

## Tips and Hints

### Feeling the Urge to Clean, Yourself?

Look at each room and identify specific tasks. Make a list of cleaning priorities. Share the fun with family members.

- Kitchen: wash and wax wood floors and mop vinyl floors. Clean out refrigerator and pantry. Change shelf-liners. Straighten junk drawer Wipe down cabinet.
- Bathroom: Use lint-free cloths or a squeegee to wash windows inside and out. Dust the sill. Vacuum the window well.
- Window Treatments: Vacuum draperies. Wash blinds. Replace heavy drapes with lightweight or sheer curtains.
- Furniture: Polish furniture, wash upholstery, vacuum between cushions. Clean behind and under sofas and cabinets.
- Closets: Give old clothes and furniture to charity. Vacuum floors. Dust shelves. Hang cedar blocks to freshen the areas.

### Best Way to Tackle Cleaning

- Always clean top to bottom. When you dust, start at the top and work down.
- Take all your cleaning tools with you into each room to avoid unnecessary trips back and forth.
- Unplug the phone and the turn off the T.V.
- Eliminate clutter. An uncluttered home looks better than one that is dust-free but strewn with odds and ends.
- Clean as you go! It takes a lot less time to remove new dirt than old, and to clean and put away stuff as you use it, than to clean and store the pile-up you can accumulate.
- A house that smells fresh will give the impression of cleanliness. Leave baking soda on carpeting for the night to absorb musty odors, vacuum in the morning.
- Keep a big astro-turf mat on the porch to cut down on tracked in dirt.
- Keep a basket in the kitchen for the mail, newspaper, car keys to help with clutter.

- Keep a hamper in every bathroom.
- Make everyone in charge of making his or her own bed and picking up their stuff.
- Always pickup the T.V. room before bedtime and start the dishwasher.
- Prioritize, if your time is limited decided what is most important.
- Delegate, get the entire family involved.
- Make a checklist, when a job is completed, check it off - you'll feel as though you are really accomplishing something.

### **Cleaning Window Sills**

To remove spots rub the surface with rubbing alcohol.

### **Cleaning Windows**

- If necessary, dust off the window and sill with a clean paintbrush. Excess dust and water can cause mud.
- Use a professional-type squeegee available for about \$20 at a janitorial supply store. Forget the cheap brands you find at the grocery store. They are not as effective, and you have to replace the whole thing once you get a nick in the blade.
- Don't clean windows while they are in direct sunlight. Your cleaning solution will dry too fast.
- Dip a 100% cotton cleaning cloth in your solution. Wring out the excess and then wipe the window to loosen dirt.
- Grab your squeegee. Start each squeegee stroke in a dry spot. Wipe a strip with a cleaning cloth to get started.
- Squeegee in a pattern from top to bottom, or side to side. If you clean the outside and the inside, Work top to bottom on the inside and side to side on the outside. By doing this, you'll be able to identify which side any streaks left behind are on.
- Keep the squeegee blade dry by wiping it with a cleaning cloth after each stroke.
- Replace the blade when necessary. Even the smallest nick can cause streaking.
- Don't have a squeegee? Use newspaper for drying freshly washed windows. It's cheaper and leaves no lint behind.

## **Countertops**

First remove everything. Then vacuum or dust off all crumbs. Then wet a white nylon backed sponge with dishwashing detergent solution and use the sponge side to go over the counter, including the backsplash. Let the solution set on the surface for a few minutes to soften hard droplets. Then, use the nylon side of the sponge as necessary to remove any stubborn stuff. Buff dry with a clean, lint free towel. If your countertops have lost their luster, try furniture polish or club soda to give a temporary shine to your kitchen.

## **Clean Doors Give a Great Impression**

If company is coming, clean and wash the doors in your house. No one knows why, but your whole house looks good. Scrub the door from top to bottom with a rag and soapy water, using a scrub brush for especially tough spots. While you're at it, wipe down the top edge of the frame. With all the dust that collects up there, it probably looks like velvet. Along with the upper side of a ceiling fan, the top of the door is one of the most missed spots in the home.

## **Blood Stains**

- Put a paste of water and cornstarch, cornmeal or talcum powder on fresh spots. Let dry and brush off.
- Cover fresh or dried stains with meat tenderizer and add cool water. After 15 to 30 minutes, sponge off with cool water.
- Fresh blood on leather? Dab on a little hydrogen peroxide. After it bubbles, wipe it off.
- If you get blood on fabric, quickly wet a long piece of white cotton thread with saliva and place it across the spot. The thread will absorb the blood.

## **Removing Crayon Marks**

Remove crayon marks from painted walls by scrubbing with toothpaste or an ammonia-soaked cloth. Rinse and dry.

## **Removing Heel Marks**

Take pencil eraser and rub them off.

## **Quick fix for shiny wood floors**

Put a piece of waxed paper under your dust mop. Dirt will stick to the mop and the wax will shine your floors.

## **Removing Tar Spots**

Use paste wax to remove tar from floors. This works on shoes too.

## **Candle Wax**

- For spilled wax on carpets and upholstery, put a brown paper bag over the dried wax and run a hot iron over it. The bag will absorb the hot wax.
- Dried wax on wood floors can be removed by softening the wax with a hair dryer, then removing with paper towels. Wash spot down with a combination of vinegar and water.

## **Cleaning Glass Table Tops**

- Clean by rubbing with a little lemon juice, dry with paper towels and polish with newspaper for a sparkling table.
- Toothpaste will remove small scratches from glass.

## **Cleaning Marble**

To remove stains, sprinkle salt on a fresh cut lemon. Rub very lightly over stain. Do not rub hard or you will ruin the polished surface. Wash off with soap and water.

## **Polishing Furniture**

- Carved furniture- dip old toothbrush into furniture polish and brush lightly.
- To remove polish build-up mix one cup water and one cup vinegar. Dip soft cloth in the mixture and wring out before wiping furniture. Dry immediately with another soft, dry cloth.

## **Cleaning Acoustical Tiles**

- Clean with the dust-brush attachment of your vacuum cleaner.
- Remove stains and dirt with mild soap and water. Don't let the tiles get too wet.

## **Cleaning Wallpaper**

- To dust papered walls, tie a dust cloth over your broom and work from the top down.
- To remove pencil marks and other non-greasy spots from non-washable papers, use an art-gum eraser or a slice of fresh rye bread.
- To remove greasy spots, crayon marks and food stains, apply a paste of cleaning fluid and fuller's earth, cornstarch or whiting. Let dry and brush off. Repeat the treatment until the spot is gone.
- Wipe off fingerprints with a damp cloth, then sprinkle the moist area with fuller's earth. Let it dry and then brush it off.

- To prevent splash marks when you're washing baseboards or other woodwork, mask wallpaper with a wide ruler, venetian blind-slat or a piece of rigid plastic.
- When you save scraps of wallpaper for patching, tack them to a wall in the attic or closet. When you use them for repairs, they won't look so brand new.

### **Removing Water Stains**

- If the fabric is non-washable, gently scratch off the stain (which is made up of mineral deposits) with your fingernail. Still there? Hold the spot over a steaming teakettle until well-dampened. As it dries, rub the stain, working from its outer edges toward the center.
- Remove hard-water stains from glasses and bottles by rubbing them with steel wool dipped in vinegar.
- Cover hard-water stains on bathroom fixtures with a paste of baking soda and vinegar. Then drape with a terry cloth towel and let stand for about an hour. Wipe off, rinse and dry.

### **Cleaning Wicker**

Remove dust from wicker by vacuuming with the dust brush attachment. To remove grime, wash with a solution of 2 tablespoons ammonia per gallon of water. Use a paintbrush or a toothbrush to get at hard-to-reach places. Rinse well. Air dry in the shade.

### **Cleaning Mini-blinds**

- Slip your hands into a pair of socks for cleaning the mini-blinds. Dip one hand into a bucket of warm, soapy water and hold the blinds between your two hands. Rub back and forth until you've cleaned the whole surface. Then reverse sides so the dry sock dries the blinds.
- Wipe mini-blinds with damp fabric softener sheets to eliminate static that collects dust. The same trick works for your T.V. screen.

### **Mini-blind Spring Cleaning**

- Take the blind down and take it outside.
- Lay it on an old blanket preferably on a slanted area of the yard.
- Let the blind out all the way and make sure all the louvers are flat.
- Mix up a bucket of all-purpose cleaner or ammonia solution.
- Scrub with a soft brush then turn it over to do the back side.
- By now the blanket is wet and is helping to clean the blind and protecting it.

- Hang the blind on a clothesline and hose it off.
- Gentle shaking will help it begin to drip dry.

### **Doorknobs**

Always disinfect doorknobs, switch plates and telephones. They collect germs from everyone who touches them.

### **Clean Mirrors**

Remove hair spray from a mirror with a little rubbing alcohol on a soft cloth.

### **Linen Closets**

Linen closets can be a jumbled mess, especially when you have children making their own beds. Organize bed linens in sets. Fold flat sheet in half twice lengthwise, then fold fitted sheet the same way and lay it on top of the flat folded sheet. Add one or two pillow cases folded long ways and roll them all together into a neat roll. Whoever is making the bed can grab only a roll instead of rummaging around and making a mess.

### **Dusting Tip**

Spray broom or dust mop with your favorite furniture polish and the dust and dirt will be easier to collect when you sweep.

### **Fresh Curtains**

To freshen curtains place them in the dryer with a fabric softener sheet and a damp towel.

### **Cobwebs**

If you can't reach the cobwebs with your feather duster, use the detached vacuum wand as an extension.

### **Ashtrays**

Spray furniture polish on hard to clean ashtrays. Ashes then dump out without sticking.

### **Odor and Moisture Removal**

To get rid of odor you have to remove the source, not just cover the odor up with perfumed air freshener. Clean up and disinfect. Kill the germs that cause most household odors. The quicker you get after odors, the easier they are to remove.