

Recipes, checklists and more on cleaning your home.

Home Cleaning Guide





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It's that time!

Deep cleaning is an annual tradition for many people, and for those who love to clean, nothing is more satisfying. It's time to open all the windows and rid the house of stale air. It's time to organize cupboards, scrub the nooks and crannies that get overlooked all year and tackle the stuff that has piled up in the garage. If you're getting overwhelmed just thinking about it, relax. We have created this helpful guide to get your home back into tip-top shape in no time!

DIY Natural Cleaning Solutions

Supplies You May Need:

Measuring
Cups
Spray Bottle
Mop + Bucket
Sponges
Rags/Cloths
Old Toothbrush
Funnel

Tile & Wood Floor Cleaner

1/2 Cup White Vinegar
2 Cups Warm Water
5-10 Drops Essential Oils optional
Spray Bottle

Mix water and vinegar together completely in a spray bottle. For a great scent, add 5-10 drops of essential oil to your water and vinegar mixture. This part is completely optional. Using your spray bottle, and a mop and bucket full of rinsing water work in sections to clean all tile and wood floors.

Garbage Disposal Cleaner

1/2 Cup Baking Soda
1 Cups White Vinegar
Boiled Water
1 Whole Lemon

Dump the baking soda and vinegar down your drain, you should hear it fizz. Leave for at least 5 minutes. In the meantime, boil a medium pot of water. Once the water reaches a boil, dump it down the drain to clear out the vinegar and baking soda. Cut a whole lemon into quarters, and with the water on add them one at a time into the garbage disposal. You will be left with a clean disposal and fresh lemon scent!

Mildew & Soap Scum Remover

1/4 Cup White Vinegar
1/4 Cup Liquid Dish Soap
Water
Funnel
Cleaning Rag
Spray Bottle

Microwave the vinegar until it is hot, then carefully pour in a spray bottle and add the liquid dish soap and water. Swirl and shake to mix. Spray all affected surfaces, and leave for at least 30 minutes. The next day, use a cleaning rag to scrub and rinse all areas.

Toilet Cleaner & Deodorizer

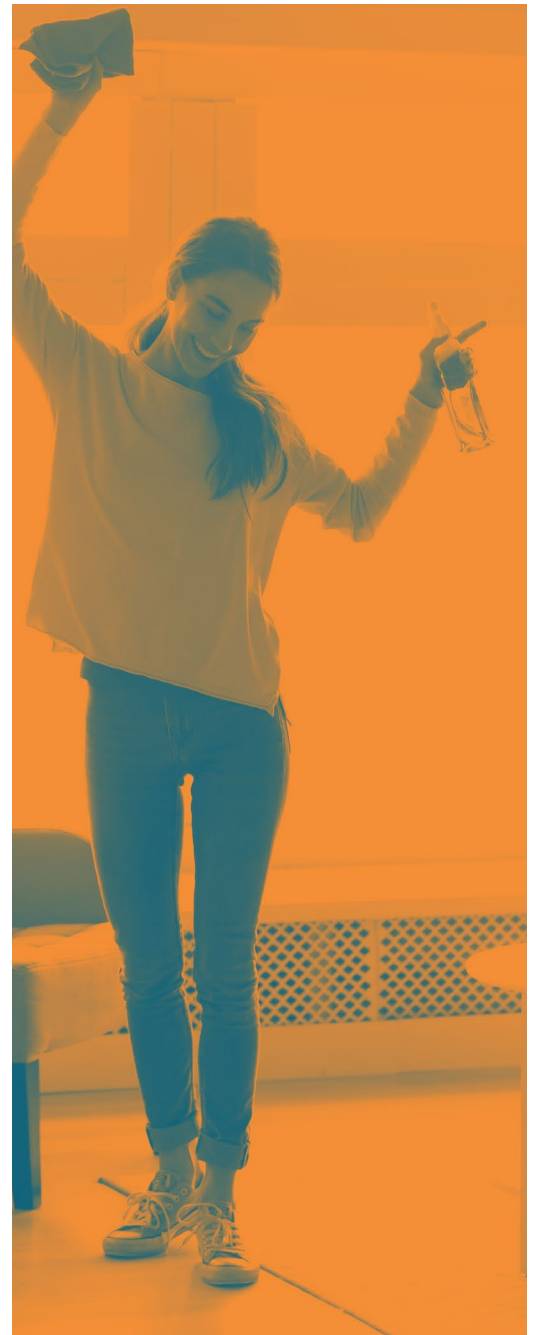
1/4 Cup White Vinegar
1/2 Cup Baking Soda
1/2 teaspoon Tea Tree Oil
Spray Bottle
Cleaning Rag

Mix vinegar and tea tree oil in a spray bottle. You can spray this on the toilet base, lid, seat, and inside the bowl. Toss the baking soda in the toilet bowl, making sure to get the rim where the water sits, then scrub with a toilet brush. Finally, use the cleaning rag to clean off the vinegar solution.

Glass Cleaner

1/4 Cup Rubbing Alcohol
1/4 Cup White Vinegar
1 Tablespoon Cornstarch
2 Cups of Warm Water
Spray Bottle
Cleaning Rag

Combine all parts of the rubbing alcohol, vinegar, cornstarch, and warm water and mix in your spray bottle. Spray the mixture on any glass or shiny surface you want to clean. Wipe away with a cleaning cloth or paper towels.





Before jumping into a deep clean, get organized. Clutter has a way of sneaking up on us, and garages, kitchens, and closets are notorious for becoming catchalls for the little treasures we just don't know what to do with yet. When your junk drawer turns into a junk closet, don't worry, we've got you! We are starting our organizing journey with the mindset of making your square footage count! You may have a lot of space to organize, or you may have a little. It's best to organize your areas like you have no space to work with. Many people feel having less stuff is liberating. Use your square footage for the things and activities that make you happy.

1. Transition to Multi- Functional Furniture

Sofas, chairs, and ottomans can include built-in storage space. Some sofas and love seats convert into beds for an instant guest room. A well-made kitchen car can multi-task as a wine rack, cabinet, and portable butcher block all-in-one.

2. Get Creative in the Kitchen

We will get into more detail about the kitchen in a bit, but get creative with storage to maximize countertop and cabinet space. Pots and pans can hang from a ceiling mount, and cabinets can be outfitted with organizers. National retailers like Bed, Bath, and Beyond or Target, have a ton of options in this regard.

3. Use Storage Accessories

Measure the space you have and consider purchasing an organization system. Keep it simple and declutter by implementing pre-made organizers from your local hardware store. Baskets and storage cubes also help organize small spaces.

4. Think Vertically

Think vertically when hanging art, mirrors, or shelving. Drawing the eye upward creates an illusion of bigness. Also, floor-to-ceiling shelving makes excellent use of space and can also serve as a design piece. If you're not sure about vertical art, start with Gustav Klimt. He's the classical and trendy authority on vertical reproductions. If you need a place to begin for shelving ideas, check out the formally functional offerings at IKEA.

Closet & Storage Organization

Small tweaks to your closet can make a world of difference to your wardrobe and even peace of mind. It's been proven that clutter creates stress. No matter the layout or limitations of your closet, there's always the potential for practical storage solutions. Having this space well organized enables you to navigate your belongings with ease, and keep your clothing and accessories in tip-top shape. Your future self will thank you!

No closet door?

If you live in a small space, replace traditional doors that swing out with curtains, hanging screens, or even a partition. Hit up your local craft store for supplies and watch YouTube for a tutorial for instruction and inspiration.

Take inventory.

Keep one or two seasons of clothing in your closet and the rest in the attic or garage until you need it. When it's time for the "big switch," purge again. Switching out clothing when the seasons change could even be considered as your exercise for the day.

Optimize with storage accessories.

Use drawers for folded items, hangers for dresses and suits, and boxes odds and ends. Plastic laundry baskets or a hamper can keep dirty clothes at bay. An umbrella stand can work well for miscellaneous items, like yoga mats. Wayfair.com offers a variety of freestanding closet systems for small spaces.

Lighting is Key.

Are your walls dark? How much natural light do you have to work with? If it's minimal, you might consider investing in a floor lamp or wiring the area.

The walls are your friend, too.

Mount a pegboard or know to hang scarves jewelry and other accessories. Hooks can create easy access to favorites like robes, jackets, and sweaters. Both practical and aesthetic, suitcases can be used to hold out-of-season linens, blankets, or sweaters. Trunks also can pack a major punch. Put a cushion or pillows on one and use it as a nook to sit and put on or remove shoes.

Choose your hangers wisely.

Swap out cheap flimsy plastic ones for velvet or wood, which grab onto your clothes to prevent pieces from falling to the floor. Also, the thin design allows you to hang more items in the same amount of space.



6 STEPS TO **Organize Your Garage**

So you can park again.

Take a before and after picture. This step is not required but will lead to a great sense of satisfaction at the end of the project. Post your before and after photos to encourage others to do the same!

1.

Take everything out.

Use your driveway or front yard as a temporary holding ground. Once everything is out in plain view, consider the utility and value of each item. You may find that much can be donated, recycled, or discarded.

2.

Clean your empty garage.

Use a top-down approach. A shop vac comes in handy for cleaning rafters and high-up storage areas. Consider wearing safety goggles and a dust mask to protect yourself from debris and allergens. You can find simple dust masks at home improvement stores like Lowe's.

3.

Perform simple improvements.

Do your garage walls or floor need painted? Could the windows use new blinds? You've got a clean, empty garage—seize the opportunity to increase your home's value.

4.

Look for areas in need of repair or general maintenance.

Shelves needing to be secured – Check to make sure that all shelves and cabinets are securely attached to the wall. Secure or replace them if needed.

Cracks in the walls or floor – Most garages have poured concrete walls and floors. Weathering and natural shifts in the earth's surface can cause them to crack. Foundation and floor crack repair kits are also widely available.

Broken windows or windows that won't open – Sometimes fixing a broken window is as simple as replacing a pane. Measure the size of the glass you need and bring your measurements to a local glass shop or larger home improvement store.

They can cut approved window glass per your measurements and can offer advice on installation.

5.

Measure the amount of space needed to park your vehicles or equipment.

This includes automobiles, motorcycles, bicycles, lawnmowers, or anything else that takes up floor space. Mark the area needed with painters tape so you won't infringe on it.

6.

Group like items together.

Gardening tools, automotive needs, toys, sporting goods, and miscellaneous items can all be separated into groups. When you begin bringing items back into the garage, it is easier to organize and find a place for things if you move one group of items before starting the next one. Neatly store small items in labeled containers or on hooks. Make the most of your wall space with pegboards. Ceiling hooks are also handy for lighter items that might otherwise take up too much shelf space.



Organize Your Kitchen

+ Cook and commune freely.

The steps to getting your kitchen clean and tidy start with finding new ways to organize the space you already have. Do you have limited cabinet space? Do you have a separate pantry? It's crucial to find the organization methods that work with your kitchen's space. Remember to prioritize tidying and organizing items that you use daily. Here are a few things you can purchase to make your kitchen more organized.

+ Opening Shelving

Use open shelving to create both aesthetically pleasing storage as well as access to frequently used items. It's best to place things like pots and pans, dinnerware, or even pantry items like coffee, flour, and sugar on open shelving. If you don't use items often enough, you will get dust buildup, which is just another thing to clean!

+ Magnetic Knife Rack

Get your knife block off your countertop or free up drawer space with a magnetic strip attached to your backsplash. This strip can hold anything metallic – knives, serving utensils, or other small kitchen tools. Place the strip close to where you will use it most. Right above the counter you use to chop veggies is a popular spot!

+ Toekick Drawers

Cookie sheets, cutting boards, serving platters – they're all flat, and they all take up way too much space. This is where the shallow, but useful, toekick drawers come into play. They are installed in the small space between the bottom of your counter and the floor. Install the right drawer slides, and you've got an easily opened and easily accessible drawer for all your large, flat cookware.

+ Metal Strips for Under Cabinets

The space under our cabinets is prime real estate and it's hardly ever used! Apply metal strips to the underside of your upper cabinets (you can even put a large metal sheet on the side of one cabinet). Then, place magnets on the lids of jars for spices, teas, and other small items you use frequently. Stick them to the metal strip and you've got easy access and more cabinet space!

+ Fridge Bins

Refrigerators can become endless pits for expired jars of condiments and hidden tubs of butter. Make your life a lot easier by purchasing fridge bins to organize the cluttered mess inside your most-used kitchen appliance. The Container Store sells starter kits that come with dozens of specialized containers for you to use for inexpensive.

Deep Clean

Room by Room Checklist

Deep cleaning is more than just moving around clutter and throwing things in cabinets, it is getting on your hands and knees with a toothbrush and scrubbing every nook and cranny! Looking at the task ahead can seem overwhelming for anyone when they first think about deep cleaning. But if you take a deep breath and follow these simple steps, you will be well on your way to a clean home!

Kitchen

Done?

Deep clean fridge and freezer, defrost if needed

Dust cupboards and top of fridge

Deep clean stove inside and out

Deep clean small appliances

Deep clean dishwasher

Disinfect sink and faucet

Wipe down walls, cupboards, drawers, counter top, and light switches

Clean out junk drawer(s)

Wash out garbage can

Sweep and mop the floor—move all large appliances if possible

Bathroom

Done?

Scrub shower walls and fixtures

Clean shower curtain or door

Wash trash can

Organize cabinets and drawers

Wipe down mirrors

Clean walls, light switch

Clean and organize medicine cabinet

Mop the floor

Dust décor

Clean toilets

Family Room

Done?

Dust surfaces, including décor

Organize book shelves, DVD collections, and gaming equipment

Wash throw blankets and pillows

Steam clean furniture

Wipe down walls and light switches

Dust and clean window treatments

Clean lampshades

Dust electronic and wipe screens clean

Clean crevices of baseboard

Master Bedroom

Done?

Dust all surfaces

Wash curtains and blinds

Wipe down walls and light switches

Wash bedding

Flip and rotate mattress

Sort through clothes and separate for garage sale, donation, etc.

Organize closet

Clean out under the bed

Clean carpet and rugs

Organize drawers

Clean lights

Additional Bedrooms

Done?

Wash bedding

Organize closet

Sort through clothes and separate for garage sale, donation, etc.

Organize toys

Sanitize toys and toy boxes

Organize books

Dust and wipe down all surfaces

Clean carpet and rugs

Laundry Room

Done?

Deep clean washer and dryer

Wipe down all surfaces

Organize cleaning products

Wipe down walls and light switches

Garage

Done?

Organize and dust shelves

Sweep floor

Throw out any broken or worn equipment





Lacking Motivation?

Try these helpful tips!

- 1. Turn chores into a competition.** Whether you compete between a spouse, your kids, or other family members, turning anything into a game is a surefire way to get everyone involved. Provide a reward, whether it's the honor of choosing dinner that night, money, or even just stickers.
- 2. Plan a party.** Nothing gets people cleaning faster than a guest coming over. Plan a party (give yourself a week!) and let panic do its thing. You'll have the house in tip-top shape in no time.
- 3. Make a playlist.** Cleaning in silence is boring. Make it fun and turn on a playlist that gets you pumped up. We've included some songs in our own playlist for you to get some inspiration.
- 4. Do one small task a day.** Small steps every day will lead to a big change. Plan a week of these small tasks – dishes on Monday, laundry on Tuesday, bathroom on Wednesday, etc.
- 5. Have less stuff.** We'll talk about decluttering later, but the fewer things you have, the less you will need to clean. Try seasonal purges to get your clutter under control.
- 6. Try a new cleaning product.** Getting excited about a new cleaning product is a great way to get you excited about cleaning. It seems like a small thing, but a fresh scent of your favorite cleaning solution may be just the thing to jump-start your urge to clean.
- 7. Reward yourself.** Set a goal for yourself so that you can get a reward for reaching it. The prize can be small – an extra episode of your favorite Netflix show - or big, a shopping spree for new clothes. You decide!
- 8. Just start—clean one thing.** Often, getting over that first hurdle is the hardest. Once you've done one thing on your to-do list, you'll be more likely to do others. The beginning is the hardest part!

Keeping up with the Maintenance

Day to day and year to year checklist to help you keep up with your cleaning.

Every Month

- ☐ Check, clean and replace air filters as needed
- ☐ Check and replace the refrigerator water filter as needed
- ☐ Flush and clean drains in kitchen and bathrooms
- ☐ Clean garbage disposal

Spring

- ☐ Install fresh batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- ☐ Vacuum and dust behind refrigerator and oven
- ☐ Inspect exterior siding and masonry
- ☐ Inspect the roof for damage
- ☐ Inspect attic for leaks
- ☐ Clean out gutters and downspouts
- ☐ Repair damaged screens in windows

Fall

- ☐ Schedule a furnace inspection
- ☐ Schedule a chimney inspection
- ☐ Cover and store outdoor furniture
- ☐ Trim trees and shrubs away from the house
- ☐ Clean up leaves and debris
- ☐ Clean out gutters and downspouts
- ☐ Inspect deck and railings for loose nails or screws and repair

Summer

- ☐ Inspect the foundation for cracks and other issues
- ☐ Inspect the basement or crawl space for moisture
- ☐ Look for unwelcome pest activity (termites, voles, wasps, etc.)
- ☐ Check play equipment for damage
- ☐ Check, repair, and replace exterior locks as needed
- ☐ Reseal the deck, patio, or wooden fence
- ☐ Inspect exterior paint for chips

Winter

- ☐ Clean dryer ventilation
- ☐ Inspect washing machine and dishwasher hoses for leaks
- ☐ Check sinks and toilets for leaks
- ☐ Clean kitchen exhaust hood or filter
- ☐ Turn off the outdoor water supply
- ☐ Check electrical holiday decorations for issues, and make sure to use "outdoor only" labeled materials outside
- ☐ Inspect for debris on the roof and in gutters after a storm



Strive For Simplicity and Eliminate Clutter

When deciding what to pitch or keep, consider which items you find truly useful to you and your household goals.

One thing most adults have in common is having a junk drawer in their home or garage. How many do you have? More than one or two? While you may have a habit of “hide it and forget it” when it comes to cleaning and organizing, you may find that learning a few new techniques can help the cohesion in your home. There’s no need to do away with this commonly used space, simply make the most of them and save valuable time (and fewer headaches) looking for things when you need them.

You’re busy, so make use of baskets and “drop zones” in heavy traffic areas of your home for items you use often. Pinterest is an excellent resource for drop zone organization ideas!

Ditch the clutter and the need to save things “just in case.” Take a look at the KonMari Method for more tips on how to reduce clutter in your home. Consider putting together a variety of shelving or other long term solutions to display items by type/use to help keep essential things accessible when you move on to your next big idea! Consider the cooking philosophy “mise en place” for your decluttering: A place for everything and everything in its place.

Toss, Recycle, or Donate!

Bathroom

Old Makeup
Expired Sunscreen
Expired Medicine
Old Hair Ties
Broken Brushes
Old Perfume
Old Toiletries
Old Nail Polish
Old Towels/
Bathmat

Bedroom

Unworn Clothing
Old/Broken Jewelry
Earrings w/o a Match
Stained Clothing
Unused Purses
Clutter in Nightstands
Old Shoe Boxes

Kitchen

Plasticware w/o a Lid
Broken Appliances
Expired Food in
Fridge
Expired Canned
Goods
Unused/old
Cookbooks
Chipped Plates/
Glasses

Misc.

Old Cleaners
Torn Cleaning Rags
Old Detergents
Old Batteries
Unused Craft
Supplies
Old Newspapers
Collectibles

Playroom

Broken Toys
Games w/ lost pieces
Old Electronics
Unused Toys
Outgrown Play
Clothes
Books
Unwatched DVDs
Old Coloring Books

Garage/Basement

Old Paint
Outgrown Bikes
Old Sports
Equipment
Broken Tools
Old Rags
Unused Holiday Items
Old Outside Toys
Unused Decor

Office

Books
Magazines
Old Receipts
Dried Up Pens/Markers
Old Notebooks
Outdated Electronics
Old Chargers/Cords
Outdated Software
Expired Coupons
Old School Papers
Old Warranty Manuals
Filled Notebooks
Unknown Keys
Old Address Labels



Our favorite inspirational sources for cleaning can be found all over the internet! On Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram, and streaming services. Follow the following sources for more ideas on how to simplify your life and get your house clean inside and out!

Marie Kondo

Tidying Up with Marie Kondo on Netflix
[The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up](#)

Grove Collaborative

[grove.co](#)
[Instagram](#)

Martha Stewart

The Martha Stewart Show (Hallmark)
[Martha Stewart's Homekeeping Handbook](#)

Clutterbug

[YouTube Channel](#)
[30 Day Decluttering Challenge](#)

Clean House

On Hulu Live TV

Minimalism: A Documentary about the Important Things

On Netflix

Apps That Help With Cleaning & Organizing

The Tody app icon is a green rounded square with the word "Tody" in white, italicized, sans-serif font.

Tody

Tody is an app that can help prioritize your to-do list. Don't wait until everything is checked off before giving yourself some kudos for your hard work though!



TaskRabbit is the perfect app to help you delegate the tasks that would not bother you if completed differently than how you'd do them. The app allows you to enlist the help of taskers in your area to help you!



OurHome is an app that makes it easy to manage tasks and events and stay organized in your home!



Evernote is a great app for organizing to-do lists and prioritizing your projects!