
To clean silver

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Don't want to serve a swanky dinner on lackluster silver tableware? Of course you don't. Depending on the level of staining, try one or both of these silver-cleaning methods.

1. Baking soda method

Cover the tarnished piece in baking soda. Be heavy handed. Dump that favorite green cleaner all over the piece until it's completely immersed in white fluff. Let the baking soda perform its cleansing magic for about 30 minutes. Borax will also work for this method.

After dreaming about your soon-to-be glossy silver for 30 minutes, dampen a cloth or abrasive scrubber with hot water. Buff the baking soda into the piece with the cloth, purging it of tarnish. Finally, rinse the item well in hot water. Love that shine?

2. Hot water, aluminum foil, baking soda and salt method

This method looks a bit like a mad scientist's wild experiment. Line a pot with aluminum foil and fill it with water. Then immerse your cloudy silver in the pot of water. Throw in a tablespoon each of baking soda and salt and bring the whole crazy concoction to a boil.

Get ready to be captivated by some green cleaning sorcery. During the boiling process, the tarnish will leave the silver and go to the aluminum. Take that eighth grade science. Repeat the process if your item isn't spotlessly shiny.

To clean copper

Buff your hazy copper pots and pans to a brilliant russet gleam with these polishing methods that use ingredients from your kitchen pantry.

1. Lemon and salt method

Our favorite method to clean wooden cutting boards also works on copper. Who'da thought?

Dip half a lemon in coarse salt. Then rub the mixture all over the copper piece. Squeeze out the lemon juice and reapply the salt as you go. Soon you will reveal a polished gleam beneath that tarnish.

2. Ketchup method

Dunk a cloth in straight ketchup and rub the tasty condiment all over the copper item until the metal's original burnished sheen is restored. This method works best on less tarnished items. Don't have ketchup? Use tomato paste instead.

3. Flour, salt and vinegar method

For particularly finicky tarnish, form a paste out of equal parts of flour, salt and vinegar. Rub the grainy substance all over the item using an abrasive scrubber. Soon your copper should look bright and oh-so shiny.

The separate polishing methods for silver and copper will not work on the other metal. So please don't mix n' match, as it could cause damage to your items. Happy shining!