**Weird Uses for Onions** by [**Tricia Drevets**](https://homesteadsurvivalsite.com/author/tricia-drevets/)

Onions are a nutrient-dense root vegetable, and they're a must-have for your home [**garden**](https://homesteadsurvivalsite.com/auto/backyardmiraclefarm). Not only are they easy to grow, you can grow a large harvest of onions in a small space. And when they're stored properly, onions will keep for months.

You already know you can use onions in soups, stews, sauces, and salads to add flavor and [**nutrition,**](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12410539/) but did you know that there are many other ways you can use onions? Read on for some weird uses for onions that may surprise you.

We’ll begin with some health remedies that rely on the natural antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties of onions.

**1. Loosen Chest Congestion**

Onions can work as a natural expectorant when you have a buildup of phlegm and mucous in your lungs. You can create a chest rub that by making a poultice with chopped onion. Here are [**instructions**](https://flourishnd.com/2019/02/26/how-to-make-an-onion-poultice-for-chest-infections/).

**2. Ease a Cough**

An onion tea can help suppress a nagging cough. All you need to make the tea are onions, honey, and [**water**](https://homesteadsurvivalsite.com/auto/waterfreedomsystem) for this [**remedy**](https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/278511/onion-tea-home-remedy-for-cough/).

**3. Help a Sore Throat**

To help alleviate sore throat pain, try boiling onion skins in [**water**](https://homesteadsurvivalsite.com/auto/waterfreedomsystem). Allow the mixture to cool, strain out the skins, and sip to soothe an inflamed throat. This [**video**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vslCDngzeBU) shows how to make a soothing throat mixture with red onion and garlic and a bit of lemon and honey for taste.

**4. Heal Bruises**

The next time you or a loved one gets a bad bruise, try holding a cut onion cut side down on the injured area for about 15 minutes. This remedy works best if you can apply the onion soon after the injury.

**5. Soothe an Insect Bite or Sting**

In a similar way as the use above, you can help ease the pain of an insect bit or sting by placing a cut onion on the affected area.

**6. Treat an Earache**

This remedy has been passed down through the centuries. It involves placing chopped onion in a sock, tying the sock shut, and keeping it in place beside the affected ear. Variations of this [**earache remedy**](https://www.everydayhealth.com/ear-infection/home-remedies/#:~:text=Onions%20contain%20a%20flavonoid%20called,the%20juice%20into%20the%20ear.) call briefly microwaving the chopped onion, and then placing the warm onion in a clean cloth to hold against the ear.

**7. Soothe Minor Burns and Sunburn**

Chemicals, including sulfur compounds and quercetin, in onions can serve as natural analgesics, helping to heal the pain of burns. Hold or gently rub the cut side of an onion on the area for relief.

**8. Promote Healing of Cuts**

The translucent part of the onion has anti-bacterial properties and can help heal minor cuts and abrasions.

**9. Treat Acne**

The acids in onion may help ease an acne breakout, mix some chopped onion with [**water**](https://homesteadsurvivalsite.com/auto/waterfreedomsystem) and then apply the mixture on the affected area with a cotton ball.

**10. Keep Mosquitoes and Other Biting Insects Sway**

Many bugs do not like the smell of onions. Try rubbing a cut onion on the exposed areas of your skin to ward of mosquitoes. (Note: You may keep some humans at a distance with this remedy as well!)

**11. Use Onions Instead of Smelling Salts**

When someone is fainting or about to faint, you can wave a cut onion under their nose to help them regain consciousness.

**12. Strengthen Hair**

The chemicals in onions can help hair growth and reduce hair breakage. To gain this benefit, boil some onions in [**water**](https://homesteadsurvivalsite.com/auto/waterfreedomsystem) and use the strained, cooled liquid as a hair rinse before shampooing.

**13. Remove Splinters**

When a splinter is difficult to remove, try taping a piece of raw onion over the area with medical tape. The chemicals in the onion will help loosen the splinter so it either comes out on its own or is easier to take out with tweezers.

**14. Settle an Upset Stomach**

Grate some raw onion through a cheesecloth and take a sip of the juice to ease an upset stomach. Another option is to add the onion juice to a cup of peppermint tea.

Now let’s look at new ways to use onions around the kitchen and other home parts.

**15. Keep Avocados from Browning**

Place a cut onion in the container with a cut, avocado to help it stay greener longer.

**16. Fix the Flavor of Burned Rice**

It’s annoying when a small amount of burned [**rice**](https://homesteadsurvivalsite.com/auto/rice) at the bottom of the pot affects the taste of the whole batch. The next time this happens, place, some onion peels in a new pot with the unburned [**rice**](https://homesteadsurvivalsite.com/auto/rice) for about 15 minutes. The peels will absorb the burned smell.

**17. Remove Rust and Tarnish from Scissors, Knives, and Flatware**

Rub a cut onion over the rusted area of your utensils. Or try plunging a rusted knife into a whole onion a few times. Scrub and wipe the area, and you should see the stain disappear. Repeat as necessary.

**18. Remove Scorch Marks from Clothing**

If you have a mishap when ironing your clothing, try this hack. Place a small amount of grated raw onion on the burned area for about 10 minutes. Wash the item of clothing, and the stain should be gone.

**19. Make Homemade Dye**

You can make a DIY dye for yarn and fabric with onion skins. For a yellowish-brown dye, steep yellow onion skins in a pot of [**water**](https://homesteadsurvivalsite.com/auto/waterfreedomsystem) on your [**stove**](https://homesteadsurvivalsite.com/auto/solostove) for about 30 minutes. Strain out the skins and allow the water to cool. Use red onion skins in the same way for a reddish dye. Here are [**instructions**](https://caitlynirwin.com/blog/beginners-guide-to-dyeing-with-onion-skins) for making fabric dye with onion skins.

**20. Get Rid of Fresh Paint Smell**

You can reduce or even eliminate the smell of new paint with the absorption power of onions. All you need to do is place one-half of a cut onion in a dish on one end of the room, and the other half on the other. For large rooms, add more cut onions.

**21. Keep Frost Off Your Car Windows**

Here’s a helpful hack for cold mornings. Rub a raw, cut onion half on your windshield at night. In the morning, the sugar in the onion juice will have created a barrier preventing frost from forming or making scraping much easier.

**22. Clean the Grill**

Stab a fork into a large chunk of cut onion and then run it between the grill grates to loosen food and grime. Wipe and rinse the residue away. Repeat as needed.

**23. Make a Natural Garden Pesticide**

Here’s a [**natural way**](https://www.treehugger.com/natural-homemade-insecticides-save-your-garden-without-killing-earth-4858819#:~:text=All%2Din%2DOne%20Homemade%20Spray,-Treehugger%20%2F%20Sanja%20Kostic&text=To%20make%20it%2C%20puree%20one,liquid%20soap%20and%20mix%20well.) to deter pests in the [**garden**](https://homesteadsurvivalsite.com/auto/backyardmiraclefarm). Blend four cut onions, two garlic cloves, two tablespoons of cayenne pepper, and one quart of water in your blender. Strain the mixture and mix in one tablespoon of liquid [**soap**](https://homesteadsurvivalsite.com/auto/barsoap). You spray this mixture on the surface and underside of leaves. Store any remaining liquid in the refrigerator for up to a week.

**24. Help Absorb Odors**

We mentioned paint smells earlier, but leaving a cut onion or two open in a bowl in a room can help absorb other unpleasant odors.

**Peeling Away Facts from Fiction**

The recent pandemic led to many folk remedies surfacing and resurfacing on social media. Videos proposing using onions as way to rid the air of germs and toxins definitely made the rounds on TikTok in 2020 and 2021.

According to the [**National Onion Association**](https://www.onions-usa.org/tips-onion-myths-faqs/onions-flu/) website, this myth dates back to 1500s and the days of the bubonic plague. It was passed down through the centuries, and folks used onions to try to ward off smallpox, influenza, and other so-called “infectious fevers.”

What is true is that onions have numerous [**beneficial properties**](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/onion-benefits#nutrients). Since the uses and potential health remedies we have suggested are safe, natural, and inexpensive, we suggest checking them out for yourself.