The Essentialist

Homemade Laundry Powder or Liquid

by Sheree Tompkins

It is so simple, easy and inexpensive to make your own laundry soap. Because it is a low-sudsing soap, it can be used in High Efficiency (HE) machines. Plus it is made with all natural ingredients you may already have, and will not harm the environment or water supply.

Equipment Needed

- Cheese grater
- Bowls
- Spoon and scraper for mixing
- Measuring cups for dry ingredients
- Food Processor or blender
- Jar, bag or bucket for storage
- Large cooking pot (to make liquid soap)

Ingredients:

- 2 ea. 4 oz Laundry "bar" soap; e.g., Fels Naptha, Kirks Cold Water Castile or Zote
- ¾ cup Baking Soda (such as Arm & Hammer brand)
- 2 ½ cups Borax (such as 20 Mule Team brand)
- 2 ½ cup Washing Soda (such as Arm & Hammer brand)

Method for Powder soap:

1) Shred laundry soap bars into bowl;
2) Mix dry ingredients into separate bowl, then mix in shredded soap.
3) Process through food processor/blender a little at a time until all has been mixed thoroughly. The shredded soap will become granular-like.
4) Store in sealed container;
5) Use 1 - 2 tablespoon(s) per load: 1 Tbsp for lightly soiled clothing; 2 Tbsp for heavily soiled clothing. Do not be tempted to use more than this as it can be harsh on fibers.

Method for Liquid soap:

If you need a milder, liquid soap, use this blended powder soap as a base to make liquid soap.

1) Use 1 cup powder mix to 6 cups boiling water in oversized pot.
2) Boil on medium temp for 15 minutes, dump into a bucket and add another 6 to 12 cups of boiling water.
3) Blend well and let cool. Mixture will turn gel-like.
4) Use ½ cup per load. Remember, the more water you add, the more you will need to use per load. Increase accordingly.

Cost

The powder soap batch makes about 6 cups (approximately 130 TBS) of powdered laundry soap.

Total batch cost = $4.50.

Cost per 1 TBS powdered soap = $0.04