

TRY IT AT HOME!

CLEANING CHEMISTRY

Put one old penny in each of 5 paper cups. Pour lemon juice into the first cup – make sure the penny is completely covered. Wait a few minutes and then use a spoon to remove the penny. What does it look like? Rub the penny on a paper towel? What happens?

Pennies are made of copper. When pennies are around awhile, the copper mixes with the oxygen in the air, forming copper oxide. The lemon juice is an acid which can dissolve copper oxide.

Try it again using soda, milk, apple juice, and water. Use the same amount of liquid. Wait about 5 minutes. Take the pennies out. Which pennies are cleaner? Why?