

Zero Waste Recipes

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Body Salve

A homemade salve is the only product I use to moisturize my skin. The salve is made quickly with two ingredients, olive oil and beeswax. I buy the olive oil in bulk and the beeswax package-free from a local beekeeper. Although not necessary, it's lovely to infuse olive oil with herbs, flowers and plants. Look online or in medicinal herbal books for instructions on how to make an herbal infused oil.

1 c olive oil, infused if you prefer
1 oz beeswax

Heat oil and wax in a glass or metal container set over simmering water. When wax is melted, gently stir and pour into jars. Let cool on the counter. Store extra jars in a cool place. Adjust olive oil or wax to get the consistency you like. I usually use a smidge over a cup of oil to 1 oz of wax for the perfect consistency.

Simple Tooth Powder

A simple tooth powder can be made from two ingredients in your pantry, sea salt and baking soda. If you're easing someone into the change from toothpaste to powder, xylitol can be added for sweetness and additional medicinal properties. Please check with your dentist to make sure this is a good choice for you and your family.

1 Tbsp baking soda
1 tsp fine sea salt
2 tsp xylitol, *optional*

Put ingredients in a jar and shake to combine. Recipe can be scaled up to meet your needs. Spoon tooth powder onto wet toothbrush and brush as you normally do.

Natural Household Cleaners

I clean my house with three ingredients: baking soda, white distilled vinegar and castile soap. I don't generally follow recipes, but below are some guidelines.

All-purpose Spray

This recipe is safe on natural stone and concrete surfaces. I learned the hard way that vinegar will damage stone surfaces.

1 teaspoon castile soap
water, to fill

In an empty spray bottle add castile soap and fill with water. Recap spray bottle and gently shake.

Glass/Mirror and Disinfectant Cleaner

This solution works on glass, mirrors and non-stone surfaces, such as toilet seats and lids.

1 part white vinegar
1 part water
1 drop castile soap

In a spray bottle fill half full with vinegar, top with water and add a drop of castile soap. Recap spray bottle and gently shake.

Scouring Powder

I use a thrifted glass parmesan shaker to dispense baking soda.

Baking soda
Castile soap, *optional*

Baking soda works well on its own as a scouring powder. For additional cleaning powder, sprinkle your tub or sink with baking soda and scrub with a wet sponge which you've added a drop or two of castile soap.

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

Baking soda
White distilled vinegar

Sprinkle toilet bowl with about a quarter cup of baking soda. Pour in a glug of vinegar. Scrub and allow to sit for five minutes or more. Take one more pass at scrubbing and flush.

Floors

Water
White distilled vinegar, *eliminate if using on natural stone or concrete floors*
Castile soap

Add water to your mop bucket to the normal level, add in a glug of vinegar and a drop or two of castile soap. Swish ingredients and mop as you normally do.

Wood Butter

Fractionated coconut oil is safe to use on cutting boards and butcher blocks, as it does not go rancid. However, if you or someone in your family has a coconut allergy this may not be the recipe for you.

1 cup fractionated coconut oil
1 oz beeswax

Heat oil and wax in a glass or metal container set over simmering water. When wax is melted, gently stir and pour into a jar. Let cool on the counter. Store in a cool place. To condition wood, rub a thin layer into the wood. If necessary, buff with a clean, soft cloth.

Junk Mail

This is obviously not a recipe, but it's a question I get often. How do I stop junk mail? I have a multi-tier approach to removing myself from mailing lists.

1. I often call the company directly. I try to deal with junk mail as soon as it arrives in the mailbox so that it doesn't pile up.
2. [Catalog Choice](#) is a free service that does a great job of removing your name from many catalogs.
3. [DMAChoice.org](#). This service costs around \$2.
4. [OptOutPrescreen.com](#) allows you to opt out of credit card and insurance offers. You do have to provide your SSN, but it's a safe and legitimate service.
5. When I order online, if the company has a comment box I request not to be added to their mailing list. If they don't have a comment box I call immediately to request to opt-out.
6. Sometimes it takes many attempts to get my name off mailing lists, but I keep "harassing" companies until they follow through