Cleaning with Lemon and Hydrogen Peroxide

Two simple cleaners, used the right way - lemon for grease, light limescale and freshness, 3% hydrogen peroxide for stains, grout and brightening.



Use separately
Never mix them in a bottle

Peroxide: 3% only
Standard household strength

Rinse between
One cleaner, rinse, then the other

Test first
Hidden spot, every new surface

Two cleaners, two different jobs

Lemon - the acid cleaner

- Citric acid cuts grease and soap film
- Loosens light limescale on taps and kettles
- Deodorises boards, bins and fridges
- Leaves a fresh scent and a light shine on stainless steel
- Use fresh juice or a halved lemon

Hydrogen peroxide 3% - the brightener

- Bubbles as it lifts dirt and stains
- Brightens grout, white laundry and light surfaces
- Useful on non-porous bathroom and kitchen surfaces
- Sold in a brown bottle - light breaks it down, so keep it in that bottle
- Use undiluted for cleaning jobs in this guide

You will need

- [ ] 2-3 fresh lemons, plus coarse salt (optional, for boards)
- [ ] 1 bottle of hydrogen peroxide, 3% strength
- [ ] Opaque spray bottle, labelled, for peroxide only
- [ ] Small bowl and a jug of clean water for rinsing
- [ ] Soft cloths and microfibre cloths
- [ ] Old toothbrush or grout brush
- [ ] Non-scratch sponge
- [ ] Rubber gloves, and a label and pen

Safety first - read before you start

- **NEVER mix hydrogen peroxide with vinegar** - the mix makes peracetic acid, which harms eyes, skin and lungs.
- **NEVER mix hydrogen peroxide with bleach or ammonia.**
- **Do not mix lemon and peroxide together** in a bottle or a sealed container. Use them one at a time, with a water rinse in between.
- Keep peroxide away from eyes and skin, wear gloves, and ventilate the room. Never swallow either cleaner.

Lemon - step by step

1 Cutting boards and stained counters

- [ ] Sprinkle coarse salt over a wooden or plastic board, if using
- [ ] Rub hard with a halved lemon, squeezing as you go
- [ ] Leave for 5 minutes, then rinse well and dry upright

2 Microwave steam clean

- [ ] Put 1 cup of water and the juice and halves of 1 lemon in a microwave-safe bowl
- [ ] Heat for 3-5 minutes until steaming, then wait 2 minutes with the door closed
- [ ] Remove the bowl carefully - it will be hot - and wipe the inside with a cloth
- [ ] Rinse the cloth and wipe again, then dry

3 Taps, sinks and light limescale

- [ ] Rub a halved lemon over taps, stainless steel sinks and shower fittings
- [ ] Leave for 5-10 minutes on light limescale, then scrub gently
- [ ] Rinse thoroughly with clean water and buff dry to prevent spots
- [ ] Never use lemon on marble, granite or natural stone - see page 3

4 Fridge and bin freshness

- [ ] Wipe fridge shelves with lemon juice on a cloth, then wipe with a damp water cloth
- [ ] Leave a halved lemon in an open dish in the fridge for 1-2 days only, then discard it
- [ ] Wipe bin lids with a lemon half, rinse, and dry before replacing the bag

Hydrogen peroxide 3% - step by step

1 Grout brightening

- [ ] Pour 3% peroxide into a labelled opaque spray bottle - peroxide only, nothing added
- [ ] Spray the grout until damp, and leave for 10-15 minutes
- [ ] Scrub with an old toothbrush, then rinse well with clean water and dry
- [ ] Test coloured grout in a hidden spot first - peroxide can lighten colour

2 Bathroom and kitchen surfaces

- [ ] Spray undiluted 3% peroxide on non-porous surfaces - sinks, tubs, tiles, toilet seats
- [ ] Leave for 10 minutes, then wipe with a clean cloth
- [ ] Rinse food-contact surfaces, such as counters and boards, well with clean water
- [ ] Dry with a clean cloth

3 White laundry only

- [ ] Add 1/2 cup of 3% peroxide to the bleach dispenser, or to the drum with white loads only
- [ ] For a single stain on white cotton, dab peroxide on, leave for 10 minutes, then wash as usual
- [ ] Never use on coloured clothes, silk, wool or dry-clean-only items - peroxide bleaches

4 Bins, sponges and toothbrush holders

- [ ] Spray the empty bin or holder, leave for 10 minutes, rinse and dry fully
- [ ] Soak a sponge in 3% peroxide for 10 minutes, then rinse it very well before use

Using both on one job - the safe order

Use ONE cleaner -> RINSE well with clean water -> WIPE dry -> then use the OTHER

Example - a stained, greasy sink: clean with lemon first, rinse every trace away with clean water and dry, then use peroxide for the stain if you still need it. Never spray one straight over the other, and never store a mixture of the two.

Quick reference - which one, when

Job	Use	How
Greasy stovetop and counters	Lemon	Rub or wipe on, leave 5 minutes, rinse and dry
Light limescale on taps	Lemon	Rub with a half lemon, leave 5-10 minutes, rinse, buff dry
Cutting board odours	Lemon	Salt plus halved lemon, 5 minutes, rinse well
Microwave splashes	Lemon	Steam with lemon water 3-5 minutes, wipe clean
Dull or stained grout	Peroxide 3%	Spray, leave 10-15 minutes, scrub, rinse
Sinks, tubs and toilet seats	Peroxide 3%	Spray, leave 10 minutes, wipe and rinse
White laundry stains	Peroxide 3%	1/2 cup in the dispenser, whites only
Bins and sponges	Either - separately	One cleaner, 10 minutes, rinse very well, dry

Where NOT to use them

Never use lemon on

- Marble, granite and other natural stone - acid etches it
- Hardwood and waxed wood - acid dulls the finish
- Brass, copper and gold-plated fittings - it can tarnish them
- Coloured or delicate fabrics - it can lighten them
- Cast iron - acid strips the seasoning

Never use peroxide on

- Coloured clothes, silk, wool and leather - it bleaches
- Dark or coloured grout without a hidden-spot test
- Wood finishes and painted surfaces - test first, it can lift colour
- Aluminium, brass and copper left soaking - it can discolour metal
- Skin, eyes, wounds or pets - this guide is for surfaces only

Safety and storage checklist

- [ ] Use only 3% hydrogen peroxide for household cleaning - never stronger strengths
- [ ] Keep peroxide in its original brown bottle, in a cool, dark cupboard
- [ ] Label any spray bottle clearly: what it holds, and the date you filled it
- [ ] Never add anything to the peroxide bottle - no vinegar, no bleach, no lemon, no soap
- [ ] Never mix peroxide with vinegar, bleach or ammonia, in a bottle, bucket or drain
- [ ] Wear gloves, ventilate the room, and keep both cleaners away from children and pets
- [ ] Rinse food-contact surfaces with clean water after cleaning, every time
- [ ] Test on a small hidden spot first, and stop if a surface changes colour or dulls
- [ ] If peroxide gets in eyes, rinse with clean water for several minutes and seek advice if stinging continues
- [ ] Use fresh lemon juice within the day, and discard leftover cut lemons after the clean

Weekly freshen-up

- [ ] Monday - Lemon steam clean for the microwave
- [ ] Wednesday - Lemon rub for taps and the kitchen sink, rinsed and dried
- [ ] Friday - Peroxide spray for bathroom grout and the toilet seat, rinsed
- [ ] Sunday - Peroxide in one white laundry load, whites only

Notes

Tip: Lemon and peroxide are helpers, not disinfectant guarantees for every situation. For illness, raw meat contamination or large areas of mould, use a product labelled for that job and follow its instructions.