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## Homemade weed killer that works

This post may contain affiliate links. These help support this website. Today's chemist solution is an easy homemade weed killer with a secret ingredient that may surprise you! I have been testing out this homemade weed killer for awhile now and I am so impressed with how well it works. I wanted to create something that was easy to put together, but also fast acting! Weed killer from the store can be expensive, not to mention it is full of so many harmful chemicals. I hate spraying that stuff around my house with Ruger around. He always gets curious and sniffs everything! The secret ingredient in this really makes it work fast! In fact, I applied this again a few days ago and shortly after it rained! I was afraid it would wash away the spray, but it had already starting working. Easy Homemade Weed Killer Ingredients: 3 cups distilled white vinegar 3/4 cup regular table salt 2 tsp blue Dawn dish soap (works best, but can use others) 3 tsp liquid arthritis rub (seriously!!!, see notes below) FYI this is a copyrighted recipe! If using it or referencing it, please give credit to Chemistry Cachet by adding in our link! Directions: In a spray bottle (please read this in-depth post about the best spray bottles for solutions like this), add all the ingredients plus the capsicum type rub rub (Found online here or at the dollar store and grocery stores for only a few dollars, see picture below). Shake it up until well mixed. Apply directly to the leaves of the weed. It starts working almost immediately, by 24 hours the weed is almost completely gone. It will continue to die and wither away! Video by: Bite of Brownie Productions Is this Considered a Natural Weed Killer? Many readers have asked if this is considered a "natural" weed killer? In the science world, natural can mean many things. I like to call this a MORE natural weed killer compared to traditional options from the store like round-up. All of these ingredients are non-toxic and safe, so you can feel better about using them. To better answer this question, let's take a look at the chemistry. Vinegar There are so many awesome things going on in this solution! Chemically, vinegar (acetic acid) is a strong acid which has the ability to kill or burn the leaves of weeds. In fact, the purpose of a vinegar weed killer is to create the perfect base. Vinegar by itself CAN kill weeds, but the other ingredients enhance this aspect, making it work better. Salt When salt (sodium chloride) is added to the equation, it catalyzes the reaction of the vinegar when applied to the plant. Have you ever accidentally touched salt to a cut on your finger? It burns! Well, it burns the plant leaves too. After mixing up the solution, you will notice the salt doesn't disintegrate all the way. This is a good thing! Salt pieces help this weed killer recipe work even better. Blue Dawn Dish Soap Adding dish soap helps everything stick, but it also creates a layer or barrier on top of the weed. This can also aid in suffocating the leaves. Remember to read more about WHY I use blue Dawn in this post. Lastly, the secret ingredient: arthritis rub. This is what makes our recipe unique. What does capsicum and methyl salicylate do? Capsicum comes from peppers. It is provides that heat feeling in rubs, so it is very common to see in things for joint pain or arthritis. I was excited to find this particular rub because it also has methyl salicylate. This is wintergreen oil! Again, it gives that icy hot burn which is great for topical treatments. Adding some of this to the weed killer, just intensifies the reaction and works better on those thick and hearty weeds. I have read literature that mentions pepper sprays for weed killing being very effective. Having the methyl salicylate is just a bonus! I found this particular brand at my local grocery store for a few dollars. You can us almost any brand that contains the capsicum and/or methyl salicylate! It is amazing how many different products contain this in the first aide section of your store! You can see from the picture the weed just keeps shriveling up. It will eventually just turn to dust like it does with store bought weed killers! It actually rained about 12 hours after I applied this solution, so I was curious if it would still work. And it did! With the capsicum rub, it really speeds this up! Please read this section below: Important Tips & FAQs for This Safe Homemade Weed Killer Things to remember: DO NOT spray grass with this! It will kill certain grasses, so make sure to spray just the weed itself! Be cautious using it in flower beds, again only spray the weed. Works better on sunny, warmer days to speed up reaction. Allow to work fully for up to 3 days, weed should be almost dissipated by then. Especially good for weeds growing in the cracks of concrete! Best method for this is to spray it and leave it! BONUS: This actually kills ants! I had ants running around the weed stuck in the driveway, and it killed the ones that got sprayed! It also deterred others from coming. Will Salt Damage Soil? Okay, I get this question all the time. I think there is some confusion about this solution. First, there really isn't much salt in this solution! Excessive salt use on soil is bad...but this isn't excessive. However, this isn't meant for soil. It's main use is touching up on sidewalks, concrete, etc. If you want to touch up weeds in flower beds, you don't use much solution. Again, there isn't much salt in comparison to the term heavy salt use. This solution compared to toxic round up is still healthier and safer, so you have to keep that in mind. Remember, this was created for sidewalks, cracks, concrete, rocks, or other spots weeds pop up you don't want. Will it work without the arthritis rub? Yes, it will still work, but not as fast. I have tried it without the addition, and it didn't do as well on those heavy duty weeds! What if I can't find this type of arthritis rub? Anything thing in that section that has capsicum will work fine! This is the one I use and have for many years. Can I just use ground peppers? Capsicum is found in peppers, like cayenne pepper. We have tested it out using some cayenne, but it didn't work as quickly. Peppers aren't as soluble as this rub, so it doesn't mix into the solution well. If you cannot find a liquid product with capsicum, you can definitely try using ground pepper. It will still work, but not as fast! And remember this heat rub also contains the wintergreen, methyl salicylate. We always test these solutions with every method to make sure we share the fastest way to get what you need! What if I leave out capsicum completely? It still works! The problem I found while testing this is how fast it worked. If you have a nice sunny day with temperatures in the high 90s and your weeds are in the sun, this solution works great and pretty fast. For weeds not in the sun, or if the weather is cooler, it doesn't work quickly. Adding in the capsicum and methyl salicylate showed an increase in effectiveness, so I always use it! AND, capsicum and methyl salicylate help enhance this for killing ants. I've tried something similar, but the weeds grow back. Will that happen with this? With this exact solution, weeds have never grown back. In fact, spray it and leave it. About a week later, the weeds start to disintegrate like they do with store-bought weed killer! I very rarely have to pull up dead weeds when I use this, they just disappear. When vinegar and salt are sprayed onto weeds, it goes down into the root. It kills them after a few hours, they don't grow back. Ours has a secret ingredient to make the solution work quicker. Sometimes things like rain or dew can wash off ingredients before it has a chance to work, so this can causes weeds to not die all the way. Does it have to be distilled vinegar? Yes. That is the best type for this solution. Can I eliminate the dish soap? You can, but again, it will not be as effective. Can I use any brand of dish soap? Blue dawn is the best (read why here), but any type of dish washing soap can be substituted. What about a vinegar weed killer recipe with epsom salt? Many reports I have read online talk about epsom salt. There is a big difference between table salt and epsom salt. Epsom salt is magnesium sulfate, an ingredient commonly used to nourish plants. If you are using a homemade solution with this ingredient, it won't work as well nor will it last. Don't use a DIY weed killer with epsom salt. Epsom salt is a nutrient for plants (like this homemade plant food). Regular cheap table salt is best! What about Weeds in the Lawn? Please be cautious using this, it can kill any living plant. I haven't had it kill much grass, but it is best for areas where you want to kill everything like sidewalks, preparing a flower bed, patios, etc. As a chemist, I get asked about this often. Unfortunately, homemade solutions cannot be formulated to kill certain things, but not harm others (like grass). Anything you use to kill weeds, will also kill grass when it comes to homemade ingredients. The best way to keep your lawn weed free is to make sure your soil and grass stay healthy. Also, make sure to keep your lawn mowed. Round-Up vs Homemade Weed Killer More and more people are searching for homemade solutions with the dangers of round-up being reported. Obviously, ingredients like vinegar, salt, and dish soap make homemade versions more safe. However, round-up has been chemically formulated to target specific weeds. Like we mentioned above, it is impossible for DIY versions to achieve this. This is why store-bought weed killers remain popular. It is the only way to kill a weed in a lawn without harming grass when it comes to spraying things. Round-up does contain many chemicals, so this is why I shared a science based more natural weed killer years ago. I needed to kill the weeds in my rocky area without Ruger walking through it. I was worried about him getting it on his paws then tracking it into the house. So, homemade options are still safer for pets. So, What are homemade weed killers best for? I think our DIY weed killer is perfect for sidewalks, fences, and especially rocky areas! I have river rock under our pergola and porch swing. It gets weeds during the spring, so I just spray our vinegar solution on it, and the weeds are gone! Our secret ingredient makes it work FAST, so you don't have to worry about possible rain. Follow on Facebook | Bloglovin' | Twitter | Instagram | Pinterest | Hometalk Linking with Met Monday and these link parties! Save Save Save Save Save This post contains affiliate links. If you buy through these links, I may earn a small commission.Here's how to get rid of Poison Ivy in the yard - use this natural weed killer that really works! All gardeners love to see plants blossoming and thriving. It brings us joy and makes us feel that the work has been worthwhile. However, there is one type of plant that most gardeners dread seeing in their yard - poison ivy! Here's how to identify it and how to get rid of Poison Ivy plants. I've got a recipe for home made Poison Ivy Killer below - and you probably already have the ingredients to whip up a batch! This homemade weed killer can be used on every kind of weed. So if killing weeds is your goal, this recipe is for you. Some weeds can be killed using hot water or even boiling water, just pour it on the weeds you want gone. However, poison ivy plants often manage to survive this method. Poison Ivy Leaves Hey! Did you touch Poison Ivy? Have a rash? Here's how to soothe and heal Poison Ivy Rash How to Identify a Poison Ivy Plant/Vine Many people grew up learning the phrase "leaves of three, leave it be" as a way to identify poison ivy. However, it turns out that many plants (even harmless ones) also have three leaves. So what's a better way to properly identify poison ivy? How to identify poison ivy leaves? Look for a three leaf pattern Yes, poison ivy has three leaves. What is important is how they look and where they are. Poison ivy (with the exception of Virginia Creeper and Boxelder) has three leaflets that grow at the end of the stem. There will be one main leaflet at the end and then two smaller leaflets beneath it on opposite sides of the stalk. Does Poison Ivy climb? Poison Ivy plants like to climb around trees. Poison ivy loves to climb, so you can often find it climbing up tree trunks, fences, and walls. How does Poison Ivy grow? It's NOT always a vine! Whereas other plants may grow in a very specific way, poison ivy is more versatile. It's not always a vine; sometimes poison ivy appears as a shrub It can creep up a tree, bunch up as a shrub, sprout as a single plant, or even become a thick, green blanket on the ground. Does Poison Ivy have Thorns? It doesn't have thorns but the vine is hairy or fuzzy along the stem. So, take a good look at the vine. If it's thick and hairy, it might be poison ivy. The leaves turn red in fall and dull after rain Though the leaves are green early in the season, by fall, they will turn red. They may also lose their usual waxy sheen after it rains, becoming dull in appearance. Does Poison Ivy have Berries? The small berries of the Poison Ivy vine are poisonous to humans Poison ivy will grow very small berries that look like tiny pumpkins. They can vary in color from white or yellowish to blue-black or dark red, depending on the variety. Can Humans eat Ivy Berries? Are they Edible? No, never eat the berries of a poison ivy vine! The small berries are poisonous to humans. If you have young children, this is another very good reason to get rid of any poison ivy plants in your yard. Why You Should Get Rid of Poison Ivy Now, you may wonder why so many people make a big fuss about poison ivy. Admittedly, although it is called poison ivy, not everyone is actually allergic to it. Some people can touch poison ivy and not be affected at all. However, others can merely be near or brush up against the finest leaf and break out in a painful skin rash or blisters. In extreme cases, a person may even go into anaphylactic shock! In addition, they may even touch a pet who has rolled around in poison ivy and end up suffering an allergic reaction. That's why, even if you aren't personally allergic to poison ivy, it is a good idea to get rid of it anyway - especially if you have friends, family, or neighbors who may be allergic. Another reason you should get on top of things when you discover poison ivy is that the vines can grow out of control, climbing up and around trees, homes, and other structures to the point where it can actually cause structural damage. While it takes time for this to happen, it's better to just nip it in the bud as soon as possible. So use this homemade poison ivy killer recipe and start getting rid of this weed in your yard today. A few notes to consider before killing Poison Ivy Before I give you this homemade poison ivy and weed killer recipe, here are a few things to keep in mind: The poison ivy plants that are not too old (less than a year old) respond extremely well to this treatment. I highly recommend killing the poison ivy plant as soon as you see it growing. Plants from older, more established roots will die but may come back a year later. You will have to spray the plants again. Simply spray the new growth again with the natural weed killer. The roots will die of exhaustion because all of their energy will be wasted in putting out all that new growth for nothing. Some really old roots are made of mutant zombie stuff, and may need a few more repeat doses. Use straight vinegar (no water added) to make the spray more potent. This recipe is not JUST for poison ivy. Since the combination basically kills and suffocates plants, it can get rid of many different plants growing in your garden - including weeds and plants you want to keep. It also kills off weed seed. Make sure you ONLY spray it on plants you want to get rid of. Let's move on to the natural recipe for how to get rid of poison ivy plants. How to Get Rid of Poison Ivy without Killing other Plants Yeah, well there's really only one way to get rid of the vines without killing any other plants. You cannot get any spray onto any plants you want to save. This homemade poison ivy killer cannot discern between "bad" plants and "good" plants. One way around this is to use a small spray bottle and set the spray to a very fine setting. No misting! How does vinegar kill poison ivy? It's the acid found in vinegar that kills the vines. Usually vinegar is around 5% acid - high enough to do the job! How long does it take vinegar to kill poison ivy? After spraying with the vinegar, it takes about 2 weeks for the poison ivy vines to die. You may find that you need to spray the vines several ties. Because there are no chemicals involved, it takes longer and you may need to repeat spraying. What kills poison ivy the fastest? Chemicals such as Roundup will kill the vines the fastest. If you don't mind spraying chemical sprays, it will do the job the quickest. However, not only is the following method chemical free, it will also be a lot cheaper. Homemade Vinegar Poison Ivy and Weed Killer Recipe Ingredients 3 cups white vinegar 1/2 cup table salt 1 tablespoon liquid detergent or soap (I use Dawn) for stick-to-itiveness. Directions Mix vinegar and salt until the salt is completely dissolved. Stir in liquid dish soap, and pour into a spray bottle. Spray onto the green growing leaves of the plants. Wait a week, then repeat on any survivors. Best time to apply: during a dry spell. (This recipe is an excerpt from Mrs. Tightwad's Handbook #5 : QUICK SUBSTITUTES & EASY FORMULAS FOR OVER 100 CANT-DO-WITHOUT ITEMS) How to Dispose of Poison Ivy Safely Before I let you get to it, I have a few safety tips on how to remove poison ivy and basic weed control. Always use gloves First of all, always use gloves when handling poison ivy. As I mentioned before, poison ivy can cause a range of allergic reactions, ranging from a skin irritation to anaphylactic shock. To prevent this, please wear thick gloves when handling poison ivy. Not everyone is allergic, but even if YOU aren't, you may touch the plant and then contaminate something that will be touched by someone who IS allergic. Besides, its better not to test whether you're allergic, right? Wear protective clothing In addition to wearing gloves, you should also wear protective clothing such as long-sleeved shirts and long pants. That way, you can protect the rest of your skin from coming into direct contact with the poison ivy plant. Bag it Up and Throw it Away Once the poison ivy plant has died, dig it up as completely as you can (being careful not to let it touch your skin. Try to get as much of the root up as possible so that it can't grow back. Place it in a plastic bag, close and tie off the bag, and then dispose of it in the trash. Wash hands, gloves, and clothing thoroughly Once you've sprayed the poison ivy, be sure to wash your hands, gloves, and clothing thoroughly so that you get rid of any of the oil that makes poison ivy poisonous. You may need to use some of your spray to clean as the vinegar and degreaser in the detergent can help remove the oil. Can You Burn Poison Ivy? Many people burn plants to kill them, but you should NEVER burn a plant that you suspect is poison ivy. What Happens if you burn Poison Ivy? It may be tempting but again, never burn poison ivy plants or any plant you think might be a poison ivy vine. Burning can cause the oil that is in the poison ivy plant to take to the air and be inhaled into people's lungs. The Bottom Line: Getting rid of Poison Ivy is a task, but it can be done naturally with a little help from vinegar and salt! Now that you know how to get rid of Poison Ivy plants, you can get started tackling these and other weeds in your garden. Let me know how it works for you in the comments below. Some of our more Popular Posts: Did you touch Poison Ivy? Have a rash? Here's how to soothe and heal Poison Ivy Rash See how I created a Pretty Flower Bed for the Shade in one of the shadiest spots in our yard. Almost maintenance free too! Want chickens? Got questions? 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