAT DO DIRT IN

By Margaret Young

From Rodales's Book Of Hints, Tips And Everyday Wisdom.  
*Copyright t1985 by Rodale Press, Inc. Permission to use granted by Rodale Press, Inc.,  
Emmaus, PA 18094.*

Catsup? Milk? Rhubarb? For cleaning? No. We're not kidding. And, we're not nutty. We're just applying science. These acids, salts, and other natural ingredients in these three grocery items (and nine others) go to work to remove spots, stains, smells, and indescribable yuck. These everyday household "miracles" can replace a whole closet full of expensive (and chemical) cleaning products. Prepare to be amazed!

**BAKING SODA** goes great in both cakes and cars! A paste made with 3 tablespoons baking powder and 1 tablespoon water will clean off the corrosion build up on car batteries. Sprinkled on a damp sponge it will also make tail lights, mirrors, license plates, windshields, and wiper blades shine like new.

**CATSUP** is wonderful on hamburgers and it also removes yucky stains from copper-bottomed pots and pans. Apply a liberal amount to stains, wait 30 minutes, then wipe off. Voila! No more yuck!

**CLUB SODA** – Use it to get out most food stains. Place a towel under the stain, pour club soda over it, and rub gently. Repeat the process until the stain disappears.

**CORNMEAL** gets rid of the wet spot Fido or Kit Cat makes on the carpet. Sprinkle with plenty of cornmeal, let dry one to two hours, and vacuum up. Use white vinegar mixed with water to help deodorize the spot if needed. The vinegar will also help deter the pesky pet (whose dainty little nose will pucker) from doing it again – at least not in the same spot!

**CORNSTARCH** not only thickens your gravy, but gets out grease spots on your shirt. First, put a paper towel under the spot, then sprinkle on cornstarch. Let sit for 5 minutes, brush off. Repeat this process until most of the grease is gone. Launder as usual.

**LEMONS** do a variety of jobs.

- 1 They serve as a terrific kitchen freshener. All you do is cut a lemon in half, put both halves in a quart of water, and gently boil for half an hour letting the fragrance take over the room.

- 2 Half of a lemon dipped in salt and rubbed over copper will clean it. Wash copper in soapy water and rinse after applying salted lemon. Buff with a soft cloth.
- 3 Do you want to freshen a bunch of dirty sponges? Soak them in lemon juice for 10 minutes and then rinse out.
- 4 To remove stains from enamel and aluminum pans, fill with water. Drop in a lemon (cut into quarters) then boil until the stain disappears.

**MILK** – Not only does it provide calcium needed for strong bones, it also removes ink stains you get on your clothes. Here's what to do: as soon as you notice an ink stain, blot as much off as you can with a paper towel. Then soak the stain in milk for 30 minutes. Launder as usual.

**RHUBARB** – It makes a great pie and removes rust stains from clothes. Cut 5 average-size stalks into half-inch pieces. Boil in a half cup of water. Strain out the rhubarb and keep the liquid. Then pour the liquid onto the stain. Rub. Launder as usual. One more "miracle" – pieces of rhubarb will get the stains out of an aluminum pan. Fill the pan with water. Add 1 cup of chopped rhubarb and boil until the stain disappears.

**TABLE SALT** gets rid of most fruit and berry stains. Sponge the stain with cold water as soon as possible. Then pour salt directly on the stain and soak it in milk for 10 minutes. Launder as usual.

**VINEGAR** may make you pucker, but it's great for cleaning glasses without leaving streaks. Mix 1 cup of white vinegar in 1 gallon of water. Vinegar also cleans windows and mirrors. Apply vinegar with newspaper, which is lint free.

#### **MAKE YOUR OWN WINDEX**

1 gallon water  
1 ½ tablespoon ammonia  
1 teaspoon dish soap  
1 pint rubbing alcohol  
blue coloring

**WORCESTERSHIRE** can sauce your steak, of course. But did you know it can also polish your brass? Simply pour sauce on a damp cloth and rub unlacquered brass\* until clean. Then rinse and dry.

*\*Note: Some metals-like brass and copper-have a lacquered finish on them so they will stay shiny. These cleaning hints will only work on metals that haven't got this special finish.*