



Top Toxins to Avoid in Cleaning Products:

These chemicals are common ingredients found in conventional cleaning products that are proven to be hazardous to human health and the environment. These dangerous chemicals are not properly regulated – it's up to you to know which cleaning ingredients to avoid!

phthalates

- found in: fragranced household products such as air fresheners, dish soap, laundry detergent, surface cleaners, toilet paper; listed as just “fragrance” or “parfum”
- health risks: endocrine disruptor, carcinogen
- to avoid: choose fragrance-free products or all-natural scents like essential oils

ethanolamines (mono-, di-, tri-)

- found in: surface cleaners, detergents
- health risks: asthmagen, skin/eye/respiratory irritant, nervous system toxin
- to avoid: look for all-natural cleaners or make your own with natural ingredients

quaternary ammonium compounds (quats)

- found in: fabric softener, cleaners labeled “antibacterial”
- health risks: asthmagen, corrosive to skin and eyes, respiratory irritant, possible reproductive toxin, environmental toxin
- to avoid: try vinegar instead of commercial fabric softeners, and seek natural antibacterial disinfectants like tea tree oil

sodium hydroxide (bleach)

- found in: many surface cleaners, laundry detergent, oven cleaner, drain opener, air freshener, stain remover
- health risks: extremely corrosive to skin and eyes, respiratory irritant, asthmagen
- to avoid: choose products without bleach, or with healthier oxygen bleach; try cleaning ovens and drains with baking soda and elbow grease

ammonium hydroxide (ammonia)

- found in: glass cleaner, disinfectant spray, floor cleaner, bathroom cleaner

- health risks: corrosive to skin and eyes, asthmagen, respiratory irritant, can be toxic to inhale, environmental toxin
- to avoid: try natural glass cleaners like vinegar, vodka, castile soap, or even cornstarch

2-butoxyethanol

- found in: window cleaner, kitchen cleaner, multi-purpose cleaner
- health risks: liver toxin, skin/eye/respiratory irritant, central nervous system depressant, can be contaminated with toxic or carcinogenic impurities
- to avoid: stick to natural ingredients like vinegar, baking soda, and essential oils

formaldehyde

- found in: dish liquid, laundry detergent, air freshener, artificial fragrance, some preservatives
- health risks: carcinogen, toxin, asthmagen, corrodes skin and eyes, respiratory irritant
- to avoid: seek out all-natural detergents and fragrances

triclosan

- found in: dish soap, hand soap, products labeled “antibacterial”
- health risks: endocrine disruptor, skin/eye irritant, very toxic to aquatic life, promotes increased bacterial resistance
- to avoid: use natural antibacterial substances like tea tree oil instead

1,4-dioxane

- found in: many cleaners and detergents; trace contaminant formed by other cleaning chemicals
- health risks: carcinogen, skin/eye/respiratory irritant, liver toxin
- to avoid: choose products that do not contain ingredients distinguished by “PEG,” “-eth,” “polyethylene glycol,” “polyoxyethylene,” or “oxynol”

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