



10 Simple Swaps for a Low-Tox Home

A beginner-friendly guide to reducing your family's everyday exposure to common household toxins — one gentle swap at a time.

You don't need to overhaul your whole home overnight. Small, consistent changes add up to a dramatically lower toxic load.



by Margaret Pleyzier | Health Begins Here



Why does this matter?

Modern homes contain hundreds of synthetic chemicals — in cleaning products, cookware, personal care and even furniture. On their own, most are present in tiny amounts. But our bodies deal with all of them together, every single day. Scientists call this the **total body burden**.

The good news? You don't need to know everything. You just need to start somewhere. These ten swaps are chosen for maximum impact with minimum effort — most cost little or nothing extra.



SWAPS 1–3 | Kitchen

1. Ditch the non-stick cookware

Often found in:
Teflon/PTFE-coated pans, baking trays, sandwich makers



SWAP TO
Cast iron, stainless steel, or ceramic-coated pans

Non-stick coatings contain PFAS - 'forever chemicals' linked to thyroid disruption and immune suppression. Cast iron is virtually indestructible and improves with age.

2. Switch your food storage

Often found in:
Plastic containers, cling wrap, zip-lock bags



SWAP TO
Glass jars, stainless steel containers, beeswax wraps

BPA and its replacements (BPS, BPF) leach from plastic into food, especially when heated. Glass and steel are inert and last a lifetime.

3. Rethink your cooking oil

Often found in:
Vegetable oil, canola, sunflower, soybean, or 'blended' cooking oil



SWAP TO
Extra virgin olive oil, coconut oil, grass-fed butter or ghee, avocado oil

Seed oils are highly processed and unstable at heat, generating toxic aldehydes when cooked. Traditional fats are more stable and far less processed.

SWAPS 4–6 | Cleaning

4. Make your own all-purpose spray

Often found in:
Commercial spray cleaners, disinfectant wipes, antibacterial sprays



SWAP TO
White vinegar + water + a few drops of tea tree or lavender essential oil

Most commercial cleaners contain quats (linked to asthma and reproductive harm), glycol ethers, and synthetic fragrance. Your homemade version cleans just as well for a fraction of the cost.

5. Ditch synthetic fragrance

Often found in:
Air fresheners, plug-ins, scented candles (paraffin), fabric softeners



SWAP TO
Unscented products, beeswax or soy candles, open windows, essential oil diffuser

Fragrance' or 'Parfum' on any label can legally hide hundreds of undisclosed chemicals including phthalates. Ventilation is your best - and cheapest - air freshener.

6. Simplify your laundry

Often found in:
Conventional detergents with fragrance, fabric softener, dryer sheets



SWAP TO
Fragrance-free detergent, wool dryer balls, white vinegar as fabric softener

abric softeners coat fibres with quats and synthetic musks that transfer directly to skin. Wool dryer balls naturally soften and reduce static - zero chemistry needed.



SWAPS 7–8 | Personal Care

7. Read your deodorant label

Often found in:
Antiperspirants containing aluminium chlorohydrate or aluminium zirconium



SWAP TO

Aluminium-free deodorant - crystal, bicarb-based, or certified natural brands

Conventional antiperspirants are applied daily near lymph nodes. Aluminium compounds carry precautionary concern, especially for vulnerable groups. Many effective aluminium-free options now exist.

8. Choose mineral sunscreen

Often found in:
Chemical sunscreens containing oxybenzone, octinoxate, homosalate



SWAP TO

Mineral sunscreen with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide (non-nano formula)

Oxybenzone has been detected in blood and breast milk above FDA safety thresholds. Mineral filters sit on top of the skin rather than being absorbed — and they're reef-safe.



SWAPS 9–10 | Your Home Environment

9. Filter your water

Often found in:
Unfiltered tap water — chlorination by-products, potential PFAS near some sites



SWAP TO

Activated carbon filter (benchtop or under-sink); reverse osmosis for PFAS removal

Chlorinated tap water reacts with organic matter to form trihalomethanes, linked to bladder cancer risk with long-term exposure. Activated carbon filters are affordable and effective.

10. Open your windows daily

Often found in:
Sealed rooms - especially with new furniture, carpet, paint, or cleaning products



SWAP TO

10–15 minutes of cross-ventilation every morning. Simple. Free. Effective.

Indoor VOC levels can be 2–5x higher than outdoors (US EPA). Off-gassing from MDF furniture, paints, and cleaning products builds up in unventilated spaces. Fresh air is your most powerful low-tox tool.



Your Low-Tox Starter Checklist



Print this page and stick it somewhere you'll see it — fridge, pantry door, bathroom mirror.

#	Swap	Out with ...	In with ...
1	Kitchen	Non-stick pans	Cast iron / stainless / ceramic
2	Kitchen	Plastic food storage	Glass jars & stainless steel
3	Kitchen	Seed / vegetable oils	Olive oil, ghee, coconut, avocado
4	Cleaning	Commercial spray cleaner	Vinegar + water + essential oil
5	Cleaning	Synthetic air fresheners	Open windows / essential oil diffuser
6	Cleaning	Fabric softener	Wool dryer balls + vinegar rinse
7	Personal care	Aluminium antiperspirant	Aluminium-free deodorant
8	Personal care	Chemical sunscreen	Zinc oxide mineral sunscreen
9	Home	Unfiltered tap water	Activated carbon filter
10	Home	Sealed rooms	10 mins fresh air every day

Remember: Progress over perfection. One swap done is worth more than ten planned. Start with whichever feels easiest — and build from there at your own pace.

This guide draws on published research and Australian regulatory guidance from AICIS, TGA, FSANZ, Safe Work Australia, and the NHMRC. Educational only — not medical advice.

This is just the beginning.

The Conscious Home Collective is a complete room-by-room home wellness guide — twelve in-depth modules, one for every area of your home and life.

Each module includes a detailed guide, a practical room checklist, and science-backed swaps written in plain language. No overwhelm. No judgment. Just the information you need to make changes that actually matter — at your own pace, in your own time.

Water & Hydration	Food & Gut Health	Mind & Stress
Air Quality	Kitchen	Bedroom & Sleep
Wellness & Self Care	Bathroom & Body	Laundry
Movement & Detox	Garden & Outdoors	Light & Rhythms

Find the individual modules or the full collection at collective.healthbeginshere.au

Available: the complete Low-Tox Life Cheatsheet — 30+ chemicals covered across personal care, cleaning, food, building materials, and water, with Australian regulatory status for every one.

