

34 Uses for That Can of Soda, Other Than Quenching Thirst

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It's the Real Thing, it Adds Life, and You Gotta Have It, but that can or bottle of cola can also work wonders in an emergency. The chemical soup that makes up most commercial soft drinks not only makes them taste good and quench thirst, but also make them effective cleaning agents, bolt looseners, paint strippers, and possible skin softeners. More uses than MacGyver could think up.

And since most guys usually have a can or six lying around the house, knowing what to use it for when trouble arises can save you big problems and big money. Here's a list you should keep handy... Just in case.

CLEANING

1. Clean Car Battery Terminals.

There's acid in almost all carbonated drinks. And that helps strip corrosion from car battery terminals. Pour some soda over the battery terminals and let it sit for a while. Wipe off the residue with a wet cloth.

2. Clean Your Dirty Toilet Bowl.

Got bad stains, a date coming over in an hour and no toilet cleaner? Pour a can of soda into the bowl. Let it sit for an hour to let the phosphoric acid work on the stains, then brush to loosen the dirt and flush clean.

3. Remove Rust Spots From Chrome.

If you have an older car that has real chrome trim, chances are there are some small, and some not so small, rust spots developing on the chrome. Take some crumpled aluminum foil, dip it in some cola and rub the rust off the affected area.

4. Remove Rust Stains in Your Tub.

Remember how the phosphoric acid worked to clean the toilet bowl? The same acid will remove rust stains in your tub. Soak a sponge (preferably one with an abrasive side), in some cola and go to work on the stain.

5. Clean Grout.

Got some mold and mildew ruining the look of your shower? Soak a sponge with Coke and work it into the grout. Rinse with water.

6. Remove Grease From Clothes.

Been working on the car all weekend and greased up more than just the engine? Pouring a can of cola into your washer, along with your regular detergent, is said to help loosen and wash away those grease stains.

7. Remove Milk Stains From Clothes.

Got milk? Soak the stain with Coke for about five minutes, then wash normally. It should get the stain out.

8. Remove Blood Stains From Clothes.

I'm not going to ask how they got there, but if you soak the stain with cola for five minutes then wash in your machine, the blood should come out. Even dried blood that's been there for a while. (Don't tell the CSI.)

9. Clean Coins.

Got a thing for shiny pennies? Collecting state quarters and want them to sparkle? Place your coins in a small dish and soak in Coke for a few hours. Rinse and wipe to a bright shine. (I wouldn't recommend this trick with a rare coin collection. Just in case.)

10. Clean Grease From Glass. Even Eyeglasses.

That same handy phosphoric acid removes grease and grime from glass. Even dried hairspray from mirrors. Just rinse thoroughly with water after.

11. Clean Oil Stains From Garage Floor or Driveway.

Pour soda over the stain, let it soak in for a while, then scrub and rinse off with a hose.

12. Clean Burnt Pans.

Forget a pot on the stove and now whatever was in it is seared to the bottom? If scrubbing won't get it off, try this: boil some Coke in the pot and the burnt-on mess should lift right out.

AROUND THE HOUSE

13. Loosen Clogged Drains.

If your sink is draining slowly and you don't have any drain cleaner in the house, pour a 2-liter bottle of cola down the drain and let the acids go to work on the clog.

14. Loosen Rusted Nuts and Bolts.

Soak a rag in cola and wrap it around the rusted-on bolt for a few minutes. The acids and carbonation will help loosen it.

15. Make Flowers Last Longer.

Got your girl some flowers and you want them to survive through the week? Pour about 1/4 cup of clear soda, like Sprite or 7-Up into a vase full of water. Sugar helps them last longer.

16. Strip Paint From Metal Patio Furniture.

Want to refinish some outdoor furniture? Do it the right way and strip off the old paint first. To make it easier, soak a towel in Coke. Let it sit on the furniture for about a week, adding more Coke whenever the towel starts to dry out. The paint should strip off easily.

17. Kill Slugs and Snails.

If these pests are invading your lawn and garden, pour a little Coke into shallow dishes or jar lids and spread them throughout your yard. The sugar attracts them, and, just like you remember from when you were a kid, the acid kills them.

18. Greener Lawn.

It's rumored that spraying Coke on your grass will keep your lawn greener into the fall months.

FIRST AID AND EMERGENCIES

19. Relieve Nausea or an Upset Stomach.

According to The Doctor's Book of Home Remedies, the syrup in Coca-Cola can be used to cure upset stomachs. Just let leave the can or bottle open for about 30 minutes first, until the soda goes flat. The carbonation could have an adverse effect on your stomach.

20. Prevent Diarrhea.

Also found in The Doctor's Book of Home Remedies, if you're traveling through a country with a questionable water and/or food supply, drinking coke could keep you from making constant "runs for the border". The acids in the soda help reduce the amount of E. Coli bacteria in your intestines. This inhibits the production of toxins that can cause diarrhea.

21. Relieve Constipation.

If you are, as the Germans say, Farfrompoopin, the caffeine from a can of coke can have a laxative effect. Much like that morning latte.

22. Stop an Asthma Attack.

Just as an asthma attack comes on, down a couple of cans of coke. Some sources say the caffeine can help prevent an asthma attack.

23. Ease a Sore Throat.

By gargling with soda you can loosen the phlegm causing the irritation.

24. Stop a Jellyfish Sting From Stinging.

The acids in cola seem to neutralize the venom in the sting. And pouring Coke over the wound is better than having your buddy pee on it.

25. Get Gum Out of a Kid's Hair.

Want to score points with that single mom struggling to get gum out of her screaming kid's hair? Come to the rescue with your can of Coke. Soak the kid's hair for a few minutes, then rinse. The gum should come right out.

26. Strip Dye From Hair.

If your girl comes over crying that her new dye job turned her hair green, wash her hair with Diet Coke. Apparently Diet Coke has the ability to strip and/or fade bad dye jobs.

27. Get Rid of Skunk Odor.

Pissed off Pepè Le Pew and now you aren't allowed in the house? Sponge down with some cola and hose yourself off. Again, those handy acids work to neutralize the stink.

28. Use As a Moisturizer.

Mixing a capful of cola with unscented lotion is said to enhance the moisturizing effects.

29. Keep People From Slipping on Slick Floors.

If you're having an outdoor get together and you're worried about guests slipping on your back patio, try this old stagehand trick: use a mop to spread a thin layer of Coke on the slippery surface. It'll dry slightly sticky and tacky.

DUBIOUS USES

30. Give Your Hair Shine.

Pour a can of coke over your head, work it into your hair, then rinse. It's said your hair will be incredibly shiny. And impervious to slugs and snails.

31. Mousse Alternative.

Mix equal parts coke and water in a spray bottle and mix well. After you shower, spray a light coat of the mixture into your hair, then style. (I'm sure having sugar in your hair all day won't attract flies or be uncomfortable at all.)

32. Prevent Flatulence.

Adding a can of coke to a pot of pinto beans when cooking is supposed to neutralize the gas-causing compounds. (Belching? Another story.)

33. Get a Darker Tan.

There are those who say rubbing plain coke all over your body gives you a deeper tan. (There's caramel coloring in there, but I question the evenness of the result, and how long it will last.)

34. Shell Hard Boiled Eggs.

Apparently, if you soak hard boiled eggs in Coke the shells will dissolve, eliminating the need to actually have to peel them.