

13 Ways to Use Baking Soda Around the House

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Use baking soda to absorb odors, soothe sunburns, clean hair, put out grease fires and more.

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Commonly kept in the refrigerator to absorb unpleasant odors, baking soda is a staple in almost every home—and one with a bevy of uses. A weak alkaline, baking soda can neutralize acids, break down proteins and restore pH balance, which can be useful in everything from cleaning and deodorizing to soothing skin ailments. Put baking soda to good use with these practical ideas.

- 1. Odor Absorber:** One of baking soda's best-known properties is its ability to neutralize odors. Sprinkle some at the bottom of trashcan liners. For carpet odors, sprinkle baking soda over carpet and let sit for 30 minutes to overnight, then vacuum.
- 2. Food De-Gunker:** Easily remove caked-on food from pots and pans by soaking them in baking soda. Just sprinkle a liberal amount on tough spots, add water, let soak for 30 minutes to an hour, then scrub off. For extra power, add a few drops of white vinegar to the mix.
- 3. Laundry Booster:** Add ½ cup baking soda to the wash cycle to enhance the effectiveness of detergent, absorb odors and help remove stains from clothing.
- 4. Silverware Sparkler:** To clean silverware en masse, line a large glass baking pan with foil, then add silverware, making sure each piece touches foil. (Combined, heat, baking soda and aluminum create a chemical reaction that reverses the process that leads to silver tarnish.) Evenly distribute ½ cup baking soda over

silverware, then completely immerse in boiling water. Let soak for five minutes, rinse (carefully—the water may still be hot!) and dry. You can also create a polishing paste by combining 1 cup baking soda with ¼ cup water; rub the paste over silverware using a damp cloth, then dry.

5. Natural Dentifrice: Make a tooth-cleaning powder by mixing three parts baking soda with one part salt. For flavor, add cinnamon sticks, cloves, citrus peels, a vanilla bean or dried mint leaves. Store in a lidded glass jar for a day or two to allow the aroma to permeate the mix, then transfer to a shaker for sprinkling on your toothbrush.

6. Dental Appliance Cleaner: Dissolve 2 teaspoons baking soda in warm water, then let dentures, retainers, mouth guards and other oral appliances soak. Or dip a toothbrush in baking soda and scrub.

7. Shampoo Booster: Shampoos, conditioners and other hair products can leave behind buildup. Mixing a teaspoon of baking soda into your shampoo bottle can help reduce buildup and make your hair more manageable. To learn more about shampoo alternatives, read the article [Lather, Rinse, Do Not Repeat](#).

8. Comb Cleaner: Remove natural oil buildup from hairbrushes and combs by soaking them in a solution of 1 teaspoon baking soda combined with water.

9. Sting Soother: Bee sting? Because of its alkaline properties, baking soda can help neutralize formic acid in bee stings. Mix baking soda with a little water to create a paste; apply to the sting.

10. Sunburn Reliever: Soothe sunburned skin with a baking soda bath. Baking soda can cool the skin while helping it retain moisture. Add 1 cup baking soda to a tub of cool or tepid water; stir to dissolve clumps, then soak for 15 minutes or more.

11. Antacid Alternative: Thanks to its alkaline properties, baking soda can neutralize acid reflux. Treat heartburn and indigestion by mixing 1 teaspoon baking soda into a glass of water. This simple remedy also works well for ulcer pain.

12. Flower Freshener: Keep cut flowers alive longer by adding a teaspoon of baking soda to the vase water.

13. Fire Control: Keep baking soda close to the stove in case of grease fires. Water encourages grease fires to spread. Instead, smother it with baking soda. Heated baking soda releases carbon dioxide, eating the oxygen fires need for fuel.