

# How to Maintain a Clean Home

These are tips that the entire family can and should use. All family members living in the home should help take care of the home they live in. Almost everyone can do something, even small children. There is no reason why Mom should clean up behind herself and everyone else too! After all, if everyone is partaking of the blessings of the home to live in, everyone should help take care of it. While no one will change overnight, incorporating these tips into your daily life will soon make new and neater habits for even the messiest of the messes.

**Clean up any and all messes immediately.** You will get into the habit of doing this after a while. Once you walk away from it, chances are that you won't go back to it.

**Make a habit of cleaning up as you go!** This saves time and keeps your home clean and organized. Washing dishes as you cook works great and prevents the large pile to wash after the meal.

**If you can't clean as you go, take 15 minutes a day to clean your home.** It's a tempting thought to try and clean the entire house all at once, and if you can do that, great! However, most don't have that much time set aside on any one day. Instead, start with the kitchen and bathroom. These are two rooms that should always be clean and sanitary. Make it a goal to clean those two rooms and keep them clean. Then work on the rest of the home. Once you have a room clean and organized, make an effort to clean as you go so that it stays that way.

**Keep a bag/box for items that you no longer use/need.** This includes clothes, toys, books...whatever is in your home that's not being used. Keep everything labeled with the date that you put it in the bag—get rid of it after seven days. You can donate it, sell it, trash it—just get rid of them! The idea here is to get *rid* of clutter, not just to move it from one place to another.

**Clean during commercial breaks.** If you watch TV, have everyone hop up during commercials to do simple tasks like putting shoes away, hanging up coats and school bags up etc. Three people doing that three or four times through a 1/2 hour show equals a sum close to an hour of work! In addition, this ends up feeling more like a game than a chore.

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## Keeping a Kitchen Clean

**Never go to bed with a dirty kitchen.** Even if you can't get to the dishes right after a meal, make sure the kitchen is clean before bedtime to prevent an unmanageable mess.



 Keep your sink nice and clean.

**Clean out your sink.** After dinner each night, wash the dirty [dishes](#) that have accumulated through the day. If you have a dishwasher, load the dishes in for cleaning. If you don't, set them in a rack to dry

once hand cleaned. When the sink is clear, wipe it down with soap and a dish towel to sanitize and clean it. Rinse with water. This step should take only a few minutes to complete.



 Keep the tabletops, stove tops, and counters clean.

**Spray a kitchen cleaner on the stove top, tabletops, and counters.** Then wipe down with a clean paper or cloth towel. Be sure to clean any spots or stuck-on food as you go. It should only take a minute's worth of work.



 Is your kitchen floor clean?

**Inspect the kitchen floor for any spots or spills, and use the same cloth you used on the counter to wipe them up.** You don't need to use spray cleaner unless the spots are really stuck on. Aim to spend 30 seconds to 1 minute on this task.



 Sweep the floors.

**Sweep the floor with a broom quickly if necessary.** If there are food particles or visible dirt, you need to get rid of it before it builds up later. Spend 1 to 2 minutes on this job.

**Set rules in your house to require everyone to pitch in.** If someone goes in to get a snack, make it clear that it's their responsibility to clean up immediately after they make the mess.

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## Keeping a Bathroom Clean



 Clean the mirror.

**Spray a glass cleaner on the mirror if has spots on it.** Use a paper or cloth towel to wipe it down quickly. It should take only a few seconds, and if there's no visible debris on the mirror, skip the step. You'll get to it when you do your heavier cleaning.



 Wipe down the sink with the same cloth you used on the mirror.

**Wipe down the sink with the same cloth you used on the mirror.** If you didn't clean the mirror, simply spray the cleaner in the sink and on the faucet and wipe up. Spend no more than 30 seconds on this step unless you have trouble spots that need attention.



 Clean the edges of the bathtub, and then toilet seat and rim.

Use the same cloth from the sink and mirror to wipe down the edges of your tub, if you have one, and then the **toilet** seat, and rim. Make sure to do the toilet last. These tasks take only 1 minute to do.



🔍 Scrub the toilet bowl.

**Scrub the toilet bowl with a toilet brush if there's a visible ring.** It should take only 30 seconds. Leaving a ring to sit will make heavier cleaning take longer. If there's no ring, skip it for later.



🔍 Be sure to clean shower doors and curtains.

**Spray an all-purpose daily cleaner on the shower doors or curtains, and wipe down with a clean, dry cloth.** Once you get this in to your routine, it should take 1 minute and will help drastically cut down on the build-up of soap scum

## Keeping a Bedroom Clean



🔍 Make the bed!

**Take 2 minutes to make the bed.** If you're in a hurry, pull the comforter over unkempt sheets, and smooth it down. You'll be getting in it soon anyway.



🔍 Put all of those dirty clothes in the hamper.

**Hang your worn clothes from the day on hangers, or toss them into the dirty clothes hamper.** Take a minute to put away any jewelry or accessories, which will help keep the room clutter free.



🔍 Get all the clutter off nightstands.

**Clear off the nightstands from last night.** Remove any old water glasses, magazines, or items you don't need right by the bed, and put them in the proper place. This should take 30 seconds.

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## Keeping a Living Room Clean



 Tidy the sofa.

**Straighten up the sofa.** Remove any toys, books, or junk, and fluff the pillows. Fold any throw blankets, and put them back in place. This step takes 1 to 2 minutes, and is essential in keeping the room clean.



 Wipe down the living room table.

**Wipe down table surfaces with a clean cloth to remove crumbs, prints, or water rings.** Spending 1 minute on this step will ensure you're lightening your load when it's time to do a more substantial cleaning job.



 Use that hand-held vacuum to clean the place up.

**Use a hand-held vacuum to pick up any dirt, food, or miscellaneous grime on the floor or rugs.** Take 1 to 2 minutes here, and don't forget to zip over the surfaces of sofas or chairs if needed.

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 Clear the floor of any clutter.

**Clear the floors of any clutter.** Take up to 4 or 5 minutes to put away any toys, books, games, or other items that aren't where they belong. With this last step, your home should be in top shape for the day.

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OK, everyone is different and works at a different pace, but everyone can do this!

*All* members living in the home should do their part. There is no excuse for anyone to not help out unless they are physically or mentally unable to do so. Even a baby that crawls at six months can be taught to begin put their toy into the toy box. Get everyone involved and get organized!

Every time you look in the refrigerator try to remove something old or unused. You'll get into the habit of looking and it will save you that smelly science project surprise later on.

Go through your refrigerator the night before your trash pickup. Get rid of old foods or condiments that go unused. If the jar of olives has been there for 2 years, it is time to toss them. Check expiration dates on dressings and other condiments. Wipe off what shelves you can. Because your trash gets picked up the next day you won't need to worry about your outside trash can starting to smell.

Make a list of chores that need to be done and scratch them off as you go. It will help prevent you from forgetting something and others can see what is left to be done. There won't be confusion with what they can assist with.

After your trash pick up you should spray bleach into your outside trashcan and hose out. Odors will be reduced and bugs and insects won't be drawn to it. Let it dry in the sun.

Before you add your first trash bag you can spray the interior and the lid with Raid or other bug spray. This isn't so much an issue when the weather gets cold but it can save you from a smelly disaster.