

INTRODUCTION

IF YOU'RE LIKE MOST FOLKS, your cupboards are crammed full of cleansers, removers, polishes, and so many powders, liquids, and gels that you forget why you even bought them in the first place! If this sounds about right, then I'm here to help you clear out the commercial concoctions and replace them with good old-fashioned DIY tonics that'll liven up your home—from your front porch to your back deck, and every teapot, tile, toilet, quilt, cabinet, couch, pooch, finch, and fern in between. Whew!



•• The first step to keeping any house in tip-top shape is to tackle the cleaning issues.

You'll learn how to bewitch your kitchen with stainless steel solutions and detergent-free dish washers, brighten your bathrooms with "green" scouring powders and citrus-sweet formulas, zap stubborn stains with tough-as-nails tonics, and gently rinse delicate duds with simple, pure potions. Plus, your floors will look great with my nontoxic carpet cleaners and super-duper spiffer-uppers for vinyl, wood, tile, and more.

But that's not all—my Ultimate Household Tonics go well beyond just cleaning and scrubbing. You'll also be able to fix furniture flaws fast using a splash of "Salad Dressing" Scratch



Remover, reward your furry friends with a batch of Just for Love Dog Delights, keep

your houseplants happy and healthy with my famous Fabulous Foliage Food, and show household bugs who's boss with a heaping helping of Beat the Ant Blues Batter. And

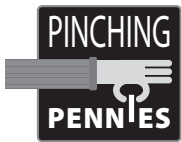
when the holidays roll around, you'll sail through stress-free with oh-so-easy homemade soaps and other great gifts, and still have plenty of time to get crafty with the kids.



Moving outdoors, you'll be ready to rock with a bucketful of handy helpers. I've included bunches of

bird-pleasing bounties, including my Flicker Flapdoodle, patio-perfecting potions like my Crackerjack Concrete Cleaner, and a Longer-Life Battery Bath that's sure to keep the old jalopy purring like a kitten.

Throughout this book, you'll also find loads of fascinating features to help unleash the power-packed potential of my Ultimate Tonics. For instance, **PINCHING PENNIES** shares my money-saving advice on everything from



deodorizing a dishwasher to trapping pesky pests to removing rust from your patio furniture.

THAT'S BRILLIANT! offers tips that are both practical and surprising—like sprucing up grungy sneakers with carpet shampoo, tidying up your oven's interior with tea leaves, and keeping bugs off your freshly painted house with citronella oil. Don't be surprised if you end up saying, "*Why didn't I think of that?*"



And when you need to get something done fast, check out the **SUPER**



SHORTCUTS. These terrific tricks tackle your toughest issues in no time at all.

For instance, you'll learn how to make ink stains disappear from leather with milk, soak away burned-on food in pots and pans like magic, and use lemon juice for almost effortless every day, every way cleaning.

I also reached deep into my mailbag to come up with the best **FAQ** (Frequently Asked Questions) I could find, featuring my easy-to-apply answers to your most perplexing problems. Whether you're wrestling with a clogged bathroom drain, need to know the best way to zap backyard bugs, or are struggling to remove old bumper stickers from your car, here's where I let you in on my best-kept secrets.



Finally, I'd never gather up this much information and leave out my Grandma Putt's advice. After all, she taught me almost everything I know about taking care of the old homestead. So now it's time to pass that lore along to you. **GRANDMA'S OLD-TIME TIPS** are exactly that—words of wisdom that'll help you in dozens of different ways, including how to brighten up wicker, polish wood, and keep your houseplants humming a happy tune.



So roll up your sleeves and dive right in. Mix up my Ultimate Household Tonics and you'll soon be on your way to a cleaner, "greener" house; happier, healthier living; and—most important of all—a calmer, more contented you!