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After watching the constant TV advertisements for Tooth Pastes, I wondered if the high cost of these items today are not due to these ads, for which the Producers have to pay through their nose. □ Actually, we the consumers subsidize these advertisements, by patronizing their brands.

Just read what follows, and if you want to help the Producers to become richer, it is fine. □ If not you can save and use this money for your other needs.

“Proctor and Gamble and Lever Brothers-and any number of other manufacturers-would like us to believe that the only proper way to care for our teeth is with expensive, highly flavored toothpastes that come in non-biodegradable, throwaway, zinc-and-lead (Now plastic -ed.) tubes.’Tain’t so!

There are effective, low-cost alternatives to that aromatic goo-in-a-tube you find on supermarket shelves. Our family has been making and using its own toothpastes and powders for years...and we’ve enjoyed excellent dental health, too. You and your clan can save a significant amount of money-and at the same time keep your teeth and gums in good shape-by kicking the *Madison Avenue habit* and choosing to follow a few simple rules:

1. MAKE YOUR OWN TOOTH POWDER. *Thoroughly mix 3 parts baking soda (the cleanser and sweetener) with 1 part salt (the abrasive) and funnel the compound into a short small-mouthed container such as a pop or beer bottle. You’ll find that the creation has a satisfying, different taste and leaves your mouth feeling very fresh and soothed. If you’d like, add a few drops of peppermint or wintergreen oil to the concoction - or mix the home “brew” half-and-half with a commercial tooth powder - to give the dentifrice a more pleasant flavor.*

[More Household Ingredients](#)

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How to make your own toothpaste or tooth powder

Written by W.J.Pais

2. MAKE YOUR OWN TOOTHPASTE. This formula is simply an extension of the tooth powder recipe:
*To each half cup of homemade
powder, add 3 teaspoons of [glycerin](#),
[rin](#),
10-20 drops of flavoring (peppermint, wintergreen, anise, cinnamon or whatever) and 1 drop of food coloring. Mix the ingredients thoroughly in a bowl and add just enough water to make the concoction "tooth-pastey". Spoon the substance into a small refillable plastic squeeze bottle or any container that dispenses easily and won't leak. VoilÁ! Toothpaste! □ □
(Isn't glycerin bad for you...?)*

The amount of glycerin you add will control the "pastiness" of the cleanser and obviously the type of flavoring will determine the taste. Both ingredients are inexpensive and available at any drugstore. Your neighborhood grocer, of course, can supply you with salt, food coloring and baking soda.

Commercial toothpastes generally incorporate a slick, easy flowing combination of chalk, soap, glycerin and flavorings. Your homemade creation won't be as smooth...but I know you'll find it more satisfying, less wasteful and - above all - less expensive. You'll be able to make a year's supply of toothpaste (for a family of four) at a total cost of around a buck and a half (...maybe a *little* more by 2009 standards. -ed.).

The formulas I've outlined here have worked well for my family...but don't be afraid to experiment and work up your own [recipes](#) .

A little experience and imagination can go a long way. See what you can do to produce your own homemade million-dollar smiles...

Editor's Note: *My daughter and I made some toothpaste this past weekend. I must say that if you decide to try it, you may have to do some experimenting, as we did. I found that the glycerin called for in the recipe is not enough. We also cut back on the salt, and didn't use any food coloring. My daughter picked out some cinnamon extract instead of the mint flavoring, which I would've preferred. If you go with cinnamon, use it sparingly!!!*

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□ I went to three different drugstores before I found what I needed. The last one, a local family pharmacy, had everything on the shelves. The first two were chain stores.

□ I have to say, brushing with our homemade toothpaste was an experience, but I have never had my mouth feel fresher, and have that feeling last so long into the day (no, it wasn't the cinnamon...). I spent around \$7.00, and I feel that there is enough left over ingredients to last at least six months or more.

UPDATE:□ The previous note was written back in 1997.□ Not too long ago, Dr. Paul Keyes contributed a piece to the OraMedia site which lists (in order of effectiveness) the best household ingredients which can be used in a toothpaste or a tooth powder ":
<http://mizar5.com/keyes.html>