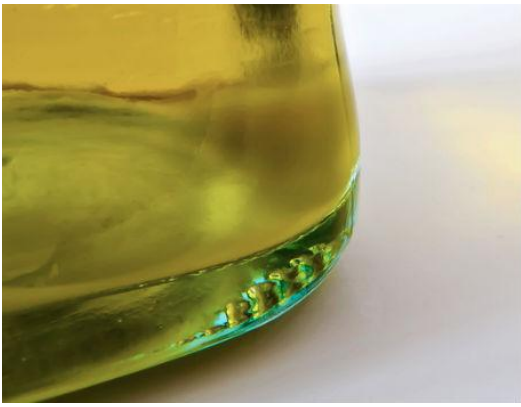


20 UNUSUAL USES FOR OLIVE OIL



Olive oil glides into place as a must-have household and beauty product.

Life without olive oil would be sad indeed. Since antiquity, this miracle substance has been revered for its wonderfully fruity flavor, but it's so much more than a healthy topping for salad and a heavenly dip for fresh-baked bread. Olive oil has dozens of unusual uses around the house, not to mention its powerful moisturizing and healing properties on the hair and skin. Check out 20 reasons why you should never be caught without it.

Paint clean-up

When your hands are covered in paint, sap or any other sticky substance that's hard to remove, try scrubbing them with olive oil and a little salt or sugar. The paint will come right off and your skin will be soft and exfoliated.

Eye makeup remover

Even the heaviest, drag-show-worthy makeup job can't stand up to the removal power of olive oil. Dab a little on a cotton pad and your eyeshadow, eyeliner and mascara – including waterproof formulas – will wipe right off.

Furniture polish

Olive oil helps remove dust from furniture and gives it a shine. Add a teaspoon to a quarter cup of lemon juice, and you've got a non-toxic, petroleum-free polish that also gently cleans wood surfaces.

Skin moisturizer

You might think using olive oil as a moisturizer would leave you with oily skin, but that's not the case. Used in small amounts, it seeps in completely, eliminating dryness and reducing the appearance of wrinkles without clogging pores.

Shoe polish

What, exactly, is it in shoe polish that has such a headache-inducing smell? It could be any number of potentially toxic ingredients. Banish them from your house and use olive oil instead. Just buff onto your leather shoes with a cloth.



Hinge lubricant

WD-40 shouldn't hold a monopoly on squeaky door hinges when simple, natural olive oil works just as well. Wipe it on with a cotton ball or use a spray bottle to lubricate the hinge and eliminate that annoying creak.

Bath oil

Add a few drops of your favorite essential oils to 3-4 tablespoons of olive oil and you've got a custom bath oil that will gently scent and moisturize your skin.

Stainless steel shine

Olive oil alone will buff stainless steel and brass surfaces to a brilliant shine. Just wipe off any debris and allow the surfaces to dry completely, then pour a little oil onto a clean, soft cloth. Buff in circular motions with firm pressure.

Smooth shave

Slick and moisturizing, olive oil will help your razor glide along your skin for a super-close, smooth shave with fewer nicks.

Throat soother

Got a big singing performance or speech coming up? Swallow a tablespoon of olive oil just before you step on stage and you won't have to clear your throat nearly as often. This trick also works to soothe itchy throats and lubricate the back of the mouth and tonsil area, which may lessen snoring.



Hair treatment

Sure, you could buy a fancy commercially-prepared hot oil treatment for your hair – or you could just grab the bottle of olive oil that’s already sitting on a shelf in your kitchen. Apply a few tablespoons of warmed olive oil to damp hair, massage into the scalp and rub through the ends, then leave it on for thirty minutes to an hour. The oil will clean and condition the scalp, soften the hair and help the cuticles lay down flat for a sleek look.

Ear ache relief

A little warm olive oil is a fast, effective means of relieving painful ear aches. Just place the bottle in a bowl of warm water for a few minutes, then pour a few drops into the affected ear. To cure ear infections, infuse the olive oil **with a crushed clove of garlic**, strain the garlic out and drip into the ear.

Sticker remover

Dab olive oil onto a sticker or label, let it sit for a few minutes and the sticker will peel right off. No scraping needed, no annoying residue left behind.

Lice treatment

Olive oil has long been a preferred natural treatment to eliminate dreaded head lice. It reportedly helps to dissolve the exoskeleton of these little parasites, and smother the ones that are resistant. Pour it on to dry hair liberally, comb out any visible lice with a nit comb and then leave it on under a shower cap for up to 8 hours. Follow by coating the hair in apple cider vinegar; leave it on overnight, shampoo as usual and then comb out any remaining eggs.

Hairball prevention

Nobody likes the sound of a cat loudly hacking up a hairball, especially since it always seems to happen when you’re trying to eat or sleep. Help it pass through your cat’s system more easily by adding 1/4 teaspoon of olive oil to his or her food each day.



Lamp fuel

A blizzard just hit, the power's out and you realized that you're out of batteries and candles. Do you just sit around in the dark? No, you grab that bottle of olive oil – because by now you should know that it's an absolute essential in your life – and use it to fuel a lamp. You can purchase specially made olive oil lamps, or simply pour it into a glass jar, poke a hole into the jar lid and insert an oil lamp wick.

Chewing gum remover

Whether your child comes home from school with a mass of sticky pink bubble gum in her hair or you find yourself the victim of a wayward wad, you don't have to resort to any crazy tricks or – gasp – *scissors* to get it out. Apply olive oil to the gum and the surrounding hair, leave it on for five to ten minutes and then pull the gum out.

Leather conditioner

Just as it cleans and restores leather shoes, olive oil can be used to re-condition cracked, dry leather items like baseball gloves, car seats and saddles. It takes a bit longer to fully penetrate the leather than most conventional conditioners, but it works.

Psoriasis and diaper rash treatment

Olive oil soothes itchy, burning, irritated skin and may help rashes heal. Apply it to a baby's diaper rash or directly to any eruptions on your own skin for quick relief. Consuming olive oil on a regular basis may also be helpful in the treatment of mild to moderate psoriasis.

Personal lubricant

Squeaky hinges aren't the only parts that work better when lubricated. But just because you're in the mood for some slippery fun doesn't mean you should grab a tube of KY. There are lots of **safe, natural alternatives** to potentially toxic personal lubricants, but plain old olive oil will do the trick nicely – just avoid using it with latex condoms.