

HOMEMADE LIQUID LAUNDRY SOAP

Adapted by Steve Schwartz from www.thefamilyhomestead.com

Ingredients:

- One box of Borax* (about \$2.99)
- One box of Arm & Hammer Super Washing Soda* (NOT Baking Soda—about \$2.99 at local grocery store in laundry aisle)
- Fels-Naptha Soap Bar* (about \$1.50 at local grocery store in laundry aisle)
- Optional: Essential Oil drops for fragrance (we did not add this, so we do not know the cost)

** Walmart and Target often do not have the above items, so check your local grocery store in the laundry aisle.*

Supplies:

- 5-gallon bucket with lid (around \$4 at hardware store)
- Used one-gallon milk jugs (or other containers) that have been rinsed clean
- One sauce pan, one cheese grater, one funnel, and half-cup and one cup measuring cups**
- One paint or drywall stirrer for use in a power drill

*** Some people use these items from their kitchen and wash them well. I felt more comfortable picking up one of each solely for this use. Between goodwill and dollar stores I found each rather cheap. Now I don't need to worry about chemicals getting in my food. I also don't need to wash them thoroughly; I can just rinse them when I'm done.*

Cost: For ingredients only (as supplies can be reused) the cost comes to about 1/2 penny per load. At the time I wrote this, Target had Tide Liquid on sale for \$11.99 for 100 oz. (the 64 load size) or \$.19/load.

Instructions:

1. Grate the entire bar of the Fels-Naptha soap.
2. Put grated soap in sauce pan with 4 cups of hot tap water. Stir continuously over medium-low heat until all of the soap flakes have dissolved and melted (about 10 minutes). It should be slightly foamy with no “chunks” or flakes to be found.
3. Fill the 5-gallon bucket half-full of hot tap water.
4. Pour the soap mixture in the sauce pan into the 5-gallon bucket. Add 1 cup of Arm & Hammer Washing Soda and 1/2 cup of Borax.
5. Stir the mixture. (You can use a big spoon or paint stirring stick, but a paint or drywall stirrer for your drill really speeds up and simplifies the process.)
6. Cover the 5-gallon bucket and let it sit overnight.
7. Open the 5-gallon bucket the next day. It should have gelled and thickened slightly. Stir again.
8. Use a funnel to add four cups of detergent to a gallon-size milk jug, then fill the jug to the top with tap water. (You can use other size containers, just make sure you add 3 parts water for each 1 part of your raw detergent mixture at this point.) Shake the jug, and label so it is not mistaken for drink.
9. At this point some people fill approximately 10 one-gallon jugs with the final 3:1 diluted mixture. The end result is 10 ready-to-go laundry detergent jugs and an empty 5-gallon bucket. Others fill two or three jugs, then leave the remaining mixture in the 5 gallon bucket, which takes less storage space. The first time we made the detergent, we did this latter method, but it was a bit of a hassle to refill the jugs when needed as you must stir the mixture in the 5-gallon jug before pouring it in the jugs and diluting it. So now we saved up extra jugs and we fill them all the day after making the detergent.
10. Our first batch lasted us SIX MONTHS, including giving about 8 half gallons away for others to try!

How much to use per load:

*Top loading washing machine: 5/8 cup per load (recommended)****

*Front loading washing machine: 1/4 cup per load (recommended)****

**** Please note: This soap will not make suds, but will clean clothes well. Too many suds can actually inhibit the agitation of the washer and reduce cleaning. During your first loads, test whether you can use a little less, or need a little more, detergent for your specific washer to satisfy your cleaning preference.*

Suggestion: Give a jug of detergent as a gift with these instructions to encourage others to try this recipe.