

Spring Cleaning

TIPS FOR MOM



Take On This Cleaning And
Organizing Task Step By Step

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INTRODUCTION

The cold days of winter are over and the fresh breezes of spring have begun to blow. As the flowers bloom and the birds chirp, many of us take a look at our homes and want to rid ourselves of the stale, winter feeling and start the season off with a clean and organized home. Spring cleaning can be hard work, but once the job is complete, the rewards are well worth the effort. So get ready and roll up your sleeves, it is time to get your home in order.

There are three basic steps to spring cleaning: Deep Cleaning, Organization, and Maintenance. Deep cleaning consists of wiping down walls, cleaning windows, wiping out cupboards, and cleaning under furniture. This is the messy part of spring cleaning, but it will rid your house of the dirt, grime, and germs that you have collected over the winter.

Organization means cleaning out closets, drawers, and cabinets. Go through clothing and toys to get rid of things that have been outgrown. Free yourself of all of the unused and broken items around the house and create more space to properly store the things that you do use regularly. Having a well organized home can make life easier and more enjoyable for everyone.

The first two steps can be completed at the same time, but maintenance will take some extra steps and dedication on your part throughout the year. Keeping up on organization is usually the biggest hurdle for most families, as old habits can be hard to break. Make sure you get everyone on board to keep your house as neat and orderly as it will be when your cleaning is complete.

Though this yearly task is dreaded by many, lightening the burden is very easy. With proper preparation, a little motivation, and some sweat equity, you can have a clean and organized home in a relatively short period of time.

BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

While jumping into spring cleaning feet first might seem like the best way to approach the tasks at hand, your best bet would be to take your time and plan things out before beginning. Complete the following list of tasks before starting your spring cleaning and you will find your project going faster and smoother than you ever could have imagined.

Start by evaluating each room and its organizational needs. Grab a notebook and jot down everything that needs to be addressed in each room before starting. For instance, if there is

a messy stack of magazines on the coffee table, make a note to buy a magazine rack.

Take stock of what cleaning supplies you already have on hand and what you will need to complete all your jobs. Add to the list any organizational tools that you need for each of your rooms. Having your supplies ready before you start will save you from running to the store, filthy from cleaning, to replace something that you have run out of, which might also cause you to lose motivation.

Have a few motivators on hand. Find some type of reward for yourself for completing the larger tasks, such as a favorite snack for breaks. Turn on some upbeat music to keep you going and make the job go by faster.

Give each room a quick straighten before starting your deep cleaning. If the dishes are washed, toys are picked up, and laundry is done, you will have the necessary space to get into the bigger jobs.

Return to your notebook and formulate your plan of attack. List each room and all of the tasks that need to be completed in detail. As you finish a job, check it off and see just how much progress you have made throughout the day.

SPRING CLEANING AND ORGANIZATIONAL TIPS

KITCHEN

Spring cleaning in the kitchen is probably the hardest task of all. As many call it the heart of the home, it certainly deserves some extra love and care when cleaning time rolls around. Here are some great tips that can help you get your kitchen clean and organized.

Start from the top and work down, to keep from having to clean the same areas over again. If you wipe out the cabinets after scrubbing the countertops, you will probably have to clean the counters again.

If you have areas around the stove that have grease build up, spray them down and let it sit while working on other projects. This will cut the time it takes to scrub off the set in grease significantly.

Start by cleaning the cobwebs and dust that has collected on the walls over the winter. As you are dusting, decide if the walls need a thorough scrub

down, a quick wipe, or just a spot cleaning. Save yourself some elbow grease for other tasks, if the walls seem to be in good shape.

Wipe of the tops of the cabinets and higher shelves next. Declutter the top of the refrigerator while you have out the stepstool and are lugging it around. Also, while the stepstool or ladder is out, take down the curtains or blinds and clean them or replace them, if necessary. If you have a ceiling fan in your kitchen, now would be a prime time to clean the dust and polish the metal fixtures.

While your window treatments are out of the way, clean your windows and screens. Make sure to do both the inside and outside, to keep the room feeling bright and cheerful. Leave the windows open once the screens have been replaced, to let some fresh air in and the fumes of the cleaning products out.

With the fresh air flowing through the windows, this is a great time to use oven cleaner. Spray it on and let it sit while you tackle another task. Those with self-cleaning ovens might want to run their cycle the night before a spring cleaning to keep from heating the kitchen up too much and making themselves uncomfortable.

While the oven cleaner is doing its job, start tackling the cabinets. Again, working from the top down, remove everything from the cabinet and wipe out the shelves thoroughly to remove any dust. Before putting anything away, look for any broken items or things that haven't been used in years. If you don't think you will ever need it again, throw it out or put it in a box to be donated. Wipe down the fronts of the cabinets to remove dust and drips from spills.

When cleaning out the cabinets, you will likely come across storage containers and lids that have become estranged from their mates. Collect these strays off to the side, until your cleanup is complete. If you have finished cleaning and there is still no match for some of your food storage pieces, throw them away. No matter how much we wish, these mysterious missing pieces will likely never reappear.

Once the cabinets have been wiped out, sort your dishes, glasses, and cookware by its usage level. Replace the cabinet liners if necessary. Put the things that are used most often on easily accessible shelves. Things that are used more rarely can be placed on the top shelves, toward the back of your lower cabinets, or stored elsewhere until they are needed.

By now the oven cleaner should have done its job, so its time to tackle the stove. Follow the directions

on the over cleaner that you used and don't forget about the oven racks and broiler drawer, if you have one. Remove the burners on your range, if possible, and clean the stovetop and drip pans thoroughly. If the stovetop lifts up, wipe underneath to get all of the bits of food that have fallen through. Check the manufacturer's directions before removing parts of the stove to be on the safe side.

Grab the trashcan and head to the pantry. Sort through the boxes and cans, checking for expired food, opened jar and boxes that may not be fresh any longer, and items that you will not likely ever use. Throw away the outdated food and opened, expired items and box up the things you won't use to send to the local food bank. Wipe down the shelves and replace things neatly so that finding everything is a breeze. Get a head start on your grocery list while you're at it, by making notes on things that you are out of or had to throw away.

Hit the fridge next, taking everything out of both the refrigerator and freezer. Throw away expired food, almost empty items, and anything that looks as if it has taken on a life of its own. In the freezer, trash anything that might be past its expiration date or has developed freezer burn. Get the trash bag full of food outside and in a sealed garbage can. This will keep the smells out of your house and the local wildlife from having a buffet in your yard.

Remove the shelves from the refrigerator and wash them well. Take out the meat and vegetable drawers and give them a good soak, as well. Defrost the freezer if needed and wipe out the inside of both the fridge and freezer. Before replacing the shelves and drawers, pull the refrigerator out, unplug it and vacuum the coils. Clean up the dirt and grime underneath and get the “hidden treasures” from under and behind the fridge.

Once everything has been put back into the fridge, you can move on to the small appliances on the counter. Clean the crumb catchers of the toaster and toaster oven, and wipe them down. Scrub out the microwave and wipe down the can opener, blender, and any other tools that you leave out.

Clean your coffee maker by running a cycle with one part vinegar and two parts water. Repeat if necessary. Make sure that you run a few cycles of plain water afterwards to completely remove the smell and taste of the vinegar from the pot. Use can also use salt, ice, and lemon to get any leftover residue on the bottom of the carafe. Just throw them in together, and swirl it around gently.

Now you can wipe down your counters, backsplashes, and tabletops. Use a disinfecting cleaner or a bleach and water solution to sanitize food prep surfaces. Don't forget to move the

appliances, canisters, and such to clean under and behind them.

Next, you can clean your sink. One great trick is to cut open a lemon and sprinkle baking soda all over the cut side. Then, rub the lemon all over the inside of the sink to clean it. If you have a garbage disposal, once you are finished cleaning the sink, drop the lemons in and run it for a minute to remove any odors. Throw in a few ice cubes to sharpen up the blades. Wipe off the knobs and faucet and dry out the sink.

Finally, it is time to clean the floor. You can either sweep the floor by hand or use a vacuum with a bare floor attachment to get up all the crumbs and dirt. Be careful to make sure there are no wet spots on the floor, if you choose to vacuum.

Scrubbing the floor depends on what type of floor covering you have. You can use a floor cleaner specific to your floor type or try using a one part vinegar to two parts water solution, with a small amount of detergent added for a fresher smell. Scrub thoroughly, rinse well with water, and wipe the floor down with a towel when you are finished.

Hang your curtains back up, put out a few decorative touches, such as some flowers or a bowl

of fresh fruit. Once you have the decorations back in place, you are done!

Now you have a sparkling clean kitchen to enjoy! Treat yourself to takeout for dinner to give yourself a break and keep it looking perfect just a little while longer.

LIVING ROOM

If your living room is like most, it becomes a catchall for everything the family walks in with and doubles as a playroom, movie room, and occasional dining area. Nearly everything else the family does during waking hours happens right here. With so much activity, it is easy for this room to become dirty and disorganized, so spring cleaning is a must.

Make sure that any stray items left on the floor after your quick straighten end up in the room in which they belong. If you choose to allow certain items to remain in the living room, make sure that they have a home. For example, an out of the way toy box for the loose toys, a rack for the magazines, and a box or bin for the mail on the table by the door.

Start by clearing any excess clutter from the tabletops. Make sure there is a home for everything and it makes it all the way there. If you come across an item that seems to be homeless, ask yourself if you really need it. If the answer is yes, find it a sensible place to live. If the answer is no, throw it away or put it in a box for donations.

If you have a collection of magazines or books, now is prime time to pare down your collection. Check the titles you have and which you have already read. Think about whether you honestly will ever read them again and throw away or give away those that you don't plan on reusing.

Go through any other collections you may have and decide which items are really necessary and which are just dust collectors that are junking up your room. If you have an extensive collection on display, why not just put out a few favorite pieces and store the rest. You can rotate them to bring a fresh look to the room later on. The less you have in the room, the less you will have to clean on a regular basis.

Once your room is free of unnecessary items and everything has found a home, you can begin the actual process of cleaning. Again, you want to start from the top and dust the corners of the rooms and the ceiling. Check the walls and baseboards and wipe them down or spot clean, as necessary. Don't

forget to get the fingerprints off the switch plates, door, and doorknobs.

Next, clean the ceiling fan and the covers to any overhead lights. You might be surprised at the piles of dust on your fan blade tops and the collection of dead bugs in your light shades. While you have the stepstool, clean any air vents that are up on the wall and take down the curtains or window treatments and clean them.

Clean your windows, inside and out, making sure to rinse the screens. You can use a vacuum with a small attachment to get the dirt and dust out of the crevices of the windowsill. Leave the windows open and let the fresh air be your motivator.

Now clean off the entertainment center or whatever houses your electronics equipment. Unplug everything and clean off any dust, drips, or spills. Remember to never spray cleaner directly onto anything electronic, instead spray it onto a cloth and just wipe down. Don't forget to pick things up and dust underneath. Untangle the jumble of cords and make sure none have signs of melting or fraying.

Knickknacks, table lamps, and other decorative pieces, including mirrors, art, and pictures should be dusted next. Again, just use the spray on a cloth rather than spraying directly onto the surfaces of

your pictures and artwork, to prevent liquid from seeping through onto your treasured photos and art.

Wipe off the tabletops and shelving, making sure to move everything and clean underneath. A vacuum attachment can be used to get the hard to reach corners. For shelving units, the top down approach comes into play again, so that any dust that falls will be wiped up on the next shelf.

Now it is time for a treasure hunt! Take all the cushions and pillows off the couches and chairs and see what has fallen through the cracks. You never know what mysteries the crevices of the couch may hold. Grab the vacuum and use a smaller attachment to get all the dirt and crumbs from the cracks and creases.

Clean the upholstery, cushions, and throw pillow of your couch and chairs, if necessary. Throw anything that is machine washable in the washer, as per the instructions. Use a spot cleaner on the fabrics that it is safe for or use an attachment on a carpet steamer if you find the entire surface needs attention.

Believe it or not, you are already in the home stretch for the living room. All that is left is to clean the floors and put things back together.

Grab all of the floor mats and throw rugs and clean them thoroughly. Shake them out, rinse them off, or launder them, as necessary. Consider having larger, more delicate area rugs cleaned by a professional.

If your room is carpeted, vacuum the room thoroughly, moving the furniture to get under and behind everything. If your carpet is in really bad shape, buy or rent a steam cleaner and get the ground in dirt cleaned out of the carpet.

If you have hardwood or tile, sweep up the loose dirt or use a vacuum on the bare floors setting, moving the furniture as you go. Mop or polish the floor with an appropriate cleaning solution and let it dry or wipe it down with a towel.

Once the floor has completely dried, you can put the couches back together and re-hang the window treatments. Take a look around and rearrange any of your knickknacks that seem to be out of place. Light a couple of scented candles, take a seat on the nice, clean couch, and enjoy relaxing in your fresh, clean living area.

BATHROOMS

As bathrooms can harbor lots of dirt and germs, thorough cleaning is a must. Because of the small size, the bathroom can become cluttered quickly, so here is a great method for getting your bathroom spic and span and clutter-free.

First, double check that everything that does not belong in the bathroom is returned to its home. Get the dirty towels and washcloths to the laundry and take down the shower curtain and liner for washing or replacement.

Start the job by dusting the walls and wiping them down where necessary. If you seem to have a problem with mildew on the walls in your bathroom, try spraying it with a 5 to 1 water/bleach mixture and scrubbing it lightly. Repeat until the mildew is gone. Test the bleach mixture on a hidden spot first; making sure it won't harm your wall covering.

Remove the window treatments, if there are any, and clean them or have them cleaned. Wash the windows both outside and in, scrubbing and rinsing the screens, as well. Keep the windows open to let out the fumes from any cleaning products and to freshen the room.

Pour toilet bowl cleaner or bleach into the toilet and let it sit while you clean other parts of the room. If you have mildew in the tub or shower, spray it down

with the bleach solution or a mildew removal product and let that sit as well.

Next, grab a box and put everything from the medicine cabinet, counter top, and under the sink into it, besides towels and washcloths. Wipe down the counters and insides of the medicine cabinet and cabinet under the sink. Don't forget the top of the medicine cabinet, as well.

Clean your mirrors and shine the bathroom sink fixtures. Wash any soap dishes, toothbrush holders, and containers that usually sit on the sink area out, or wipe them down. Scrub out the sink and dry thoroughly when you are done to prevent water spots.

Take the box or boxes with all of the medicines and toiletries and begin sorting through things. Grab a notebook to make a list of anything that needs replacing in the medicine cabinet.

Throw away medicines, vitamins, and supplements that are past the expiration date, as these can be potentially dangerous if taken. Remember that sun block expires within a year, too, so check the dates on your bottle and replace if necessary.

Take stock of your first aid kit and write down any supplies that might need replenishing, such as Band-Aids, peroxide, alcohol, and the like. Don't forget to stock up on other health products that you keep on hand, such as pain relievers, antacids, and vitamins.

Go through your makeup supply and throw away anything that you do not use or that is almost used up. Think about how long you have had products and rid yourself of ones that have been around too long. Keeping makeup longer than recommended can cause problems, as it can harbor bacteria.

For powder-type makeup, including blush and eye shadow, and lip products, two years is the maximum it should be used.

Liquids, creams and nail polishes are usually good for a year to eighteen months.

Liquid eyeliners and mascaras should be replaced every six months.

Look at your collection of creams, lotions, soaps, perfumes, and other toiletries, as well. If they are half gone and rarely used, losing their scent, or have changed texture, it is time to throw them away. Even things that are unopened that won't be used

should be given away or thrown in the trash. Once everything is sorted through and cleaned out, it can be put back in the cabinet, where it belongs.

If you use the area under the sink for storage, make sure that you are using containers to keep all of your products organized. This will make things easier to find and will prevent everything from rolling out when you open the cabinet door.

When the sink and medicine cabinet area is cleared, you can scrub the toilet. Make sure you use a brush to get under the rim well. Wipe of the top and back and scrub the area around the floor, as this often gets ignored in an everyday bathroom cleanup.

Start cleaning the tub or shower from the top and work down. Pay attention to the edges and corners, as mold and mildew can hide in these areas. Remove any mats or slip pads to make sure that they aren't harboring mildew and replace if necessary. Scrub out the tub area and remember to polish the faucet and handles, as well. Wipe the tub dry when you are done.

Finally, it is time to do the floor. If you have carpeting in your bathroom, vacuum well and steam clean, if needed. For hard floors, remove any area rugs and clean them, then sweep or vacuum up any

loose dirt. Mop or clean the floor with a product that is safe for that particular type of floor covering. Pay close attention to corners and edges, where germs, mold, and mildew might develop.

Once the floor has dried, replace the rugs and re-hang the curtains. Put a toilet bowl disc in the tank, light a scented candle, and your beautifully clean bathroom is ready to enjoy!

BEDROOMS

Most of us spend at least eight hours a day in our bedrooms, so spring-cleaning in here is essential. You will sleep better and enjoy your leisure time much more in a neat and orderly bedroom. Here is how you can make your own bedroom or your children's rooms, the oasis they should be.

When you start spring cleaning a bedroom, the first thing you want to do is to clean out, before you start to clean up. Strip the beds and wash the pillows or hang them outside to air, while you are cleaning the rest of the room.

Start by tackling the biggest project first...the closet. Use the top down approach, once again, and take

everything off the shelves, if there are any. Sort through the pile of things from the shelf and decide what you need, what you want, and what can be thrown or given away. If you find something that you forgot you had and have no use for, throw it out. Dust the corners of the closet walls and wipe down the shelf before replacing the items.

Move down to the hanging items next. Take everything out and wipe off the hang bar. Now go through the pile of clothes, being blatantly honest with yourself. If it doesn't fit, is hopelessly out of style, or is in need of repair that will never happen, throw it out or put it in a bag to be given to charity. Though we should all keep a pair or two pants for less-than-slender days, the jeans that were super-snug in high school are never going to go over those hips that bore three children, ever again.

While you are going through the hanging clothes, check your hangers to see if any need replacing. You can buy new ones very cheaply, or recycle those that are on the items you are getting rid of. If you find that your closet is still stuffed full, even after weeding out the old things, try adding a bar beneath one half and hanging tops on the upper bar and skirts and folded pants below.

Finish up the closet by removing everything from the floor and vacuuming thoroughly. Dust the corners and wipe down the walls if needed. Sort

through the items here with the same technique of throwing out the old, unnecessary items and only keeping what you need and really want.

Next move on to the dresser, sorting through the clothing there in the same fashion. Wipe out the drawers before putting all the “keepers” away. De-clutter the top of the dresser, as well. Throw out old toiletries and perfumes that might be wasting the space.

If you are cleaning in a child’s bedroom, you should tackle the toy box next. Throw away anything that is broken or has missing pieces. Take toys, books, and games that are in good shape, but have been outgrown or rarely used, and box them up for donation to a children’s hospital or other charity. Sort smaller toys into bins or containers with other like items. This technique works well for blocks, small cars, train sets, Barbie dolls and similar items.

Once you have finished cleaning things out, you can start from the top of the room, cleaning things up. Clean the dust from the ceilings, and the cobwebs from the corners, checking the walls and cleaning them as necessary. Wipe down the baseboards, doors, knobs, and switch plates.

Take down the curtains, blinds, or other window treatment and wash the windows, inside and out.

Wash down the screens and wipe out the windowsill and the corners of the frame. Leave the window open to air out the room and bring the fresh, spring air inside to energize you.

Make sure that everything that is on the nightstand is necessary. Get rid of excessive piles of books and only keep the ones that are being currently read on the table. Wipe down any pictures, knickknacks, and table lamps and dust the nightstand well. Dust and wipe down any other furniture and decorative items in the room, as well.

Vacuum the mattress and turn it, if necessary. If it smells a bit stale, try using a fabric refresher spray and airing it out for a while.

Hit the floor and take a look under the bed. This is another place where lost items tend to migrate and hidden treasures can be found. Be sure to get rid of the trash and forgotten items here, as well, and return everything else to its rightful home. Then you can vacuum under the bed to get rid of the dust bunnies.

Finally, you can clean the floors. Vacuum well, or sweep hardwood flooring. If you have carpet, you might want to use a steam cleaner or carpet shampooer if the rug is exceptionally dirty. For hardwood floors, take out any throw or area rugs

and clean them. Then scrub the floor as to the recommendations for your particular flooring type.

Once the floors are finished, you can put your window treatments back up. Put fresh sheets, pillowcases, and blankets on your bed or better yet, buy a brand new set to liven up the nice clean room. Finish off the fresh spring feeling with a bunch of flowers on the dresser.

Now that you are finished your spring bedroom clean up, why not take a quick shower and have a nice nap in your fresh, clean bedroom. You have certainly earned it!

QUICK TIPS TO HELP YOU STAY ORGANIZED

After all of your hard work spring cleaning and organizing your home, you certainly won't want to see things back to the way they were in a matter of weeks. Staying organized takes a little work and is

certainly a learned habit, but for this small amount of daily effort, you will have a cleaner home and a happier family. Try some of these tips to help keep your home looking like you just wrapped up your spring cleaning efforts.

GENERAL

Keep a small basket in each room for things that do not belong. Get in the habit of checking the basket as you leave the room for items that might belong in your next destination.

Keep all of your cleaning supplies together, along with rags, paper towels, scrub brushes, and any other items you may need to complete any cleaning task. Using a bucket or cleaning supply caddy will make grabbing the necessary tools a snap when it is time to do your daily chores.

Sort through your mail each day when it is brought in. Immediately throw away junk mail, saving only important letters and advertisements that you are planning to use. Place all the mail in a designated area and file the bills away after they are paid.

When choosing containers for storage, look for lidded boxes, bowls, and bags that are clear. When

you go looking for an item, it will be easier to find if you can see into the containers without opening each and every one.

KITCHEN

Every night after dinner, make sure that all the dishes are cleaned and put away, or at least rinsed and put into the dishwasher, until there is a full load. Don't let the dishes get away from you or you'll find yourself in the midst of a marathon cleaning session.

Only keep enough plates, cups, glasses, and silverware for one meal, plus just a couple of extra. Having lots of extras on hand will make you less likely to keep up on your dishes. You don't have to get rid of everything, if you enjoy having company, just put them away in a place that isn't easily accessible until they are needed.

Wipe counters and tables after each meal, knocking the crumbs to the floor. Sweep up after washing the dishes each night and use a damp rag to wipe up and spots, splashes, or spills on the floor.

Always make sure the sink looks clean and sparkling. After washing the dishes, wipe it out well and dry it to prevent water spots.

Set aside a little time each week or on the weekend to do a more in-depth cleaning. Check the fridge and pantry for expired food, wipe the stove, cabinets, table, and counters thoroughly, and clean the floor well. If you have kept up on your daily straightening ritual, you will be shocked at how quickly the kitchen cleans up.

LIVING ROOM

No matter how clean your living room might be, if your couch and chair cushions are a mess, then the whole room looks cluttered. Make sure the cushions are always straight and the throws and pillows are properly arranged.

Be sure that everyone takes out of the living room what they have brought in. This applies to clothes, dishes, toys, and anything else that might be used in the room. If you find stray items, drop them in the basket to be taken to their home when you next pass that way.

Make sure that with every new magazine you add to your magazine rack, you rid yourself of an old issue. Don't let your magazine collection get out of control. Always remember the saying "out with the old, in

with the new” when it comes to any of your collectibles.

Make sure CDs, DVDs, video games, and videotapes are immediately put back in their cases after use and filed away where they belong. As tempting as it is to leave them in the machine, the odds are that the case will somehow disappear before you finally remove it.

Doing a quick dusting every day will help keep the living room looking neat and tidy. Rather than dragging out the vacuum on a daily basis, use one a handheld mini-vacuum or one of the new crumb-catcher Swiffer products to get the small stuff up quickly.

For the once a week major cleanup in the living room, all you will need to do is dust everything, do a quick sweep of the couch and chair cushions for buried treasure, straighten the pillows and throws, and vacuum. If you have been meticulous in your upkeep for the week, this will only take a matter of minutes.

BATHROOM

One of the biggest keys to keeping the bathroom organized is making sure the sink area stays clutter-free. Put away makeup, lotions, shaving supplies, and anything else you use in your daily grooming after each and every use.

Wipe off the bathroom counter and dry out the sink every day. Make sure that you get up any toothpaste drips when they happen, as they can be difficult to scrub off if you wait until they have dried.

Keep antibacterial cleaner wipes under the bathroom sink to give the toilet a quick cleanup daily. Don't forget to wipe the handle before you clean the seat. This will help to kill germs and keep your bathroom smelling fresh and clean.

Wipe down the mirrors whenever you see water splashes, hairspray flecks, or spots from overzealous tooth brushing. Once these have hardened on, cleaning them off takes a bit more elbow grease than when they are fresh.

Keep up on the laundry to avoid hamper overflow. The reality is, if there is no room in the hamper, the clothes and towels will find themselves on the floor. If the laundry is kept current, the hamper will have plenty of room for dirty clothes and towels.

Invest in a shower misting spray and use it religiously after every shower or bath. This will keep nasty buildup from forming on the walls and fixtures of your bath and shower area. Don't forget to spray the shower curtain, as well.

The once a week deep clean will take only minutes if you have followed the daily routine. Just wipe off the surfaces of the counter, sink, and toilet, and then scrub the toilet bowl with a brush. Wipe down the shower walls and the tub, plus the faucet and fixtures. Give the floor a quick sweep and mop and you are all finished.

BEDROOM

As your bedroom is out of sight of company and probably of yourself as well, most of the day, dropping things in the room without putting them away is an easy habit to get into. However, any time you bring something in the room, make sure it finds its proper home and your room will stay neat and organized.

Make your bed every morning. Not only will this keep your room looking neater, but there is something quite comforting about folding back the sheets and blankets each night, as you lie down on a nicely fluffed pillow.

When you bring clean clothes into the room, put them away immediately. Don't leave the folded stacks on the bed or on top of the dresser. Put the items to remain folded into their respective drawers and hang up the items that need it. This will keep the room clean, plus your clothes will also stay neater and you will be less likely to have to iron things before you wear them

Choose your clothing for the next day at work or for any planned event ahead of time. By having an outfit gathered together and ready to go, you won't start digging through the closet and drawers, tossing clothes around to find something to wear at the last minute. By taking care of this early, you can put things back properly, as you search for the perfect ensemble.

If you are dealing with a child's room, consider setting up a reward system for neatening up their toys and making their bed each day. The actual rewards will depend on your individual child, so be creative and think about what would be a good motivator for them.

If your room stays tidy throughout the week, on your designated deep cleaning day you will be finished in just minutes. All you will need to do is change the sheets, dust the tables and flat surfaces, give any knickknacks a once over, and run the vacuum.

CONCLUSION

While your seasonal spring cleaning is certainly a chore that takes hard work, elbow grease, and a bit of sweat, the environment you will create will pay great dividends. Keeping it up will be much easier with the nice, clean slate that you have created for yourself.

One important thing to remember when cleaning, organizing, and maintaining your home is to not try and do everything in one day, by yourself. As they say, Rome was not built in a day, and a year's worth of clutter can't be cleaned up in a day, either. Be sure to enlist the help of your family members in your quest to prepare your house for this warm and welcoming season.

Spring cleaning is certainly not the end of your task list, either. Daily and weekly clean ups are necessary to keep your home looking, feeling, and functioning as if you have just wrapped up your yearly spring clean up. Assign daily and weekly chores to everyone and make them all responsible for their own messes and rooms. Even the littlest

children can learn to clean up after themselves, with a bit of assistance from an older sibling or a parent, so make the entire family chip in, as long as they are old enough to walk.

Once everything is completed and your new weekly maintenance plan is in place, you will see just how much smoother your entire life runs with an organized house. No more hunting for lost items while rushing out the door to work or school, because everything is neatly in its place. Cleaning things up as you go keeps those weekly deeper cleaning sessions short and to the point, allowing more free time to do the things you love the most, with your family.

With all of the benefits of having a neat and organized house, getting started on that basic spring cleaning should now be a huge priority for you. So grab some paper, check out your supplies, make a plan of attack, and get down to business. Though the initial clean up might take a little while, you will be reaping the rewards of cleaning, organizing, and maintaining your home until it is time for the next yearly spring cleaning.

CLEANING SUPPLIES LIST

- Broom
- Dustpan
- Bucket
- Mop
- Mop heads
- Rags
- Paper Towels
- Sponges
- Scrubbers
- Brushes
- Toilet Brush
- Dish Detergent
- Laundry Detergent
- Dishwasher Detergent (if needed)
- Oven Cleaner
- Multipurpose Cleaner - Can be homemade.
- Essential Oils for spray cleaner and air freshener spray.
- Bathroom Cleaner
- Shower Mist
- Toilet Bowl Cleaner

- White Vinegar
- Baking Soda
- Bleach
- Carpet Spot Cleaner
- Upholstery Cleaner
- Vacuum Cleaner
- Mini Vacuum
- Steam Cleaner
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

ROOM BY ROOM SPRING CLEANING CHECKLIST

Kitchen

- Dust and Clean Walls
- Clean Fans, Vents, and Fixtures
- Wipe Tops of Cabinets and Fridge
- Clean Windows and Screens
- Clean Out Cabinets

- Clean Oven and Cook top
- Reorganize and Wipe Down Pantry
- Clean Fridge and Freezer
- Throw Away Old Food
- Clean Counter Appliances
- Wipe Down Counter and Table
- Clean Out Sink, Drains, and Disposal
- Sweep or Vacuum, and Scrub Floor
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Living Room

- Clear Messes From Tables
- Sort Through Collections
- Get Rid Of Clutter
- Wipe Walls and Ceiling
- Clean Fans and Vents
- Clean Windows and Screens
- Wipe Down Electronics
- Dust Photos and Knickknacks
- Dust Shelves and Furniture

- Clean Couches and Chairs
- Vacuum Carpets, Sweep Hardwood
- Steam Rugs, Mop Floors

Bathroom

- Wipe Down Walls
- Clean Windows
- Clean Out Toiletries
- Wipe Out Cabinets
- Reorganize Cabinets
- Clean Sink and Counter
- Clean Mirror and Pictures
- Scrub Toilet
- Clean Tub and Shower
- Sweep, Mop, Vacuum Floor

Bedroom

- Clean Out Closet
- Clean Out Dresser
- Neaten Dresser and Night Stand
- Clean and Sort Toys, Books, and Games
- Wipe Down Walls
- Clean Windows
- Dust Knickknacks, Tables, and Dresser
- Clean and Turn Mattress
- Clean Under Bed
- Sweep/Vacuum Floor
- Mop/Steam Clean Floor

FREE RESOURCES

TAKE 5 – 5 Minute Bootcamp for Dustbunnies

Get a 5 minute task sent to your email every day. Less stress and less mess 5 minutes at a time.

[TAKE 5 - 5 Minute Bootcamp for Dustbunnies](#)

The No KAOS Zone

Our monthly membership club – offers ongoing support to work through the four phases of getting clear including deep cleaning, decluttering and maintenance.

If your home is lost beneath the clutter and confusion – I'll help you find it!

[The NO KAOS Zone](#)

JAN'S PICKS – THINGS I'VE USED AND LOVED

List Planit

Loads of check lists and printables to keep you organized for every occasion!

[List Planit](#)

Declutter Fast

This is the book that inspired me to have a Declutter Day. It is a simple system that make decluttering fun and effective with lots of tips and tricks to be more organized around the house and how to keep it that way. One of my all time favourites.

[Declutter Fast](#)

Confessions of a Clean Freak

Ever wanted to be a fly on the wall at a “clean freak's” house. They always make it look so easy. This ebook is written by Carol Pagan, who tells us all of her secrets. Another favourite of mine, as is all of her ebooks and courses.

[Confessions of a Clean Freak](#)

MY NOTES...

Record your notes here as a handy reference.