

Skunk Odor Remover Recipe

Tomato juice does not work to neutralize or deodorize skunk spray. Bathing an animal in tomato juice seems to work because after lengthy exposure to strong odors, the human nose quits smelling the odor (olfactory fatigue). When this happens while bathing a pet in tomato juice, the odor of tomato juice can easily be detected. A person suffering olfactory fatigue to skunk spray will swear that the skunk odor is gone and was neutralized by the tomato juice. Another person arriving at this point will quickly tell you that the skunk smell is still present.

1 cup water

¼ to ½ cup baking soda

1 tsp liquid dishwasher soap (Dawn Dishwashing Detergent is often recommended, but any dish soap will work)

Put cotton balls in your pet's ears to protect the inner-ear tissue from the cleaning mixture, which could easily drip in. Apply a drop of mineral oil to his eyes to prevent irritation. Wash the pet outside so the skunk spray does not contaminate your house. . Using Rubber or latex gloves mix above ingredients well in an open container (bucket or bowl). Thoroughly soak dog with warm water. When ready, mix in 1 qt 3% hydrogen peroxide; it will be fizzy, a clue that you shouldn't try to mix it or store it in a bottle or other closed container. Start with your pet's head, taking care not to get the solution into his eyes, ears or mouth; you can use a sponge to carefully wipe it onto his face. Knead the solution well into his coat while it is still bubbling. Make sure the solution soaks through the hair onto the skin. Let the solution stand for 10 minutes before rinsing. Rinse the animal thoroughly with clean water after 5 minutes of scrubbing. Be sure to protect the eyes when rinsing the head. Repeat if the smell persists. Chances are you will not get all of the smell off of the face and will have to live with that as it wears off. This solution has no shelf life. (This recipe will wash a small dog the size of a Jack Russell terrier. Make multiple batches for bigger pets.) The hydrogen peroxide mixture must be used immediately after mixing and will not work if it is stored for any length of time. **DO NOT STORE IN A CLOSED CONTAINER** - it releases oxygen gas so it could break the container. This mixture may bleach the pet's hair. (Paul Krebaum's Recipe from Chemical & Engineering News , October 18, 1993, p. 90).

Commercially prepared skunk odor remover or douches that remove skunk scents from fur are also available. Ask your veterinarian for advice on which product works best. You can try Tricotine Liquid Douche Concentrate or any over-the-counter douche.

After bathing, check your dog's eyes. If they are red and watering, your dog may have taken a direct hit in the face. Skunk spray won't blind the dog, but it's very painful. Contact a vet.

Wash colorfast inanimate objects (buildings, decks, etc.) that have been sprayed with one cup of liquid laundry bleach per gallon of water. CAUTION - THIS MAY BLEACH THE BUILDINGS, DECKS, ETC. Try it on a small area if bleaching may be a problem. The bleach must come in contact with the spot where the secretion was sprayed. Repeated applications may be necessary for large amounts of the skunk spray. DO NOT USE BLEACH ON HUMANS, PETS OR CLOTHING.

The yard: Spray that has drifted over a large area can be neutralized by mixing 1 gallon of clear vinegar and 1 cup of non-foaming cleanser (such as liquid dishwasher soap) in a backpack garden sprayer. Spray down the area with the skunk smell; it will be neutralized on contact.

If a skunk has sprayed underneath a house, place a plastic tarp in the crawl space and put 25 pounds of charcoal on the tarp. The odor in the air will be soaked up by the charcoal. Be sure to ventilate the living space within the house. (These last two odor solutions were provided by Pete Bromley, Fisheries & Wildlife Coordinator, NCSU Dept of Zoology.)