

Bright Ideas

From cooking to cleaning, vinegar is one versatile liquid. Here are a few tips to get the most out of your vinegar.

Window Cleaner:

1 cup of White Vinegar
1 cup of Water
Newspaper
Spray Bottle

Mix the white vinegar and water together in the spray bottle. Spray your windows and use the newspaper to dry your windows to a sparkling clean.

Stain Remover:

White Vinegar
White ammonia
Water
2 Spray Bottles
Clean White Cloth

Fill your spray bottle with one part white vinegar and seven parts water. Fill your second spray bottle with one part white, non sudsy ammonia and seven parts water. Wet the stain with the vinegar solution and let it sit for a few minutes. Blot thoroughly with a clean white cloth. Repeat the process with the ammonia solution. Continue the process until the stain is gone.

Tip: Using distilled vinegar in a steam vac to rinse your carpets after shampooing them will remove the detergent residue to keep the carpet fresher longer. Use a 1/4 cup of vinegar for every one gallon of water.

Microwave:

1 Tbls. of Vinegar
1 cup of Water
1 to 2 drops of Dish Soap
Microwave Safe Bowl
Sponge

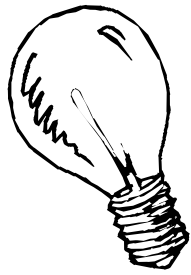
Add the dish soap, vinegar and water to the bowl and put it in the microwave on high for 3 - 4 minutes. Let it stand for 15 minutes and then wipe clean with a damp sponge. The vinegar and the steam loosens the build up in the microwave.

Furniture Polish:

White Vinegar
Vegetable Oil
Soft Cloth

Use equal parts of the white vinegar and vegetable oil. Wipe it on the furniture and use the soft cloth to buff your furniture.





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Home Energy Saving Tips

Lights:

Be sure to buy ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs. They will save you about \$30 or more in electricity costs over each bulb's lifetime. Producing about 75% less heat, they are safer to operate and can cut home cooling costs.

Controls such as timers and photo cells save electricity by turning lights off when not in use. Dimmers save electricity when used to lower light levels. Be sure to select products that are compatible with CFL bulbs; not all products work with CFLs.

Take advantage of daylight by using light-colored, loose-weave curtains on your windows to allow daylight to penetrate the room while preserving privacy. Also, decorate with lighter colors that reflect daylight.

Appliances:

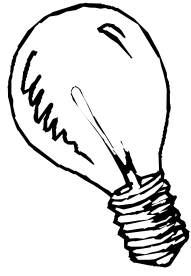
Consider purchasing ENERGY STAR qualified fixtures. They are available in many styles including table, desk and floor lamps — and hard-wired options for front porches, dining rooms, bathroom vanity fixtures, and more.

When you're shopping for appliances, think of two price tags. The first one covers the purchase price—think of it as a down payment. The second price tag is the cost of operating the

appliance during its lifetime. You'll be paying on that second price tag every month with your utility bill for the next 10 to 20 years, depending on the appliance. Refrigerators last an average of 14 years; clothes washers about 11 years; dishwashers about 10 years; and room air conditioners last 9 years.

To help you figure out whether an appliance is energy efficient, the federal government requires most appliances to display the bright yellow and black EnergyGuide label. Although these labels will not tell you which appliance is the most efficient, they will tell you the annual energy consumption and operating cost for each appliance so you can compare them yourself. The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy provides information to consider when deciding on new appliances.





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Home Safety Tips

Most accidents occur at home and many of them are preventable, so it is important that your home is as safe as possible. Here are some helpful tips from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission on making your home a safer place for everyone.

Bathroom

Wet soapy tile or porcelain surfaces are especially slippery and may contribute to falls. Apply textured strips or appliques on the floors of tubs and showers. Use non-skid mats in the tub and shower, and on the bathroom floor.

Grab bars can help you get into and out of your tub or shower, and can help prevent falls.

Grandparents should use child-resistant vials if they are able to. Although grandparents may get traditional easy-to-open closures by asking their pharmacist for them, the child-resistant vials should be used whenever children are around.

Store all medicines separately from household products, and store all household chemical products away from food. Keep items in their original containers. Leave the original labels on all products, and read the label before using. Always leave the light on when giving or taking medicines. Clean out the medicine cabinet periodically, and safely dispose of unneeded medicines when the illness for which they were prescribed is over. Pour contents down drain or toilet, and rinse container before discarding.

Bedroom

Lamps or switches located close to each bed will enable people getting up at night to see where they are going. Rearrange furniture closer to switches or move lamps closer to beds. Install night lights.

In case of an emergency, it is important to be able to reach the telephone without getting out of bed.

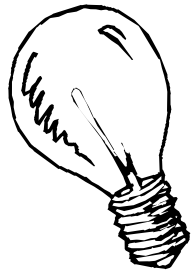
Do not smoke in bed. Smoking in bed is a major cause of accidental fire deaths in homes.

Kitchen

Never place or store pot holders, plastic utensils, towels and other non-cooking equipment on or near the range because these items can be ignited.

Roll up or fasten long loose sleeves with pins or elastic bands while cooking. Do not reach across a range while cooking. Long loose sleeves are more likely to catch on fire than are short sleeves. Long loose sleeves are also more apt to catch on pot handles, overturning pots and pans and cause scalds.

Keep constant vigilance on any cooking that is required above the "keep warm" setting. Know where the "danger" items are -- medicines, toxic bleaches, oven and drain cleaners, paint solvents, polishes, and waxes. Look for items packaged in child-resistant containers. Don't leave them under a sink or in plain view in a garage. Lock them away in a secure place, out of a child's sight and reach.



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10 Tips to Beat the Summer Heat

1. Schedule physically strenuous activities for cooler times. And yes, that includes walking around the theme parks. Walking around in the heat and humidity can make ALL parts of your body sweat, and that includes your poor feet. When feet are wet, blisters can develop, so try to wear socks that are not 100 percent cotton. If you feel a hot spot developing, find a place in the shade to sit down. Take off your shoe and sock and inspect your feet. Put a bandage on the tender area, and let your feet dry. Dry feet are happy feet!

2. Dress in light, loose, cotton clothing. Natural fabrics like cotton are much cooler than most synthetics (though there are new high-tech synthetics made specifically to keep you cool). Protective hats (Wide-brimmed) keep the sun out of your eyes and provide some cooling shade. Loose fitting clothes allow air to circulate, keeping you cooler. The fewer clothes, the better, but make sure to be appropriate to the circumstances

3. Use sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher (the most effective products say "broad spectrum" or "UVA/UVB protection" on their labels). You can get painful sunburn even on a cloudy day, so slather on the sunscreen every morning before you start out. Don't forget lips, ears, back of neck.

4. When working outside, take periodic rest breaks in a cool area. So relax, slow down, pace yourself.

5. Drink, drink, drink - WATER and Non-Alcoholic drinks!! DON'T wait until you feel thirsty -STAY HYDRATED. In hot weather, as much as 3-4 quarts per day are recommended while exercising. Avoid opening the refrigerator or freezer. Food should be safe as long as the outage lasts NO MORE than 4-6 hours. Avoid alcohol and caffeine, which are diuretics -- substances that increase water loss via the urine. Sport drinks, such as Gatorade, are high in sodium and are only needed if you exercise (or work) hard and long. Water-filled fruits and vegetables add to your hydration level, but not in significant amounts.

6. Never leave children or pets inside a car, even if the windows are open.

7. If you are taking medication, ask your doctor about its side-effects. Be extra cautious in the sun/heat if you have diabetes, high blood pressure, or other medical conditions. Also be extra careful if you are taking any medications. For instance, certain medications (like some antibiotics, NSAIDS [such as ibuprofen and aspirin], and some oral contraceptives), may make you sunburn more easily, so be sure to protect yourself and stay out of the sun as much as possible.

8. Keep cool with fans, air conditioning, and cool baths or showers. Make your own air conditioner by placing a bowl of ice in front of a fan and letting it blow on you. Window fans work best when blowing air out, so put your fan on the sunny side of the apartment and let it expel the hot air while pulling cool air from open windows on the shady side. Keep shades or curtains pulled on the sunny side of the house.

9. Get plenty of sleep and eat light, nutritious, and non-fatty meals. Eat foods high in water content, like fruits & vegetables. Don't use your oven, use the microwave or a toaster oven. Better yet, eat out.

10. Be aware that when active in a hot, dry climate -- for example when playing tennis -- both salt and water are lost in sweat. Under such conditions restriction of dietary salt by healthy individuals may be unwise. However, salt tablets are rarely necessary.

