

# Good Housekeeping Reports:

## How green cleaners stack up in tough tests

You care about the environment, but you also want clean laundry, shiny dishes and a spotless kitchen.

That's why the Good Housekeeping Research Institute's home appliances and cleaning products department put 23 green cleaners -- nine laundry detergents, seven hand dishwashing liquids and seven all-purpose cleaners -- through rigorous tests.

Six were winners, and all six get their cleaning power from plant-based ingredients.

Here's how Good Housekeeping tested the cleaners:

*Laundry detergents* -- Fifteen common stains (including coffee, ink and blood) were applied to swatches of cotton and polyester, let set for 24 hours, then washed (cotton on hot-wash, polyester on cold-wash). Swatches were compared with the industry standard for stain removal.

*Dishwashing liquids* -- A spinach-based "standard soil" mix was applied to dinner and salad plates and left for one hour. With a measured amount of soap whisked into a basin filled with 6 quarts of hot water, plates were washed one at a time. Soaps were evaluated on the number of plates washed and how long suds lasted.

*All-purpose cleaners* -- Testers evenly spread a mixture of grease and dust on appliance enamel, a painted wall and laminate surfaces and allowed it to dry. A measured amount of each cleaner was spritzed from 6 to 8 inches away and wiped a specific number of times. Winners had to meet or beat our soil-removal and grease-cutting requirements.

### Serious stain busters

For overall laundry spot removal, the new green detergent Arm & Hammer Essentials 2X Concentrate (\$3.49 for 50 ounces) came out on top. It was particularly effective at washing in cold water, with top scores for removing ink, mascara, wine, gravy and grape-juice stains.

Purex Natural Elements (\$7 for 100 ounces) worked almost as well -- and at about half the cost per load of the Arm & Hammer product.

## Dish-detergent dynamo

Of the seven soaps tested, the Institute's experts found one standout: Planet Ultra Dishwashing Liquid (\$3.09 for 25 ounces). It zapped dried-on grease and food particles, and cleaned the most plates per use.

## All-star and all-purpose

Of the ready-to-use, all-purpose products tested, Sun & Earth All Purpose Spray Cleaner (\$3.79 for 22 ounces) cut through the greasy mess best, especially on countertops. Green Works Natural All-Purpose Cleaner from Clorox (\$3.32 for 32 ounces) was a very close second, at an even better price per use.

## Green tips

While there are no specific criteria that qualify a product as green, most that make the claim are biodegradable as well as phosphate- and chlorine-free. Usually they derive their ingredients from plants like coconut or palm (renewable sources) rather than petrochemicals like crude oil or natural gas (which are not renewable).

But even if a product seems green, read the label -- and keep it away from kids and pets.

Other green steps to take:

- Try washable, reusable microfiber cloths in lieu of paper towels.
- Spritz spray cleaner on cloth, not on surfaces. You'll use less.
- Use the cold setting on your washer when possible.

**SUPERSTRENGTH**

Simple Green All-Purpose Cleaner (\$5 for 32 ounces), which has scored high in several GHRI tests, can handle heavier jobs than most all-purpose cleaners (like scouring barbecue grills and concrete floors). The secret: It's concentrated, so you dilute as needed.



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