

Basic Soap Spray

Quart hand sprayer filled with warm water

Add a squirt of non-detergent soap such as Ivory or baby shampoo

Do not use detergent as this could harm your plants.

Additions to the Basic Soap Spray

It is most convenient to prepare additives in larger quantities and store the mixture for future use in a glass container, such as a small jam jar. When using the mixture, just add a teaspoon to your quart container of basic soap spray. It is best to test the mixture on one or two leaves before spraying the entire plant, to ensure that no leaf damage will result.

1. Oil Additive

Add a teaspoon of vegetable oil to the basic soap spray to improve adherence.

2. Garlic Spray

Combine about 1/2 cup of mineral oil with a dozen or so crushed cloves of garlic. Allow to stand for 48 hours. Strain. Start by using roughly 1 tsp in your quart sprayer.

3. Hot Spray

In a food processor, liquify a small onion and an entire bulb of garlic. Seep this mixture in a cup of olive oil. After 48 hours, strain the olive oil and discard the pulp. Add a half teaspoon of cayenne pepper. Store in a glass jar. To use, add a teaspoon to basic soap spray.

Nicotine Spray

Soak an old broken up cigar in a quart of water for 48 hours. Strain and use. If this "tobacco tea" is very dark, it can likely be diluted.

"Safe" sprays are available commercially, the most popular being insecticidal soaps. When buying these products, carefully read the ingredients on the label to ensure that no toxic ingredients have been included. Do not rely on the product name alone. A name like "Green" or "Environmentally Safe" does not mean that the product is non-toxic.

Generally, studies have shown that home remedies are as effective as commercial spray. However, home remedies may damage plants if used in high concentrations. Cautious experimentation is advisable. It is also helpful to keep some notes documenting mixtures and their effectiveness for future reference, and to share with fellow gardeners. (Just like cooks share recipes.)