

Removing Skunk Odor



Deodorizing Treatment

Consider these approaches when dealing with skunk odor:

1. Remove the source of the odor.
2. Ventilate the area with fresh air.
3. Wash or apply deodorants to the source of the odor.
4. Use air fresheners to mask residual odor in the air.
5. Use laundry detergent to remove residual odor in fabrics.



Skunk odor may reactivate during periods of high humidity. If the odor does not decrease in a week or two, the skunk may have re-sprayed or died on the property.

Home Remedies

Never overlook the simple act of taking a shower and washing clothes to mitigate skunk odor. Time, air, soap and water, and ammonia in water are recommended to remove odor from fabrics. Other treatments include washing items with a strong soap, a heavy-duty laundry detergent, or borax. Be sure to follow any directions that are specific to washing a particular fabric.

A chemist by the name of Paul Krebaum discovered a solution that chemically neutralizes skunk odor. The ingredients for the formulation are:

- 1 quart 3 percent hydrogen peroxide (fresh bottle)
- 1/4 cup baking soda (sodium bicarbonate)
- 1-2 teaspoons liquid dish soap.

Ingredients must be mixed in an open container and used immediately. Never mix the ingredients in advance because oxygen released from hydrogen peroxide may cause a closed container to explode. The solution can be used on people or pets; avoid splashing the product in the eyes or mouth. Allow the solution to remain on hair for five minutes before rinsing with water. Repeat as needed. Do not use this solution on clothing — it may discolor the fabric.

For clothing that cannot be washed or dry-cleaned, such as shoes, suspend them outdoors, allowing fresh air to carry away the volatile thiols. The odor will decrease over time provided the material is not re-exposed to skunk musk. Any cleaning fluid or household chlorine bleach also can be used to remove skunk odor from fabrics. Use these products in separate steps — not together. Test cleansers first on an inconspicuous portion of the fabric before applying to the entire fabric.

When deodorizing a house, don't forget to change the air filter to the furnace/air conditioner. Sometimes it can become contaminated with skunk odor and continue to disperse the smell throughout the house after the initial source of the odor has been treated.