

## Homemade Veggie Wash



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Have you tried a homemade veggie wash before? Or perhaps picked up a veggie wash in the store? If so, you're taking an important step in keeping you and your family healthy. Let's go over the pros and cons of the many ways in which you can get your fresh produce clean and unpack your best alternatives.

Common sense tells us that it's important to wash conventionally grown produce to remove pesticide residues. So, what about organic produce? Should those be washed as well? The short answer is YES! You really should wash all your produce to avoid ingesting any potential food borne pathogens in addition to any pesticide residue.

Unfortunately, many Americans die from food borne illness each and every year. But you can reduce your risk by taking a few steps before you put that bite in your mouth. Let's start with what you don't want to do.

### Don't do these

**Soak produce:** particularly don't fill your kitchen sink and soak your produce. The pesticides and germs don't flow away, not to

mention there can be pathogens in your sink from washing dirty hands, cooking meat, etc. Soaking simply doesn't remove the residues completely.

**Use soap:** because fruits and vegetables can absorb the soap. Soap doesn't taste good so you don't want it tainting the flavor of your produce. Secondly, soap, in particular dish soap can have chemicals that are harmful to your body.

**Re-wash pre-washed:** you don't need to re-wash these. They've already been washed in such a way that germs and residues are minimized. If you do you're taking a chance on introducing new germs.

## Do this instead

**Wash under running water:** because the running water dislodges residues and rinses them away. Small fruits and vegetables can be placed in a colander to rinse. Gently rubbing while rinsing increases the friction and assists with the cleaning.

**Use a veggie scrub brush:** for root vegetables, melons, citrus fruit, cucumbers and the like. Run water over these while gently scrubbing to remove any residues. While you may not eat the skin on these types of food, it's possible to transfer bacteria to the inside when you slice through them.

**Trim outer leaves:** on items like lettuce and cabbage. The majority of the residues and germs are on the outer layers.

**Dry produce well:** pat dry with a clean tea towel or paper towel to remove and last bits of germs and residue from your produce. Also, it's beneficial to layer a paper towel inside your storage containers to absorb moisture and keep your produce fresh.

More info is available at [EPA.gov](https://www.epa.gov)

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You can take an extra step to ensure your produce is clean and healthy. Store bought veggie sprays can potentially have harmful chemicals and a hefty price tag. It's super easy and cost effective to make your own from a few items you probably already have in your home.

### Ingredients:

- 1 Cup Water
- 1 Cup Distilled White Vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon Baking Soda
- Juice of 1/2 a Lemon

### Directions:

Mix all ingredients in a spray bottle. Spray on your produce and let sit for 5 minutes. Wash and rinse before eating or storing as indicated above.

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