




# SPRING CLEANSE

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*There is more than work in a spring clean.  
There's wisdom too. Tending to the space we live in  
can be a way of restoring our well-being.*

Home is even more than the place we return to daily—it's also a feeling. It's where we take shelter, seek sanctuary, find comfort, and rest easy. At home, we are truly ourselves. There is joy to be found in creating this space that nurtures our body and spirit and anyone under its roof. But when it comes to maintaining that environment, many of us feel less joyful, more dutiful.

Often, we scrub, sweep, and keep out of a sense of obligation, detached from the true benefits a well-tended sanctuary provides. This season, as we embark on the age-old ritual of spring cleaning, we invite a more mindful approach. Turning our focus to the areas of our home that need our attention, one at a time, can also be an act of self-care.

In the practice of single-tasking, restoration can be found. For the task in front of us, and also for ourselves. It is an opportunity to slow down and be in the present moment. This kind of mindfulness looks like tuning in to our thoughts, senses, and surrounding environment through a nurturing lens, solely focused on the here and now. When we apply these principles to cleaning and caring for our home, not only do we do a better job, but we learn to find meaning in our everyday toils. Carrying out mundane chores can become peaceful, even pleasant.

Start your spring cleanse by being aware of your surroundings. Look to spots you might sometimes glance past—the cobwebs, corners, and crevices that are easiest to overlook in the day to day. Make a list, prioritizing the tasks that will give your well-being the most needed boost. Flipping and vacuuming your mattress can induce deeper sleep. Dusting vents and changing furnace filters will improve the quality of the air you breathe. Washing windows and screens lets in more sunlight while enhancing the beauty of your outdoor views.

Consider how you can be fully engaged in each activity. Give yourself permission to take it slow. Pay attention to what you are doing and the sensations that surround it. If you are hand-washing your throw pillows, note the temperature of the water on your hands, the smell and feel of the soap bubbles, the repetitive motion of dunking and wringing. Think about all you have to be grateful for. Those pillows cradle our family's weary heads as we relax into our couch after a long day. How lucky are we to have these fluffy pillows, this comfy couch, our family, and this sanctuary—a safe haven, our home.

When a task is complete, resist the temptation to rush off to the next. Take a moment to appreciate the outcome of your efforts, savoring the positive feelings that come when calm and cleanliness are restored. Like the object of our attention, we, too, are made whole again.

GET IN THE RIGHT

# Head Space

## PREPARE FOR SUCCESS

- Put a day or days to clean on the calendar. Setting aside the time can help you feel more relaxed as you make your way down the list of things to do.
- Stock up on cleaning supplies you need to get the jobs done. Sometimes finding new products to help your process can feel exciting.

## SET THE TONE

- Turn on all the lights to keep things bright. As you finish a room and move to the next, perhaps you turn off the lights, a visual cue that your work there is done.
- Open curtains to let in the sunlight or, if the warmer spring temperatures have settled in, open windows so the air can flow.
- Light a favorite candle and practice slow and even breathing—this can help you remain relaxed while working.
- Consider silencing your phone and other distractions so you can focus on the task at hand.
- Resist rushing so you can take your time and tune in to what you're doing with all of your senses.

## LET YOURSELF ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE

- Create a music playlist that motivates you, use the time as a chance to catch up on podcasts, or listen to an audiobook from your to-be-read pile.
- Snap some “before” pictures on your phone so you can see all the improvements after you are done.
- Treat yourself to a favorite dinner or another special treat to reward your efforts.
- Carve out time for rest after the work is finished, a space where you can savor the joy of a job well done.
- You don't have to do it all. If there are tasks that you really dislike that just squeeze out all the fun, consider outsourcing those to a professional.

# Look at the Big Picture & Make a Plan

Sometimes the biggest hurdle to spring cleaning is deciding where to begin. When you have high hopes and a long list, it can be helpful to focus your attention.

## DECIDE ON A CLEANING STRATEGY

Breaking down your to-do list into tasks you can complete in set intervals will help your spring clean feel less daunting.

- ***go room by room***  
*In this strategy you choose one room and tackle it from top to bottom before turning your attention elsewhere. If you have a few hours each day, this works especially well, allowing you to work through one room every time you clean.*
- ***take it task by task***  
*Start at the top of the list and do each task throughout the whole house before moving to the next task on the list. For example, sweeping every room, then mopping, and then going through to polish windows and glass.*

## IDENTIFY HOW MUCH TIME IS AVAILABLE

Knowing whether you will devote an entire day or just a portion of the day helps set your mind to what will get done. Consider that sometimes there is value in changing the way you usually tackle cleaning. If you typically set aside an entire day to clean, perhaps you would be surprised by what you could get done by setting a timer for two or three hours.

- ***all at once***  
*Blocking out a large amount of time can help you get into the flow, allowing you to settle more deeply into the task at hand. When working this way, consider which projects will take more mental energy, like organizing, and perhaps tackle those first, when you feel fresh.*
- ***a little at a time***  
*If you are going to clean for a couple hours each day—or just try to achieve as much as you can in brief bursts—it can help to organize tasks by the time you have to give. That helps you wrap up the task before having to walk away, giving you the feeling of a job well done.*



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**GET THE GOOD STUFF**

Finding the right products for a job helps us clean more efficiently. By choosing scents, and even packaging, that soothe us, we can create an environment where we feel more at home—and more motivated.

- Carrying caddy
- Rubber gloves
- Sponge
- Scrub brushes
- Squeegee
- Plastic bucket
- Cleaning cloths or paper towels
- Vacuum cleaner + attachments
- Mop or steamer
- Broom and dustpan
- All-purpose cleaner
- Glass cleaner
- Baking soda
- White vinegar
- Dish soap

# Focus Your Efforts

You know your home better than we do. Here we offer a suggested list of tasks meant as a starting place for a spring cleanse. Whether you use this as a checklist for what to get done or simply pick and choose the chores that are a good fit for your space and the time you have available, our hope is that this list works as helpful inspiration.

## KITCHEN

### *clean*

- Wipe down appliances, cabinets, baseboards, molding, and trim.
- Sweep and mop.
- Clean hanging light fixtures.

### *deep clean*

- Unload the fridge so you can wipe down shelves. While everything is out, throw away what you don't use.
- Organize your pantry with items you use most up front.
- Clean then reseal marble, granite, or other stone surfaces.
- Purify the dishwasher.
- Pare down unused utensils and gadgets.
- Destreak glass with a vinegar-based solution.
- Clean the inside of your oven.
- Clean parts of appliances that sometimes get neglected, like the inside of the toaster and coffee maker.
- Wash windows and screens.

### *finishing detail*

- Light a candle when the work is done.

## BEDROOMS

### *clean*

- Wipe down cabinets, baseboards, molding, and trim.
- Vacuum floors and shake out curtains.
- Clean hanging light fixtures and wipe down fan blades.
- Wash sheets and comforters.

### *deep clean*

- Swap out any heavy winter bedding or quilts for lighter pieces.
- Dust air vents to reduce allergens.
- Flip and vacuum mattresses.
- Organize any drawers, nightstands, or bookshelves where items tend to accumulate.
- Destreak glass and mirrors with a vinegar-based solution.
- Wash windows and screens.

### *finishing detail*

- Prepare a diffuser with essential oils to help you relax when it's time for bed.

## LIVING AREAS

### *clean*

- Wipe down cabinets, baseboards, molding, and trim.
- Vacuum under couch cushions.
- Clean hanging light fixtures and wipe down fan blades.
- Reposition furniture that might have shifted slightly over time.
- Give your throw pillows a good fluffing and shaking out.

### *deep clean*

- Refresh sofas and love seats.
- Wash throw pillows and blankets.
- Dust air vents to reduce allergens.
- Dust back corners of bookshelves, books that aren't moved much, and anywhere else that may not get dusted regularly.
- Destreak glass and mirrors with a vinegar-based solution.
- Wash windows and screens.

### *finishing detail*

- Fill a vase with fresh-cut spring flowers.

## BATHROOMS

### *clean*

- Wipe down cabinets, baseboards, molding, and trim.
- Sweep and mop.
- Clean light fixtures.
- Clean shower doors or wash shower curtains.
- Clean the bathtubs, toilets, sinks, toothbrush holders, and soap dishes.
- Empty trash cans.

### *deep clean*

- Wash bath mats.
- Dust air vents to reduce allergens.
- Organize any drawers that have become junk drawers.
- Clean spaces that get missed in daily cleans, like behind the toilet.
- Pare down products to what you regularly use.
- Destreak glass and mirrors with a vinegar-based solution.

### *finishing detail*

- Set out a towel and bath salts so they're ready to enjoy later.

# Beyond the Clean

When the deep cleaning is done, often we find space has been created so we can freshen the home in ways that are above and beyond even a deep spring clean. These extra steps continue to deepen the satisfaction—and even peace—we can find from cleaning jobs well done.

## **ENHANCE AIR QUALITY**

Change HVAC filters throughout your home. Run a dehumidifier in damp areas like the basement, and consider having your ducts professionally cleaned to remove trapped dust.

## **LIVEN UP PLANT LIFE**

Dust leaves, prune, repot, fertilize, rotate, and rearrange in a sunnier spot to restore health to houseplants, livening up your indoor scenery.

## **REFRESH ARTWORK**

Updating the art on your mantel and walls is an easy way to alter your aesthetics. Choose decor that makes you happy, like your children's artwork, and hang recent family photos you've been putting off framing.

## **REORGANIZE THE ROOM**

Sometimes it takes getting everything in its right place to see new ways to position furniture. If the deep clean inspires you to move things around, explore where the feeling might take you. Seeing what you know so well in a new way often makes it feel brand-new again.

*Sourcebook on page 106*

