

Cleaner Cleaners

It might not make much sense, but many household cleaners actually cause pollution. So the scouts can try out some milder ways of cleaning.

Section: All
Time: 30 minutes
Where: Home, Den



PLAN

Discuss with scouts the ways in which pollution from their homes reach rivers, lakes and the sea. Get them to find out what is in detergents like washing up liquid, laundry detergent and toilet cleaners. Watch for symbols on the bottles which represent the harm that they can do. For younger scouts, you might like to just recommend some cleaners that they can make up themselves and get them to try them out, either in the den or at home. For older scouts, you can suggest the ingredients but set them the challenge of figuring out what works best in different situations. The last pointer for the scouts is the use of "elbow grease". You might need to clarify that this does not come in a bottle, but that sometimes a good scrubbing with a cloth or sponge will do the job!

DO

If are giving your scouts a few simple cleaning solutions to try out, you could ask them to:

1. Clean tea or coffee stains from a cup just giving a good scrub with a sponge, or adding a little salt or sugar onto the sponge to make it abrasive.
2. Clean windows with a spray made of equal parts water and vinegar, or water with some lemon juice added.
3. Clean sink and wash-hand-basin drains by dropping in some bread soda followed by vinegar, and watch it fizz up and clean as it goes.

Instead, if your scouts are up for the challenge, let them try to come up with the best way to clean a few items from this list:

- Tea/Coffee-stained mug
- Kitchen worktop
- Saucepans
- Toilet
- Stove top
- Sinks and wash-hand basins
- Kitchen Floor
- Windows

For each of the cleaning tasks, scouts could start by trying out individual components, then try some of them together. They could add other household ingredients as well. They might find that some need to sit on the stains for a while, while others might need that bit of elbow grease.

REVIEW

Chat with the scouts about what worked and what didn't. Be sure to bring the focus back to the importance of trying to reduce the levels of pollution coming from people's homes. Are there any household cleaners that the scouts could not replace in their own homes?



In a nutshell...

- Find out about the potential for pollution from household cleaners.
- Come up with some alternative, safer, ingredients for homemade cleaners.
- Mix up and try out these 'solutions'.



Follow-on

Scouts could use The Sea Starts Here activity to identify other sources of pollution of our lakes, rivers and seas. They could make a short video on how (and why) to make these safer cleaners and show how well they work. This could be put up on the groups social media to encourage lots of households to be aware of this issue and make the switch.



SDG 14 Life Below Water

SDG 14 aims to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution. Through this activity, scouts can actively seek to reduce potential pollution coming from their homes, and encourage others to do the same.



Find out more!

Visit - www.betterworld.ie
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 Produced by the Scouting Ireland Sustainable Scouting Team