

How to Use Baking Soda for Weed Control



I've dealt with some nasty weeds in my day. I've also tried a lot of methods to get rid of said [weeds](#). A lot of those so-called "tried-and-true" methods are actually bogus. Like so

many gardening pieces of wisdom, a lot of weed control tricks aren't really useful. What about baking soda for weed control? Does it work?

Baking soda's many uses

I *always* have a box of baking soda in my cupboard—usually two, in fact. Baking soda has many uses. It's a frequent baking ingredient. It's great for sopping up urine stains (something I have to deal with sometimes as a dog owner) and it deodorizes almost like magic. I also always have a box in the fridge to deal with stubborn smells that permeate from containers of leftovers.

But does it work for killing weeds? Can you use baking soda for weed control?

Baking soda in the garden

I have a love-hate relationship with weeds. I genuinely believe that some weeds are lovely. Dandelions, for instance, are a treat and I love how they attract dozens of bees to my garden. Invasive vines, on the other hand? Kill them with fire! Or maybe baking soda?

Here's the deal. Baking soda is not a magic weed killer. Don't believe the hype. It contains sodium, which will surely kill weeds if you pile on the stuff. But, salt is also going to harm other green living things around your garden. Salt can also leech into your soil and can cause harmful runoff.

TLDR: It works but it can also cause problems.

It seems like a harmless substance, but I don't recommend it for use in the garden. There are plenty of better ways to deal with weeds.

Baking soda alternatives

Here are a few alternatives to using baking soda for weed control.

- **Landscape fabric.** Prepare beds with landscape fabric to prevent weeds from popping up in the first place.
- **Plastic mulch.** Plastic mulch is another easy-to-use alternative that can easily suffocate weeds.
- **Organic mulch.** Good ole' organic mulches like wood chips and straw can help prevent weed growth. If you have a bed infested with weeds, though, don't use [mulch](#) until you've pulled out most of the invading plants.
- **Your hands.** If you're dealing with a minor weed infestation, just use your hands or a trowel to dig the weeds up by the roots. Remember to dig up the *whole* plant or else it'll pop up again.
- **Cardboard.** Lay down cardboard before planting to prevent weeds from growing back.
- **Get some chickens.** Chickens won't selectively pick out weeds for you but they will eat the remnants that you've pulled up. That way, you won't have to find a way to dispose of them.

Quick tip: Never toss weeds into your household compost. You can contaminate your garden this way!

While I have you here: if you *really* hate those dandelions. I suggest not letting them go to waste. Pick them and use them to make tea.