Presoaking:
Soak heavily soiled items in warm water with 1/2 cup of washing soda for 30 minutes, or rub soiled areas with a mild liquid soap.

Spray starch for regular fabrics:
Mix 2 tablespoons cornstarch and a pint of cold water in a spray bottle. Shake well.

Spray starch for delicate fabrics:
Mix a package of unflavored gelatin with 2 cups of hot water in a spray bottle. Test solution on corner of fabric before using. If fabric becomes sticky when dry, add more water.

Floor Polishes/Wax
Vinyl Floors:
Combine 1/4 cup TSP (trisodium phosphate), 1/4 cup borax or 1/2 cup white vinegar with a gallon of warm water.

Wood Floors:
Use damp mop with a mild vegetable oil soap, dry immediately.

Painted or Finished Wood Floors:
Combine a teaspoon of washing soda and a gallon of hot water, dry floor immediately.

Wood Floors (sealed with polyurethane):
Clean with 1/4 cup white vinegar and a gallon of water; dry immediately.

Furniture Polish
Finished Wood:
Use a mild vegetable oil soap, or mix 1 teaspoon lemon juice in 1 pint mineral or vegetable oil and wipe furniture.

Painted Wood:
Mix 1 tsp. of washing soda in a gallon of hot water.

Unfinished Wood:
Polish with mineral oil.

Metal Polishes
Brass and Copper:
Mix 1/3 cup flour, 1/3 cup vinegar in small bowl. Add 1/4 cup salt and mix well. Spoon onto tarnished item and let sit for at least 1 hr. Rinse and wipe clean. Polish with small amount of olive oil.

Silver:
Rub with toothpaste or baking soda and a soft cloth; rinse. Polish dry with clean cloth.

Chrome:
Wipe with apple cider vinegar and rinse with water, then dry. Shine chrome fixtures with baby oil and soft cloth, a piece of aluminum foil (shiny side out), or newspapers.

Insect Bites
Bee Stings:
Apply a thick paste of baking soda and water or rub with an onion cut in half to stop pain and swelling.

Chiggers:
Rub area with a moist aspirin tablet.

General insect bites:
To relieve itching, rub area with apple cider vinegar or baking soda paste.

Mosquitoes:
Soak bites in salt water, then apply cold cream or apply a paste of salt mixed into lard or cold cream.

Keep Nebraska Beautiful
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Household Hazardous Waste
Household hazardous waste (HHW) is products found around the home that are considered:
❖ flammable  ❖ toxic  ❖ corrosive  ❖ reactive

Less Toxic Alternatives

Air Freshener/Deodorizer
Carpets:
Deodorize dry carpet by sprinkling liberally with baking soda. Wait at least 15 minutes & vacuum. Repeat if necessary.
Garbage cans:
Sprinkle baking soda in bottom of can.
Garbage disposal:
Grind used lemons or peels in the disposal or pour baking soda into the drain.
Litter box:
Sprinkle baking soda on the bottom of the litter pan before adding litter.
Other:
❖ Leave open boxes of baking soda in refrigerator, freezer, closets, and bathrooms.
❖ Saturate a cotton ball with vanilla and place in an open container in a room or in an automobile.
❖ Set out an open container of white vinegar to destroy odors.
❖ Simmer cinnamon and cloves or potpourri.
❖ Burn scented candles. Never leave unattended.
❖ Fill your favorite vase with fresh-cut flowers.

Cleaners
Plant Sprays:
Wipe leaves with mild soap and water; rinse.
Dishes:
By hand  Use 1/2 cup of baking soda with a mild dishwashing liquid to help cut grease and food. Automatic dishwashers  Choose a detergent with the lowest phosphate content listed on the package.
Disinfectant:
Use 1/2 cup borax to each gallon of water. To inhibit mold and mildew, do not rinse solution.
General Cleaner:
Dissolve 4 T baking soda in 1 quart water.
Grout:
Combine 3 cups baking soda and 1 cup warm water; scrub into grout. Rinse well.
Kitchen Degreaser:
Use a non-chlorinated powder with a nylon scouring pad or fine steel wool.
Scouring Powder:
Use baking soda or salt, or a non-chlorinated commercial scouring powder.
Surface Cleaner:
Mix vinegar with salt and water.
Glass Cleaner:
Mix 1 T vinegar or lemon juice in 1 pint water.
Mildew Cleaners:
Mix 1/2 cup vinegar, 1/2 cup borax in warm water. Apply with sponge or spray bottle.

Laundry Products
To whiten clothes:
Use a washing soda or up to 1/2 cup non-chlorine bleach.
To remove spots and brighten colors:
Use 1/2 cup of borax in each load.
To freshen and soften clothes:
Add a cup of vinegar or 1/4 cup of baking soda during final rinse.
Detergents:
Use a synthetic detergent without adding fabric softeners or bleach or use products which include washing soda. Washing soda brightens fabrics and costs less than bleach.

To reduce static cling:
Dampen hands when folding clothes.

Oven Cleaners:
Do not use cleaners with self-cleaning ovens. Use an oven cleaner that does not contain lye or scrub spots with a baking soda, salt and water paste.
Moth Balls:
Use cedar chips, lavender flowers, rosemary, mint, or white peppercorns.
Toilet Bowl Cleaner:
Scrub with a solution of 1/2 cup borax in a gallon of water for cleaning and disinfecting.

Drain Openers
To unclog a drain:
Pour 1/2 cup of baking soda down the drain, then 1/2 cup of white vinegar. Let sit for a few minutes, then pour a pan of boiling water down the drain to flush.
To help prevent drains from getting blocked:
Once a week, pour 1/4 cup of salt down the drain, followed by boiling water.

Toilets:
Toilet Bowl Cleaner:
Scrub with a solution of 1/2 cup borax in a gallon of water for cleaning and disinfecting.

Carpets, Rug & Upholstery
❖ Use a non-aerosol, soap-based cleaner.
❖ Clean spills immediately with club soda.
❖ Mix a quart of water, a teaspoon of mild liquid soap, a teaspoon of borax and a squeeze of lemon juice or splash of vinegar; apply with a damp cloth or sponge and rub gently; wipe with a clean cloth and allow to dry.
❖ To clean a red wine spill, rub a thick layer of salt on the spill. Sponge up after spill has been absorbed.