Homemade Citrus Vinegar Cleaner

The bathroom spray our kids use. Label the bottle and keep it where little ones can't reach it.

YOU NEED

- Orange or lime peels
- White vinegar (about 5% acidity)
- A glass jar with a lid
- A spray bottle and a label

MAKE IT

1. Scrape any fruit off the peels, so nothing in the jar goes moldy.
2. Put the peels in the jar and cover them with vinegar.
3. Close the lid and leave it for **at least two weeks**. Longer gives a stronger citrus smell; ours often sits for months.
4. Take the peels out and pour the vinegar into the spray bottle. **Don't add water**: it weakens the vinegar against germs.
5. Write "Citrus vinegar cleaner" and the date on the label.

To kill germs: use it **full strength** (no water), leave the surface **wet for five minutes**, then wipe. In a lab test, that killed most common bacteria in five minutes, and a coated virus (the kind that includes flu) in about one minute. Watered down, it still cleans but doesn't disinfect. After a stomach bug, an adult should use a store-bought disinfectant on the toilet.

THREE MORE HOMEMADE BATHROOM CLEANERS

Mirror	3 tablespoons of vinegar in a quart of water, in a spray bottle.
Sink and tub	Baking soda mixed with a little water into a paste. Scrub, then rinse.
Toilet bowl	Flush first if anyone might have used bleach in it. Pour in a quarter cup of baking soda and a cup of vinegar, wait 3 to 30 minutes, scrub with the brush and flush.

SAFETY

- **Never mix vinegar with bleach**, and never use it on a surface just cleaned with bleach. The mix gives off chlorine gas.
- Mix baking soda and vinegar only in the open, never in a closed bottle: the fizz builds up pressure.
- Keep vinegar off marble, granite and other natural stone; the acid can dull it.
- Wear gloves for the toilet, open the door or run the fan, and wash hands afterward.

Sources: Zinn and Bockmühl, BMC Microbiology, 2020 (vinegar on surfaces); Poison Control, poison.org (vinegar and bleach); University of Arkansas extension service (recipes). Full post: growtide.app/blog/how-to-teach-a-kid-to-clean-the-bathroom