

The microwave lemon trick – and 10 other household hacks that actually work

Level 2: Intermediate – Teacher's notes

Article summary: The author shares some household hacks to make life easier.

Time: 60–90 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Vocabulary: phrasal verbs

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of housekeeping and for students to reflect on their relationship to housework and housekeeping hacks and tricks.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and compare their answers in pairs or small groups. Check understanding by asking students to rephrase or find synonyms for the words.

Key:

1. skewer
2. custom-made
3. Rust
4. Mould (mold, AmE)
5. overwhelming
6. Repellent
7. Grounds
8. smudged
9. zap
10. Urine
11. dilute

- b. Ask students to do the exercise individually and compare their answers in pairs or small groups.

Key:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------|
| 1. smudged | 7. zapping |
| 2. rust | 8. mould |
| 3. skewers | 9. grounds |
| 4. overwhelming | 10. dilute |
| 5. custom-made | 11. urine |
| 6. repellent | |

3. Comprehension check

- a. Ask students to read the statements and find the relevant information in the text to complete the task.

Key:

1. a discarded plastic bottle, a cotton bud, a skewer, and something to pierce the lid with, like a knife
2. 200g citric acid, 150ml boiling water, and 20ml washing-up liquid
3. It can remove algae, dissolve rust, and kill mould, clean shower screens, baths, sinks and shower heads, brass and copper, and remove stains on laundry.
4. Wash everything on cold and don't bother sorting by colour. When the clothes are dry, don't fold them.
5. used coffee grounds
6. Washing soda. For stains, mix with hot water and soak clothes for an hour. Put on chairs, shoes, rugs, or carpets to remove smells.
7. Dip it in cold water, wipe the screen with it and then polish.
8. Use a lemon. Put it in water and microwave for five minutes.
9. Use vinegar when washing soda fails.

4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise in pairs and highlight the phrasal verbs in the article. Remind them that the two parts might be separated by objects.

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Key:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. <i>up</i> | 5. <i>up</i> |
| 2. <i>out (of)</i> | 6. <i>down</i> |
| 3. <i>out</i> | 7. <i>off</i> |
| 4. <i>up</i> | |

- b. Ask students to complete the statements individually or in pairs. As an extension, get them to try and remember in what context each phrasal verb is used in the article.

Key:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <i>take out</i> | 5. <i>set up</i> |
| 2. <i>wipe down</i> | 6. <i>mix up</i> |
| 3. <i>spread out</i> | 7. <i>scrape off</i> |
| 4. <i>freshen up</i> | |

5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas about each statement and encourage them to support their opinions with examples.

6. In your own words

- a. Ask students first to choose an area they want to focus on. Remind them that they can choose something they already do well or want to learn to do. Give them time to research. Then, ask them to write two or more hacks. Remind them that they can use the article as a model. They can structure their text in a similar format or more like a "how to" tutorial. Have students peer edit in pairs.
- b. Ask students to share their hacks in small groups. You can ask students to share one hack with the whole class if there is time. You could also ask students to share their texts online.