

f (<https://www.facebook.com/RusshMaga>:
t (https://twitter.com/russh_magazine)
@
(<https://www.instagram.com/russhmagaz>
d
(<https://www.tiktok.com/@russhmagazin>

RUSSH
(<https://www.russh.com/>)

🔍 (<https://www.russh.com/search/>)

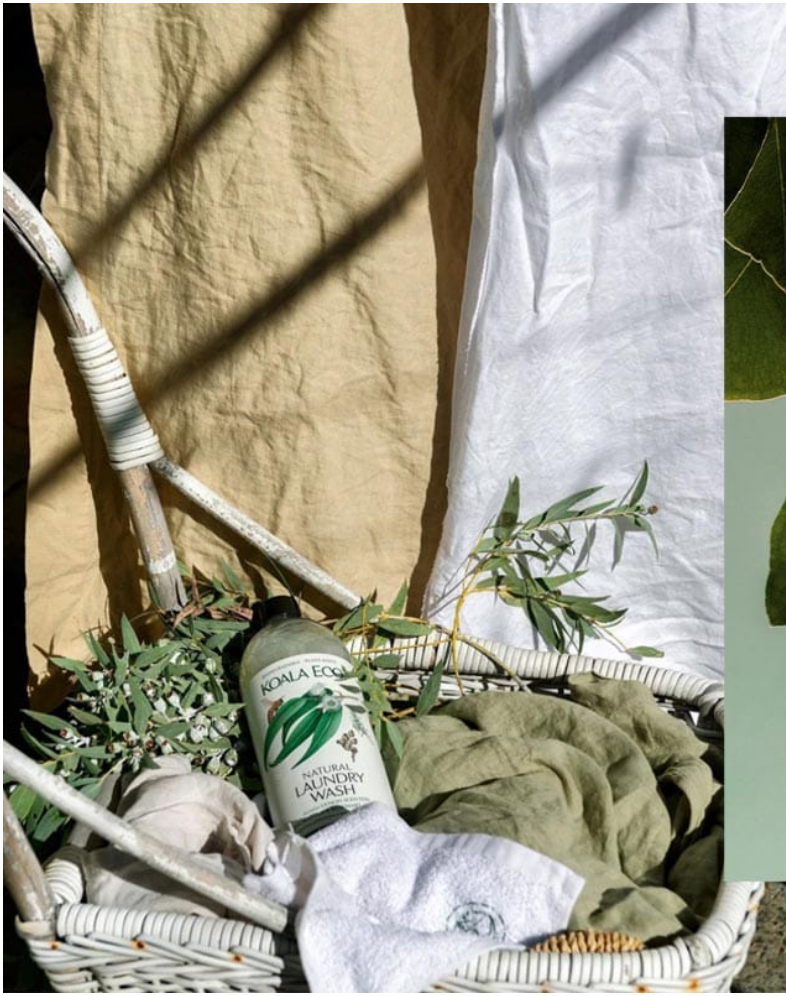
FASHION ([HTTPS://WWW.RUSSH.COM/CATEGORY/FASHION/](https://www.russh.com/category/fashion/)) BEAUTY ([HTTPS://WWW.RUSSH.COM/CATEGORY/BEAUTY/](https://www.russh.com/category/beauty/))
WELLBEING ([HTTPS://WWW.RUSSH.COM/CATEGORY/WELLBEING/](https://www.russh.com/category/wellbeing/))
CULTURE ([HTTPS://WWW.RUSSH.COM/CATEGORY/CULTURE/](https://www.russh.com/category/culture/))
HOROSCOPES ([HTTPS://WWW.RUSSH.COM/CATEGORY/HOROSCOPES/](https://www.russh.com/category/horoscopes/))
LIVING ([HTTPS://WWW.RUSSH.COM/CATEGORY/LIVING/](https://www.russh.com/category/living/)) TRAVEL ([HTTPS://WWW.RUSSH.COM/CATEGORY/TRAVEL/](https://www.russh.com/category/travel/))
WIN ([HTTPS://WWW.RUSSH.COM/CATEGORY/COMPETITIONS/](https://www.russh.com/category/competitions/)) STORE ([HTTPS://SHOP.RUSSH.COM](https://shop.russh.com))
CONTACT ([HTTPS://WWW.RUSSH.COM/CONTACT/](https://www.russh.com/contact/))

HOMEWARES ([HTTPS://WWW.RUSSH.COM/CATEGORY/LIVING/HOMEWARES/](https://www.russh.com/category/living/homewares/)) / **LIVING**
([HTTPS://WWW.RUSSH.COM/CATEGORY/LIVING/](https://www.russh.com/category/living/))

Should you make the switch to natural cleaning products?

f (<https://www.facebook.com/sharer/sharer.php?u=https://www.russh.com/should-you-switch-to-natural-cleaning-products/>)
t (<https://twitter.com/home?status=https://www.russh.com/should-you-switch-to-natural-cleaning-products/>)
📌 (<https://pinterest.com/pin/create/button/?url=https://www.russh.com/should-you-switch-to-natural-cleaning-products/>)
@ (<https://www.instagram.com/russhmagazine/>)

WORDS *Mia Steiber* (<https://www.russh.com/author/mia-steiber/>) PUBLISHED *Fri, 16 Jul 2021 - 2:25 pm*



It's the questions many of us have been asking ourselves - should you switch to natural cleaners?

Our post-COVID world has undeniably made us all much more conscious of our health and wellness. The new discourse around effective cleaning and high-alcohol sanitisers has made some of us (including the team here at RUSSH) question, what exactly is in the products that we use to clean our kitchen benches and bathrooms.

To find out more, and understand more about natural cleaning products and the industry, we spoke to Jessica Bragdon, founder of Koala Eco. She reveals what ingredients are regulated and which ones aren't and why so many people (/tag/people/) are making the switch.

Why are many people making the switch to natural cleaning products?

It's been our observation that people are becoming way more discriminating about environmentally friendly purchase choices in cleaning products, and I think there are several reasons for that.

I'd have to say the pandemic has probably been the biggest disruptor with regard to lifestyle and buying habits. Health awareness and cleanliness are paramount thanks to these extraordinary circumstances the whole world has been experiencing. And we don't know how long this situation will last. People are shifting perspectives and priorities: how to look after each other, how to be kind. They're focusing on how to stay well mentally and physically, and how to keep their immediate environment safe and healthy. We're all questioning what the future will look like for family life, work life, self-fulfilment.

So accordingly, while we've never been more conscious of the need to wash hands and minimise the spread of infection, rather than reaching for the mainstream products (which can contain harsh ingredients), people are exploring more natural alternatives for cleaning products, ones that are kinder to the planet as well as kinder to skin and respiratory systems. If those are not already obvious reasons, why else?

Firstly, I think we'd prefer our homes and offices to smell of the pure essential oils from Australian [native](#) plants—like Rosalina or Lemon Myrtle—than of ammonia. Why should cleaning be an unpleasant chore? It's so much nicer to use cleaning products that invite you to breathe deeply (and safely) and invite the outdoors in.

And secondly, speaking of the outdoors, during lockdowns we've been reminded (as if that were needed) of the importance of nature and green spaces to our mental and physical wellbeing. It's also a reminder that if we don't do our utmost to minimise harm to nature, we'll ultimately lose everything that's precious to us.

Are natural cleaning products more sustainable? If so, how?

As far as Koala Eco products are concerned, absolutely. Our formulas are [plant-based](#) or plant-derived, from the pure essential oils to the surfactants. Plants are a [sustainable](#) resource; as compost, they nourish the soil organically, readying it for planting. You keep planting, you encourage a whole ecosystem of insects and birds etc that carry out pollination, you can keep harvesting, and the cycle continues, with minimal waste. There are networks of farms all over [Australia](#) dedicated to doing this, and at Koala Eco we help to sustain that through accessing the supply chain of ingredients that these farms produce, and which go into our products. So we pretty much know where the plants are from, and who has grown them.

To offer a slightly different perspective on sustainability, I'd also add that it's fantastic that the natural cleaning and personal care categories have experienced such growth in the last couple of years or so: proof that the market is well and truly there for these products. The more the demand, the more Koala Eco can also give back to the natural environment, because each sale triggers a donation to global environmental charity One Per Cent for the Planet.

Aren't Australian cleaning products and their ingredients regulated? If this is the case, why would you need to pick something natural?

Under The Therapeutic Goods Act (1989), many products such as hospital grade cleaners and disinfectants have to be regulated, and it's worth noting that regulation is necessary because these products may, and often do, contain poisons. However, general consumer products (i.e. general cleaners, sanitisers and antibacterial skin cleansers) are not regulated under the Act. So, faced with a choice between a natural plant-based product without any synthetic fragrances, allergens or irritants, or a mainstream one which may contain any or all of those components, perhaps that's why people opt for choices which list ingredients that customers a) have heard of, and b) are better choices.

That's why Koala Eco products do not contain any dyes, masking agents, synthetic perfumes, chlorine, bleach, sodium laurel sulphates or phosphates.

Research has shown that a lot of the ingredients in mainstream cleaning products are harmful to our skin, eyes, and nervous system. When you start looking into all of this, it's pretty horrifying. At present, there are more than 84,000 chemicals in commercial use, with 1000 new ones being developed every year around the world. Long after household exposure to these chemicals has happened, links have been made to health issues like hormone disruption, allergies, asthma and more. Research shows certain chemicals may cause long-term, gradual changes, unnoticeable to the human eye. Some common ingredients are regarded as 'sensitisers' and repeated exposure can cause a build-up in the body, leading to allergies. Add in the artificial fragrances a lot of products use to mask these toxins and if it's not doing you or your family any good, imagine what it's doing to the planet.

Do natural cleaners work as effectively? Do they kill bacteria to the same standard?

At Koala Eco, we put pure botanicals and plant-derived ingredients together with research-backed evidence. Our products have been extensively and independently lab-tested and our surface sprays and sanitisers found to kill 99.99% of germs and bacteria when used as directed.

The essential oils from native botanicals combined with sugar derived alcohol and plant based surfactants are powerful antiseptics and anti-bacterials and these essential oils (100% pure) are the hero ingredients in our products. These essential oils deodorise, clean, purify ... the list goes on. And not only that, they smell gorgeous. No need whatsoever for synthetic fragrances. And while these are powerful cleaners and antiseptics, they are also totally safe around babies and young children when used correctly.

As an important part of Koala Eco's production and development processes, we've had our cleaners tested on multiple surfaces including marble, concrete, and porous stone, to ensure they won't damage any of these materials, and to make sure we are using a safe amount of essential oils. Every test has given us beautiful results. We do however always recommend a patch test when you use the cleaner for the first time on a new surface.

Are there any particular areas, rooms, or surfaces that you think are particularly important to only clean with natural products?

Straight answer? No. There isn't any part of your home that wouldn't be better cleaned with natural products. Regular cleaning with natural products is the go, and the more pleasant (as well as effective) the products are to use, the less of a chore cleaning becomes. If people are initially hesitant about buying eco-friendly cleaners, try adding old citrus peels to vinegar, baking soda and water for a safe and natural kitchen bench top cleaner, for example.

What do you think more people need to know about their household cleaners?

Because household cleaners are used several times a week, maybe even several times a day, be aware of what you are misting around your home. Think about what you could be breathing in, what might go in your eyes, or into your child's eyes. When people buy so-called 'naturally' scented products, they hope that their homes will smell 'naturally'

good. But in reality they're often breathing in things that have questionable health benefits. Fragrances like these can be made from a blend of ingredients, which can mean synthetics or nasties are hidden. Plus, these products simply can't smell as good as the real thing.

If you look at the labels on ordinary products, you'll see warnings about some of their ingredients being hazardous if accidentally inhaled, or if they come into contact with skin. Scientists regard household cleaning products as a key source of indoor pollution, leading to headaches and breathing problems. That's the last thing we need right now.

And maybe people could consider the bigger picture. If we all used natural products that were biodegradable and grey water safe (like Koala Eco's range), and bottled sustainably in rPET plastic or glass, we'd directly be responsible for some really good outcomes. For example, we know that Koala Eco customers avoid about 2,000 kg of virgin plastic being manufactured each month, because we're able to offer 100% recycled bottles. We also know that by using our products, our customers avoid 25,000 litres of toxic liquid being dumped in our water systems each month. Little by little, we can all make a difference.

For more on natural products, be inspired by our edit of [favourite \(https://www.russh.com/favourite-natural-beauty-products-2021/natural-beauty\)](https://www.russh.com/favourite-natural-beauty-products-2021/natural-beauty) products.

Stay inspired, follow us.



[\(https://www.instagram.com/russhmagazine/\)](https://www.instagram.com/russhmagazine/)



[\(https://www.facebook.com/RusshMagazine/\)](https://www.facebook.com/RusshMagazine/)



[\(https://www.pinterest.com.au/russhaustralia/\)](https://www.pinterest.com.au/russhaustralia/)



[_ \(https://www.youtube.com/user/Russhmag\)](https://www.youtube.com/user/Russhmag)



[_ \(https://twitter.com/russh_magazine\)](https://twitter.com/russh_magazine)



[_ \(https://www.tiktok.com/@russhmagazine\)](https://www.tiktok.com/@russhmagazine)

← PREVIOUS

Kristen Stewart cements Princess Diana's legacy in the official trailer for 'Spencer'
[\(https://www.russh.com/kristen-stewart-princess-diana-in-spencer/\)](https://www.russh.com/kristen-stewart-princess-diana-in-spencer/)



[\(https://www.facebook.com/RusshMagazine/\)](https://www.facebook.com/RusshMagazine/)

[_ \(https://twitter.com/russh_magazine\)](https://twitter.com/russh_magazine)

NEXT →

What is 'flipping' and how do I make money from it?
[\(https://www.russh.com/what-is-flipping/\)](https://www.russh.com/what-is-flipping/)