The Best Spray for Tackling Pet Stains and Odors Is Not an Enzyme Cleaner

This got really smelly. We painted real dog urine and pungent onion juice on fabric to test nine cleaners. Our winner is fast-acting and budget-friendly.



By Jennifer Ford

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Pet waste stains and odors are notoriously difficult to remove, but we found oxidizing and enzyme cleaners that did a stand-up job.
Photos: Getty Images, Consumer Reports

When I visit a cat or dog owner's home, the first thing I notice isn't the pet—it's the smell. Having lived with both, I instantly recognize the aroma of wet fur and, more stubbornly, that unmistakable tang of pet urine. The latter is notoriously hard to remove, but the good news is it's not impossible.

For years, enzyme cleaners have been the go-to solution for banishing pet smells and stains from upholstery, carpets, and other surfaces. They break down stains and odors at the molecular level, so lifting them is significantly easier to do than with traditional cleaners, such as vinegar, baking soda, or ammonia-based products. But despite their reputation, enzyme cleaners don't always come out on top.

IN THIS ARTICLE

Spray Cleaners We Tested: **Clorox Urine Remover**, **Nature's Miracle** , **OdoBan Pet Oxy**, **Pooph**, **Puracy**, **Rocco & Roxie**, **Simple Green Bio Dog**, **Skout's Honor Urine Destroyer**, and **Zep Urine Remover**

How We Tested

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CR tested popular stain and odor-removing formulas on carpet samples stained with real dog urine. We also put them up against pungent onion juice odors. In both tests, the top performers didn't contain enzymes at all—they were oxidizers with hydrogen peroxide, bio-enzymatic cleaners that use a combo of safe bacteria and enzymes to break down stains and odors, and a plant-based surfactant that can neutralize odors.

One formula type isn't better or worse than the other; they have their pros and cons. Enzyme cleaners require a longer dwelling time to work, but most are biodegradable and nontoxic. Oxidizing cleaners work faster on stains, but because they contain ingredients like hydrogen peroxide and bleach, they aren't always safe for all surfaces.

In addition to performance reviews of each product, this article includes information and safety ratings from our partner, SkinSafe, an organization that uses Mayo Clinic data to evaluate overall product safety, potential for irritation, and allergenicity. SkinSafe scores products based on the presence of the 11 most common allergens: The higher the score, the fewer allergens a product contains. The highest possible score is 100.

For carpets, furniture, and anyone with a heightened sense of smell, our favorite cleaners effectively remove stains and odors from pet messes and more.

Best Stain and Odor Removers

Top Pick



OdoBan Pet Oxy Stain Remover

A fast-acting oxidizer that eliminates tough stains and odors.

Read more

Prices from:

$5.98

Shop

Runner-Up



Skout's Honor Urine Destroyer

A plant-based formula that lifts stains and neutralizes odors.

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Prices from:

$15.49

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Top Pick



Our top pick was OdoBan—this oxidizer not only is inexpensive but also broke down odors and stains quickly. It's also free of the top common allergens.

Photo: Consumer Reports

OdoBan Pet Oxy Stain Remover

Prices from: **$5.98**

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PRODUCT DETAILS

Odor removal method: Oxidation

Contact time: None

Capacity: 32 fluid ounces

Cost per ounce: 22 cents

OdoBan Pet Oxy Stain Remover delivered the fastest visible results of all the products, working immediately upon contact. This isn't an enzyme cleaner, but a hydrogen peroxide–based formula that oxidized and broke down stains while neutralizing odors. During testing on both the carpet sample

stained with dog urine and the onion juice stain, stains disappeared quickly, and odors were no longer detectable after treatment, making it the strongest performer for speed and immediate stain removal. At just 13 cents per ounce, this is the least expensive cleaner we tested by a long margin.

This product has a SkinSafe score of 100, the highest possible score.

Runner-Up



This non-enzymatic cleaner works using plant-based surfactants and mineral odor neutralizers—it left a light and pleasant fragrance behind.

Photo: Consumer Reports

Skout's Honor Urine Destroyer

Prices from: **$15.49**

PRODUCT DETAILS

Odor removal method: Molecular deodorization

Contact time: 5 minutes

Capacity: 35 fluid ounces

Cost per ounce: 44 cents

Skout's Honor Urine Destroyer uses a non-enzymatic blend of plant-based surfactants and mineral odor neutralizers to lift residue and address odor at the molecular level. In our stain test, it removed stains from fabric quickly and reduced odor shortly after application. The light fragrance left behind was subtle and clean, making the treated area feel refreshed without a heavy chemical smell. OdoBan was better at masking the scent of dog urine, but Skout's Honor wasn't far behind.

This product is not in SkinSafe's database.

Honorable Mention



It took a few hours longer for this cleaner to fully activate and work, but once it did, it removed dog urine stains and reduced urine and onion juice odors.

Photo: Consumer Reports

Nature's Miracle Stain & Odor Remover

Prices from: **$10.77**

PRODUCT DETAILS

Odor removal method: Bio-enzymatic

Contact time: Up to 12 hours

Capacity: 32 fluid ounces

Cost per ounce: 42 cents

Nature's Miracle uses enzymes to break down organic material at the molecular level, rather than chemically altering it. As a result, it takes longer to fully activate and works best when you give it time to penetrate deep into the fibers (we left it on for a few hours before blotting). In our tests, it successfully removed the dog urine stain and reduced odor for both the urine and onion juice samples, though the process was slower and less immediate than with our other Top Picks. We also noticed that this formula left behind a strong citrus scent.

This cleaner has a SkinSafe score of 82. It's not fragrance-free and contains preservatives.

Other Enzyme Cleaners We Tested

These six cleaners weren't as effective in removing the scent and stain left behind by dog urine and onion juice. A few even made the smell worse.



This oxidizer relies on hydrogen peroxide to remove stains and odors. It worked well on stains but left odors behind.

Photo: Consumer Reports

Clorox Urine Remover

Prices from: **$7.34**

PRODUCT DETAILS

Odor removal method: Oxidation

Contact time: 5 minutes

Capacity: 32 fluid ounces

Cost per ounce: 24 cents

This bleach-free spray, safe for use on both soft and hard nonporous surfaces, uses hydrogen peroxide to lift stains and neutralize odors. While it effectively reduced the intensity of unpleasant urine and onion juice stains, it was less effective at completely eliminating odor. This problem was most evident

with the dog urine carpet sample: The yellow stain was mostly lifted, but the scent of urine didn't completely vanish.

This product is not in SkinSafe's database.



Of the cleaners we tested, Pooph was among the most expensive per ounce, and it did the worst job lifting dog urine stains.

Photo: Consumer Reports

Pooph Pet Odor Eliminator

Prices from: **$22.97**

PRODUCT DETAILS

Odor removal method: Oxidation

Contact time: None

Capacity: 32 fluid ounces

Cost per ounce: 72 cents

Pooph Pet Odor Eliminator is a fragrance-free, non-enzymatic formula that is safe for use around pets and people. During testing, it successfully removed onion juice stains and significantly reduced the odor of the onion juice, though it did not eliminate the smell entirely.

The same could not be said for dog urine. Despite being one of the most expensive cleaners per ounce, Pooph did the worst job of lifting the dog urine stain. The stain was still yellow, even hours after spraying, and the smell was only slightly masked.

Pooph is not in SkinSafe's database.



Puracy's cucumber and mint fragrance mixed with our urine and onion juice samples and left an unpleasant lingering scent.

Photo: Consumer Reports

Puracy Pet Stain & Odor Remover

Prices from: **$17.99**

PRODUCT DETAILS

Odor removal method: Enzymatic

Contact time: 15 minutes to 24 hours

Capacity: 25 fluid ounces

Cost per ounce: 72 cents

Puracy Pet & Stain Odor Remover is a pricier bio-enzymatic solution with a cucumber and mint scent that initially passed our smell test straight from the bottle. However, when used to treat onion juice odors, the lingering scent was less pleasant and did not fully mask the underlying smell. The same held true when testing it on carpet stained with dog urine: A faint yellow stain remained, and instead of neutralizing the odor, it masked it with a minty scent, so it smelled like mentholated pet urine.

This product is not in SkinSafe's database.



This bio-enzymatic cleaner did a good job removing stains, but it didn't neutralize bad odors as well—instead it masked them with a powerful scent.

Photo: Consumer Reports

Rocco & Roxie Stain & Odor Eliminator

Prices from: **$23.92**

PRODUCT DETAILS

Odor removal method: Bio-enzymatic

Contact time: 30 to 60 minutes

Capacity: 32 fluid ounces

Cost per ounce: 75 cents

This Rocco & Roxie Stain & Odor Eliminator is an enzyme cleaner designed to break down pet messes. It did a decent job at removing the dog urine stain from a carpet sample, but it left an overwhelming scent behind.

This product is not in SkinSafe's database.



We like Simple Green, but the bio-enzymatic cleaner's scent wasn't as pleasant as others, and we would still choose OdoBan over it.

Photo: Consumer Reports

Simple Green Bio Dog Pet Stain and Odor Remover

Prices from: **$12.68**

PRODUCT DETAILS

Odor removal method: Bio-enzymatic

Contact time: None

Capacity: 32 fluid ounces

Cost per ounce: 32 cents

Simple Green Bio Dog Pet Stain and Odor Remover uses safe bacteria and enzymes to break down stains and odors. It removed the dog urine stain but left a lingering scent that wasn't entirely pleasant. In a pinch, this cleaner should work, and does so at a lower price than two out of three of our Top

Picks, but we would still choose OdoBan over it.

This product from Simple Green is not in SkinSafe's database.



Zep Urine Remover removed the dog urine stain with its peroxide-based formula. We liked it a lot, but OdoBan worked faster and was more affordable.

Photo: Consumer Reports

Zep Urine Remover

Prices from: **$9.99**

PRODUCT DETAILS

Odor removal method: Oxidation

Contact time: 5 minutes

Capacity: 32 fluid ounces

Cost per ounce: 31 cents

Zep Urine Remover is a professional-strength peroxide-based formula. It removed our dog urine scent and left a light clean scent behind—nothing too powerful or detectable. This one was our third least expensive cleaner, and we like it—but didn't love it as much as our Top Picks—especially OdoBan, which worked the fastest and costs less than Zep.

This specific cleaner from Zep isn't in SkinSafe's database.

How We Tested Enzyme Cleaners

We tested nine formulas designed to eliminate stains and odor on carpet samples stained with dog urine and fabric samples stained with onion juice. We evaluated how effective each product was at lifting the stain and whether it removed the smell or just masked it. We followed the directions on each bottle and left the spray on longer if its instructions indicated a contact time. We calculated the cost per ounce for each product and accounted for cleaning time.

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Jennifer Ford

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