Grandma Bea's:

The 47 Secret Garden Formulas & Houseplant Home Remedies that Changed My Life Forever

By Bea Fontaine

How to Make Your Own Powerful Garden Formulas Fast, Easy, and More Naturally

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First of all, welcome! And thank you for taking an interest in this book – and in the topic of garden home remedies. Growing up on a small rural farm, I can remember having an early fascination with the various hand-labeled jars and cans filled with my mom and pop's secret “potions” (as I used to call them) even as a young girl half a century ago.

At that age, it seemed like my mother had a formula for anything, and I remember trying to make my own secret formulas in the backyard as a young girl – which usually involved a little mashed up grass and dandelions mixed with water to go along with the mud pies my brother and I would leave baking in the hot summer sun.

That early fascination eventually developed into a lifetime interest in home remedies of all types for much of my adult life, particularly in caring for my garden and houseplants. So let me just begin by saying it is truly a pleasure to be able to share in that
passion with you today.

Now, let me just say that with this book, I think you're in store for a real treat. This book represents sixty years of testing and experimenting with hundreds of home remedies in my garden and on my houseplants.

I personally own over 140 gardening books in my library that cover the subject of home remedies to one extent or another—so it would be a lie to tell you that I've personally invented all the formulas, home remedies, and tricks you're about to learn in this book.

But what I have done is rigorously tested much of what you'll read about in those books—as well as the remedies passed down within my family and through friends to see what works, what doesn't, and why.

And in doing so, I discovered something which became one of the main reasons I decided to write this book:

Most of what those books claim works—including many of those old wives tales we're all familiar with—is really just a bunch of baloney.
In other words, the remedies don't work. Plain and simple. And in some cases, they can actually cause more harm to your plants than if you did nothing at all. Now, in most cases I learned this the hard way – losing dozens of plants over the years.

But this book will save you all that trouble.

Because in this book, I've provided only the 47 formulas and remedies that I have actually had success with over the years.

Now, in full disclosure, these results are based on my own personal experience, and it's certainly possible that results may vary. After all, it's possible that factors such as weather, climate, and a whole host of other outside variables could influence whether or not a remedy will work for you.

But chances are if the formulas and remedies have worked for me (and have continued to be effective for years) then they'll work for you too.

Okay, before we dive right into the book, there are a few things that you should know up front:
1. The book contains 47 unique formulas and remedies, but you'll find that some of those remedies are listed multiple times because they have several different uses. For example, my “Stay Away Spray” works if you've got a maggot problem, as well as if you want to keep animals out of your garden. So while this same remedy is listed twice – it only counts as one of the 47 unique formulas.

(I mention this, because I know some folks with lots of time on their hands will go through and do a count :-)

You'll find this to be very different from most of the garden home remedy books out there on the market today. They'll entice you with a huge number like 1,001 remedies, formulas, and tricks – only to discover that the same 50 or so have been repeated over and over with a slight twist.

2. Unlike other books that offer garden home remedies, you won't find any formulas that require you to go out to five different stores to find five different ingredients, when just buying a commercially available premixed formula is both faster and cheaper.

Instead, you're probably going to find that you
already have most of the ingredients sitting there in your pantry or in the garage already. And as someone who lives in a small town, I wanted to make sure that anybody would be able to find the ingredients that I recommend – without having to make any special trips to the city (or having to special order something on the internet.)

So I created a little rule before including anything in this book:

I had to be able to find every ingredient at either my local Wal-Mart or my little Grocery Store in town here in rural New Hampshire. (I live in a county where there are more cows than people.) This means that you should have no problem getting a hold of any items that you happen to not have on hand.

3. You also won't find any ridiculous advice (that no one in their right mind would follow) just to fill up extra pages with fluff and filler. If you've spent any time thumbing through garden home remedy books before, then you know exactly what I'm talking about.

Instead you'll find that every page is packed with real, useful, and practical home garden
remedies that you can use yourself.

4. The home-made remedies in this book will save you time and money. Over the years, I can't even begin to estimate how many hundreds – or maybe even thousands of dollars these remedies have saved me.

When you buy certain commercial products, sometimes you're paying several dollars an ounce for what is 95% water – I'll teach you how to make formulas that will literally cost you pennies.

5. Another benefit of these remedies is that since most of them are all-natural, they're a great way for to do your little part to be “be green.”

Imagine for a moment, never having to use another commercial pesticide in your garden or on your houseplants ever again. And if you have small children or grandchildren – or even pets – then imagine how much more relaxed you'll be knowing that you don't have any harmful, dangerous chemicals around that could cause them to get sick.

6. You'll find that a few ingredients are found over and over again in many different formulas. This is actually a good thing, because if you have to
go to the store to pick up an ingredient or two, you'll do so knowing that you'll be able to use that ingredient in many different solutions, and it's not going to go to waste.

(If you're like me, I'd rather have a handful of “basic ingredients” on hand that I can use to make a whole bunch of recipes – rather than a house stocked with items that I only use once or twice and then sit there collecting dust. If you like to bake, just think about how many desserts you can make starting with eggs, flour, water, and sugar combined in different ways.)

7. To help make looking up information as easy as possible, I've also provided a short little index at the end of the book to help you quickly find a solution to your problem.
Chapter 1:
Basic Rules of Thumb

There are a few basic rules of thumb that I like to recommend before trying out any of these formulas or remedies on your own plants.

1. Always test. Before trying anything out yourself, I recommend first testing the results on either a single plant, or part of a plant (such as one leaf) or in an isolated location. It's usually a good idea to let the test run 48-72 hours before confirming the absence of any apparent adverse effects.

2. Unless otherwise indicated, it's a good idea not to apply most formulas on your plants on an overly hot, sunny day. This is because in direct, hot sun, certain ingredients – particularly oils – can burn delicate foliage. I like to err on the side of caution here, and either move my plants to a shady location, or for plants in a fixed location, wait for a partly cloudy or overcast day.
Now, the obvious exception to this is if you're applying an herbicide, such as my “Wickedly Effective Weed-Killing Formula” – in which case the hot weather would actually help the formula work even more quickly.

3. Always spray in the morning. Not only do mornings offer cooler temperatures, but by doing your watering or applying formulas in the morning you give your plants an opportunity to dry out over the course of the day. This reduces any chance of developing fungus or rot.

4. Use separate spray bottles & containers for each of your formulas. Plastic spray bottles cost next to nothing these days, and for everything else you can use a well-washed recycled glass jar or plastic container. But don't try to use the same container for multiple formulas, because this can lead to contamination and have detrimental effects on your plants. For example, this is especially true for formulas like my “Super Spicy Hot Pepper Spray” which works great for getting rid of unwanted pests – but can damage delicate leaves on certain plants.

5. Use caution around children and pets. Although most of the solutions in this book are arguably safer
than their chemical counterparts, it goes without say that you should use extra caution when you have small children and animals around. For example, cats can get sick if they ingest vegetables in the garlic or onion family. So if you have cats around, just be sure to exercise caution when using “Grandma Bea's Garlic Spray.”
Chapter 2:  
**Potent Pesticides & Tricky Traps**

In this chapter, you'll discover how to make your own effective homemade pesticides, insect repellents, and traps to get rid of even the peskiest of pests. I'll start by sharing six solutions that are great to have on hand for general use, and then I'll cover specific formulas that I've found to be particularly effective on thirteen of the most commonly found garden pests.

Pests are organized alphabetically, and rather than give you 10 or 20 ways to get rid of each pest, I've provided you with only the top 1 or 2 most effective ways – this way you can stick with what works, and ditch everything else!

**PART I: General Use**

Keep the bugs away with these super easy...
insecticides and repellents. I like to have each of these solutions on hand, which work great as replacements for a general insecticide that you might use – and as you'll discover later in this chapter, each works particularly well on specific types of insects:

**All-Purpose Stay Away Spray**

- 3 hot peppers (jalapeños work great)
- 3 garlic cloves
- 1 tbsp liquid dish soap
- 2 cups of water

Blend all ingredients, let stand for 1 hr and strain. Spray over plants and/or perimeter to keep pests away. This one is great to start with, and I've found it to be pretty effective at keeping most insects at bay. If you only have one 'general use' pesticide on hand, then this would be it.

**Super Spicy Hot Pepper Spray**

- 2 tbsp hot pepper sauce (like Tabasco)
- 1 drop liquid dish soap

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4 cups water

Combine and mix thoroughly. Let the mixture sit overnight and pour into a spray bottle. Spray over plants.

**Grandma Bea's Garlic Spray**

- 4 garlic cloves
- 2 tsp mineral or vegetable oil
- 2 cups of water
- 1 tsp liquid dish soap

Blend/chop 4 cloves of garlic and mix with 2 tsp of oil. Let this mixture sit over night and then strain. Garlic pieces can be thrown into the garden to keep pests away. Mix the garlic oil with 2 cups of water and teaspoon of dish soap.

This concentrate can be stored until use. To use, mix 2 tablespoons of the concentrated mixture to every 2 cups of water and spray over plants once a week. Also spray around the perimeter of your garden to keep pests from getting too close to your plants.
**Remember:** The oil helps the solution adhere to the leaves but it can also burn delicate leaves if applied on really hot, sunny days.

**Citrus Spray**

- 1 cup of citrus peels (orange, lemons, lime, grapefruits all work equally fine)
- 2 cups boiling water

Finely chop the peels and boil in 2 cups water for 10 minutes. Let it sit until cool and strain. Pour into a spray bottle and spray over plants or around the perimeter of your garden.

**Peppermint Spray**

This one is particularly great for getting rid of “hard body” insects including most beetles.

- 1 tbsp liquid dish soap
- 1 tsp peppermint oil
- 8 cups of water

Simply mix the ingredients and spray on
plants and soil.

**Oh-So-Simple Soap Spray**

This solution does a great job at killing certain insects such as aphids, thrips, and scale.

- liquid dish soap
- water

This one couldn't be any easier to make. Mix 2 drops of liquid dish soap with every 4 cups of warm water and spray directly on your plants. The soap will dissolve better and distribute more evenly throughout the solution if you use warm water. Just be sure to let cool to room temperature before applying on your plants.

**PART II: Specific Pests**

1. **Ants**

**Vinegar Solution**
• vinegar
• water

A 50/50 mixture of vinegar and water will zap just about anything. Use with caution as it can kill plants.

**Sugar Ant Bait**

• ½ cup borax
• ½ cup sugar

Mix 1/2 cup borax with 1/2 cup sugar. Attracted by the sugar, the ants will bring the sugar/borax mixture into their mounds and be killed. The mixture can be poured directly over ant mounds or placed in small containers where sugar ants have been seen. Evaluate after 10 days and reapply over the mound if necessary.

Follow precautions on borax containers and use with caution near children and pets.

**Tomato Leaf Spray**

• 2 cups water

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• 2 cups chopped tomato leaves

Add chopped tomato leaves to water and let it sit overnight. Strain leaves and pour liquid into a spray water. You can use as it or even dilute the liquid with another cup of water. Spray on and below infested leaves and plants. Repeat the next day if necessary. Liquid can be kept up to a week.

**Powder that Packs a Powerful Punch**

Sprinkling cayenne pepper or cinnamon on ant hills will drive ants crazy. They'll go nuts. Dust the area every few days. Unfortunately, this won't actually kill the ants, but from experience they will rush off to seek shelter elsewhere – and you can combine this technique with the borax/sugar mixture: just sprinkle the borax mixture around the perimeter of your yard, and ants will be attracted to the sugar, and thus seek new shelter further away from you home.

2. **Aphids**

**Oil Spray**
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp liquid dish soap
- Water

Add 1 1/2 tbsp of the oil/soap mixture to every cup of warm water.* Pour into a spray bottle and spray on all sides of the leaves and stems being attacked by aphids. Apply early in the morning (on shady days) and repeat every few days until clear.

*You can optionally add 1 tbsp of garlic oil to every cup for extra punch! (See Grandma Bea's Garlic Spray recipe on page 15 for details).

Remember: The oil helps the solution adhere to the leaves but it can also burn delicate leaves if applied on really hot, sunny days.

**Tomato Leaf Spray**

- 2 cups water
- 2 cups chopped tomato leaves

Add chopped tomato leaves to water and let it sit overnight. Strain leaves and pour liquid into a spray water. You can use as it or even dilute the
liquid with another cup of water. Spray on and below infested leaves and plants. Repeat the next day if necessary. Liquid can be kept up to a week.

3. Cabbage Worm/Caterpillars

**Spicy Protective Powder**

This spicy powder is great for protecting cabbage family plants from the hungry caterpillars that might be lurking in your garden.

- 1 cup flour
- 2 tbsp cayenne pepper

Combine the flour and cayenne pepper and sprinkle over plants. The caterpillars won't be able to take it. As a bonus, the hot pepper will keep a lot of other creatures away from your plants too.

4. Corn Earworm

**Tomato Leaf Spray**
• 2 cups water
• 2 cups chopped tomato leaves

Add chopped tomato leaves to water and let it sit overnight. Strain leaves and pour liquid into a spray water. You can use it as is or even dilute the liquid with another cup of water. Spray on and below infested leaves and plants. Repeat the next day if necessary. Liquid can be kept up to a week.

5. Earwigs

Earwigs, sometimes known as “the assassin bug” do eat aphids and other garden pests and can in some respects be a friend to the gardener. But you can trap them relatively easily if you want to keep their numbers in check.

Tricky Earwig Newspaper Trap

• 1 or more sheets of newspaper (or cardboard paper towel tubes also work great)
• rubber band
• water

Roll a sheet of newspaper into a tube (secure
with a rubber band if needed) and dip the tube in water so that it is soaked all the way through. Make as many newspaper rolls as needed and place them in areas with earwig damage.

Earwigs like to come out at night, so place the traps before nightfall. Check the traps in the morning. Earwigs will go deep into the rolls. You can shake out the earwigs over a pail filled with soapy water (which will kill them), dispose of the roll entirely, or relocate the earwigs to a location where you've got an aphid problem.

**Earwig Bath**

- vegetable oil or soapy water
- shallow container(s)*

Fill a shallow container with vegetable oil or soapy water (leave a 1 inch gap at the top). Place the shallow container in the garden, make it flush with the ground. Earwigs will go into the liquid and drown.

*An empty tuna can works great for this or make your own shallow dish by cutting down a paper cup.*
6. Flies and Gnats

Flying pests bothering you? Try the following homemade sticky trap.

**Sneaky Little Sticky Trap**

- yellow cardstock or yellow paint and cardboard pieces (3” x 5” or other size)
- plastic wrap
- Vaseline
- string or stake
- scissors

**Step 1:** Paint cardboard pieces yellow or cover in yellow paper. (Or cut yellow cardstock into 3” x 5” pieces.)

**Step 2:** Cover the yellow 3” x 5” pieces in plastic wrap.

**Step 3:** Attach a stake (if going into the ground) or a string if being hung from a tree.

**Step 4:** Apply a layer of vaseline over the plastic wrap.
**Step 5:** Position the traps around your desired area. Flies and gnats will be attracted to the bright yellow color and will become trapped in the Vaseline.

7. **Maggots**

**All-Purpose Stay Away Spray**

- 3 hot peppers (jalapeños work great)
- 3 garlic cloves
- 1 tbsp liquid dish soap
- 2 cups of water

Blend all ingredients, let stand for 1 hr and strain. Spray over plants/area.

8. **Mites**

**Grandma Bea's Mite Fightin' Spray**

- 1 tbsp buttermilk*
- ½ cup wheat flour
- 8 cups water

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Combine all ingredients so that the flour dissolves completely. Pour into a spray bottle and spray over your plants. Repeat 1 or 2 times a week until mites disappear.

Don't have buttermilk in your kitchen? Use a substitute: Add a drop of lemon juice or vinegar to 1 tablespoon of milk and let stand for 5 minutes. (Traditional recipe quantity: 1 cup of milk for every 1 tbsp of vinegar or lemon juice.)

**Tomato Leaf Spray**

- 2 cups water
- 2 cups chopped tomato leaves

Add chopped tomato leaves to water and let it sit overnight. Strain leaves and pour liquid into a spray water. You can use as it or even dilute the liquid with another cup of water. Spray on and below infested leaves and plants. Repeat the next day if necessary. Liquid can be kept up to a week.
9. Moths

**Tomato Leaf Spray**

- 2 cups water
- 2 cups chopped tomato leaves

Add chopped tomato leaves to water and let it sit overnight. Strain leaves and pour liquid into a spray water. You can use as it or even dilute the liquid with another cup of water. Spray on and below infested leaves and plants. Repeat the next day if necessary. Liquid can be kept up to a week.

10. Nematodes

A nematode is an unsegmented worm with an elongated rounded body pointed at both ends – more commonly known as round worms, including hook worms and pin worms.

**No More Nematode Spray**

- 1 can of beer
- 1 cup of molasses
Combine and spray/pour over areas that seem to be affected. The nematodes will feed on the mixture and essentially suffocate due to an inability to digest the formula.

11. Scale

Oil Spray

- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp liquid dish soap

Add 1 1/2 tbsp of the oil/soap mixture to every cup of warm water.* Pour into a spray bottle and spray on all sides of the leaves and stems being attacked by scale. Apply early in the morning (on shady days) and repeat every few days until clear.

*add 1 tbsp of garlic oil to every cup for extra punch! (See the Garlic Spray recipe on page 15 for details).

**Remember:** The oil helps the solution adhere to the leaves but it can also burn delicate leaves if applied on really hot, sunny days.
12. Slugs and Snails

Slugs and snails can't resist yeast, so why not invite them over for a drink with these yeast beverages?

**Slug and Snail Beer**

- beer (the cheaper, the better!)
- shallow container

Pour beer into a shallow dish (an inch or so from the top)*. Sink the container into the ground so that the top is flush with the ground. Place the container(s) in your garden and wait. The slugs/snails will drown. Refill as necessary.

**Slugs and Snail Yeast Feast**

No beer? Try this formula instead:

- 1/2 tsp. Baking yeast
- 1 tbsp. Sugar
- 1 tbsp. Salt
- Warm Water
Pour the mixture into a shallow dish (an inch or so from the top)*. Sink the container into the ground so that the top is flush with the ground. Place the container(s) in your garden and wait. The slugs/snails will drown. Refill as necessary.

*An empty tuna can works great for this or make your own shallow dish by cutting down a paper cup.

**Citrus Trap**

- orange(s) or grapefruit(s) (cut in halves)

Cut an orange or grapefruit in half and scoop out the inside.

Place the rinds in your garden, skin side up so that they look like little upside-down orange domes on the ground.

Let them sit overnight.

Look under the rinds for slugs in the morning. You'll find your garden slugs have gathered in the citrus cave. You can collect and then dispose them. Repeat with new rinds until needed.
13. Yellow Jackets

**Yellow Jacket Trap**

Hang this trap away from where you will be eating or entertaining outside (I like to place a few of them about 20 ft away from our back patio, away from the grill and picnic table).

- 2 or 3 liter soda bottle
- scissors or utility knife
- stapler or duct tape
- string
- soda or fruit juice

**Step 1:** Cut the top half of the bottle (where the curved top meets the straight side or where the top of the label ends).

**Step 2:** Put the top of the bottle inside the bottom of the bottle. (It will like the bottle has a funnel in it). Staple or duct tape the top inside the bottom.

**Step 3:** Cut two holes on the sides of the bottle near the top. Tie string through the holes so
that the trap can be hung from a tree. (If you don't have a tree available, the bottle can be placed on the ground too.)

**Step 4:** Add soda or juice to the bottom of the bottle (about 2 inches of liquid will do). Spread some soda or juice around the inner funnel—this will help lure the yellow jackets to your trap.

**Step 5:** Hang the trap a good distance away from where you will be eating or entertaining.

Yellow jackets will be attracted by the sweet drinks and find their way into the bottle, but will have no way out. Once trapped, you can fill the bottle with soapy water and drown them, or simply dispose of the entire trap along with the insects themselves.
In this short chapter, I'll give you a few simple quick tricks you can use to help keep unwanted animals out of your yard and garden. The general purpose formulas below have worked effectively for me with mice, moles, voles, squirrels, skunks, and raccoons. And for deer, I have a specific (albeit a bit odd) trick that has worked wonders for me for years!

**General Purpose**

**All-Purpose Stay Away Spray**

- 3 hot peppers (jalapeños work great)
- 3 garlic cloves
- 1 tbsp liquid dish soap
- 2 cups of water
Blend all ingredients, let stand for 1 hr and strain. Spray over plants and/or your perimeter to keep animals away.

**Super Spicy Hot Pepper Spray**

- 2 tbsp hot pepper sauce (like Tabasco)
- 1 drop liquid dish soap
- 4 cups water

Combine and mix thoroughly. Let the mixture sit overnight and pour into a spray bottle. Spray over plants.

**Jalapeño Pepper Barrier**

Tired of those critters sneaking in to eat your plants?

Plant jalapeño peppers within 6” of the affected area to prevent everything from moles, voles, groundhogs, rabbits, squirrels and more from feasting on your garden. In fact, our own cats and dogs (who generally have a field day digging around in our garden out back) won't even go near where we plant our jalapeño plants every year.
Deer

Soap on a Rope Deer-be-Gone

- bar of soap
- string or women's panty hose

Believe it or not, but hanging pieces of Irish Spring soap around the garden will keep the deer out of your garden and lawn. The soap can be strung from trees and plants. Pieces can also be placed in tied off sections of women's panty hose where they will dissolve slowly over time.
Chapter 4:
Homemade Fungicide Formulas & Solutions

In this chapter, you'll discover several effective home-made fungicide formulas, as well as a few other fungicidal remedies that have worked for me.

All-Purpose Fungicide Sprays

Try these natural fungicide solutions to treat and keep harmful fungus away from your plants:

Listerine Spray

Listerine has anti-fungal properties, and the alcohol content also makes it effective against bugs!

Start with a diluted solution of 50% Listerine
and 50% water before going full strength. Simply spray your plant lightly once a week or so, and you'll have yourself a quick and easy way to keep away unwanted pests and disease, and ensure your plant stays healthy.

This "2-in-1" home remedy can be used as a spray at full strength for short periods (about 2-3 consecutive days is okay) as a preventative measure. Just be sure to ONLY use the original (gold colored) version, because the flavored versions have added substances that are not 100% plant-friendly.

**Chive Tea (General Fungicide)**

- 2 cups water
- chives

Chop chives and place in 2 cups of boiling water. Turn off the heat and let chives sit in the water until water is cool. Strain chives and pour chive tea into a spray bottle. Chive tea can be sprayed on plants two times a week.

**Garlic Spray (General Fungicide)**
• 4 garlic cloves
• 2 tsp mineral or vegetable oil
• 2 cups of water
• 1 tsp liquid dish soap

Blend/chop 4 cloves of garlic and mix with 2 tsp of oil. Let this mixture sit overnight and then strain. Garlic pieces can be thrown into the garden to keep pests away.

Mix the garlic oil with 2 cups of water and 1 teaspoon of dish soap. This concentrate can be stored until use.

To use, mix 2 tablespoons of the concentrated mixture to every 2 cups of water and spray over plants once a week.

*Arm & Hammer Slammer* (*General Fungicide*)

• 2 tbsp baking soda
• 1 gallon water
• (optional) 1 tsp mineral or vegetable oil
Dissolve 2 tablespoons of baking soda into a gallon of water and add 1 teaspoon of oil to the mixture. (The oil is optional. It helps the solution adhere to the leaves but it can also burn delicate leaves on really hot, sunny days.)

Spray the solution 1 or 2 times a week in the morning, covering the stems and all sides of the leaves.

**Specific-Purpose Fungicide Sprays**

The following formulas work wonders when combating specific fungal problems on your plants.

**Mildew, Tomato Blight, Leaf Blight, & Powdery Mildew Fungicide**

- 3 tbsp baking soda
- 1 tsp liquid dish soap
- 1 gallon water

Mix and spray on leaves and plants in the morning. Repeat weekly as necessary.
Mildew & Scab Rehab Remedy

- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 gallon water

Mix and spray your plants thoroughly in the morning. Repeat weekly as necessary.

Black Spot Milk Treatment

Black spot is the most common fungus diseases to affect roses. The fungus, which thrives between spring and summertime, produces small black spots on leaves and sometimes stems. The leaves will turn from green to yellow and eventually fall off, leaving a once perfectly healthy plant completely bare.

Black spot spores will grow in warm, wet conditions. Watering your plants in the morning and letting them dry out during the day will help prevent black spot. If you choose to remove diseased leaves from the plant, dispose of them in the trash immediately. Do not compost or leave diseased leaves on the ground, otherwise the fungus spores will spread to other parts of your garden.
The following solution can help prevent and treat black spot:

- water
- milk

Mix equal parts milk and water. Spray the half and half mixture or dab (foam paintbrushes work great) onto affected leaves. Spraying the mixture over all the leaves will help prevent future black spot fungus from damaging your plants.

**Black Spot Baking Soda Treatment**

- 1 tbsp baking soda
- 1 tsp liquid dish soap
- 1 gallon of water

Mix all ingredients well and pour into a spray bottle. Spray the solution on both sides of the leaves once a week (preferably in the morning). Reapply the solution after rain.
Powdery Mildew Milk Cure

Milk is a great fungicide and can tackle that pesky powdery mildew that appears on many of your garden squash, cucumber, tomato plants. The natural enzymes in the milk change the pH levels in the leaves, leaving them less susceptible to mildew.

This solution couldn't be any easier:

- water
- milk

Mix 9 parts water with 1 part milk and spray the solution thoroughly over your plants. Repeat every 3 to 4 days on affected areas until it clears (don't forget to get under the leaves). This solution can also be sprayed weekly as a preventative measure.

The Power of Cinnamon

Cinnamon Powder

Cinnamon is a safe and all-natural fungicide, and applying a small amount on exposed areas your plant can protect it from fungus and bacteria!
Here's how to use it:

Simply wet the recently cut / broken area of the plant with a bit of water so the cinnamon will stick. Sprinkle the cinnamon directly onto the affected area, or pour a small amount in a plate first, and then "dip" the tips of the affected areas into the plate of cinnamon. But whichever method you prefer, be sure to use Cinnamon sparingly.

You can also use cinnamon to help give your new seedlings a happy and healthy start.

Simply sprinkle cinnamon powder on the surface over your newly planted seedlings. The antifungal and anti-bacterial qualities of the cinnamon will protect your seedlings from disease.

Think of it like “antibacterial spray” for your plants!
Chapter 5:
Free Fertilizers &
Soil Boosters

Here are several free (or almost free) fertilizers and soil boosters that you can use in either your garden or directly in potted plants.

Grandma Bea's “Wonder Water”

- 1 gallon of compost (in burlap bag)
- 4 gallons of warm water
- one 5 gallon bucket

Soak the burlap bag of compost in the 4 gallons of water. Cover the bucket and let it sit for at least 5 days. Remove the burlap bag from the bucket. You can spray the tea on your plants and/or water your garden and lawn with this super rich compost tea
Nitrogen Boosters

- **Cat Food:** Spread dry cat food directly on soil so it decomposes when wet. Usually the cheap stuff has the highest nitrogen concentration.

- **Coffee Grounds:** Dry the grounds before use. Add small amounts to your potted plants and/or garden. You can sprinkle used grounds for slow-release or dilute them with water and pour into the soil for a liquid fertilizer.

Potassium Booster

- **Banana Peels:** Plant the peel under the soil and let it decompose into the soil. The potassium will boost the flower and fruit plants. (Liquid peel: Liquify the peel in the blender with 1 part water and pour.)
Calcium Booster

• Egg shells: Wash shells and crush them either in a bag or in a blender into small pieces or powder. Sprinkle the powdered shells on the soil around your plants and trees.
Chapter 6:  
More Tips Straight from Grandma's Cupboard

Here are a few more home remedies, formulas and tips that I've found to be effective over the years, and which may be helpful to you too!

How to Make Cut Flowers Last Longer

Keep cut flowers from you garden longer after putting in water with these two “flower power cocktails”

**Flower Juice**

- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 cup warm water

Mix and pour into vase(s).
**Flower Soda**

- 1 cup of lemon-lime soda
- 3 cups warm water
- ¼ tsp bleach

Mix and pour into vase(s).

**How to Keep Mosquitoes Away**

Follow these few tips to keep those mosquitoes away from you and your garden.

**Pond/Birth Bath Fix**

No fish in the pond to eat mosquito larvae? Has a bird bath in your garden become a mosquito breeding ground? Add a few drops of olive oil to the water. The oil will drown any adult mosquitoes landing on the surface and will keep the young larvae from reaching the surface to breath.

**Mosquito Repelling Plants**

Here is a list of plants mosquitoes can't stand to be around. I've listed them in order of
effectiveness based on my own experience, beginning with the most effective. Try them in planters near your deck/outdoor sitting area.

- Lemongrass
- Catnip
- Catmint
- Rosemary
- Marigolds
- Citronella Grass
- Basil
- Lavender
- Peppermint

_Homemade Mosquito Repellents_

1. Crushing the leaves from any of the plants listed above and wiping them over areas of exposed skin will work great as a quick natural garden repellent.

2. Peppermint oil, dabbed on skin/clothing is particularly effective at keeping mosquitoes away. You can dilute the oil rubbing alcohol and spray (1 part oil to 10 parts alcohol).
3. Rubbing a dryer sheet over your skin and placing dryer sheet(s) in your pockets will also do the trick.

4. Here's a repellent that you can use to cover a larger area:
   - 1 cup lemon-scented ammonia
   - 1 cup lemon-scented liquid dish soap

   Combine the ammonia and dish soap and spray the mixture around your deck, fence or patio 2-3 times a week in the morning or evening. The mosquitoes will stay clear from the strong scent of lemon.

**Grandma Bea's All-Natural Flea & Tick Repellent**

- ½ cup fresh or dried rosemary
- 4 cups water

   Add the ½ cup of rosemary to 4 cups of boiling water. Boil for 15 minutes, strain and let it cool. Once cool, the solution can be sprayed or dabbed on the skin. This spray works great on pets too!
Wickedly-Effective Weed-Killing Formulas

Get rid of pesky weeds with these quick fixes:

Vinegar

Vinegar kills just about everything, so pouring some over your weeds will zap them completely. Just be careful not to get any on your surrounding plants or you might kill them too! Start with a less-toxic mixture of 25% vinegar and 75% water before going for the full vinegar treatment.

Tip: Washing the vinegar directly on weeds with a foam paintbrush prevents the vinegar from contacting other plants

Boiling Water

Pouring boiling water on weeds growing in the cracks of sidewalks or driveways works.

Urine

Yup, urine is highly acidic and salty. It works wonders on your soil when diluted, but will kill just about everything in your garden when poured
straight on. Something to think about next time you take the dog for a walk! :-)  

**Bee-Attracting Pollination Spray**

Have beautiful flowers, but no bees to pollinate them? Lure bees into your garden with a quick sugar fix:

- Sugar
- Water

Combine 1 part sugar to 4 parts water and spray directly on your flowers. Yes, this actually works! But just a little will do (a light misting works best), because if you overdo it, you may attract ants and other pests.
Chapter 7: Putting it All Together

Now that you're armed with the best-of-the-best garden home remedies that actually work, you may decide to keep this little guide handy next time a problem pops up to see if there's an effective home remedy before going straight for a commercially available solution.

Now, some people may be disappointed to discover that there isn't a home remedy listed for their particular problem or desired solution. Other books may offer such solutions, but I've tried to save you time, money and a little heart-ache by sharing only the remedies that I've found to be effective after six decades of testing and experimenting.

For everything else, I stick with commercially available products – and I recommend the same to all my good friends and family.
That being said, I like to use all-natural or home-made solutions whenever possible. So, if you're like me, you may like to keep a readily-available stock of the most commonly used formulas on hand.

Below, I've put together a quick checklist for you of the most critical (and most commonly used) ingredients that I try to keep on hand at all times:

- Dish Soap
- Baking Soda
- Listerine
- Cinnamon
- Tabasco Sauce
- Garlic
- Mineral Oil
- Borax
- Sugar
- Cayenne Pepper
- Vinegar
- Peppermint Oil
- Spray bottles
- Empty jars or plastic containers

Some ingredients – like tomato leaves or
some of the mosquito-repelling herbs tend to be seasonal for much of the country. So I try to keep these items on hand when available as well. Other items – like egg shells, coffee grounds, and banana peels are things we go through every week and either go into our compost bin, or directly to the garden or specific potted plants as and when needed.

And that's really all there is to it! Now go out there and have some fun, and pass along these tips and tricks to your friends and family, so they can benefit from all these formulas and remedies too! :-)

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