

2021 Spring Cleaning While You're Still Stuck at Home

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It's that time of year again — when you can swing open the windows and doors and let the fresh spring breezes flow through the rooms of your home. It's also time to grab the cleaning supplies and start the spring cleaning! Okay, maybe starting spring cleaning is not really an event to celebrate, but finishing it *is*! While you're stuck at home during what are hopefully the final weeks of the COVID quarantine, why not use these handy tips to do your best spring cleaning ever?

Anyway, there's no need to do the deed the traditional way — all at once. After all, since you're stuck at home anyway, instead of a sprint, let it be a marathon. Just check off a few items from your spring cleaning task list each day, and knock out the project within a few days or so.

Here's a list of the cleaning tasks that should be a part of spring cleaning, and advice on everything from how to freshen your mattress to how to clean windows professionally. These will brighten and freshen your entire home and let the feeling of springtime fill your living spaces.

Kitchen

Food Storage Cabinets — Cabinets and pantries can gather dust in the corners, despite being closed all but a few seconds per day. Removing food contents, disposing of expired food items, and wiping shelves is a good opportunity for any reorganizing and straightening you need to kick off the season of fresh starts.

Refrigerator — First, brace yourself for whatever you may find hiding at the back of those fridge shelves. Despite your certainty that you've been keeping the fridge contents streamlined, don't be alarmed to discover a couple of errant food items, now months old and overgrown with mold fuzz. Remove *everything* from the fridge. It's the only way. Throw away the expired food items, and then wipe the fridge interior and all the food containers with gentle but effective dish soap.

Sink and Faucet — Make the faucet and handles glisten, by pouring on some decalcifying agent or vinegar and scrubbing gently with a toothbrush or plastic scouring pad. Pour a little organic drain cleaner or vinegar and water mixture down the drain to help open up slow drains.

Bathroom

Shower and Bathtub — Before using cleaning products, open windows, or otherwise ensure sufficient ventilation of the small space. These are areas that you may be able to clean just by using a mixture of baking soda with vinegar. Or, use a standard household cleaner, or your favorite eco-friendly bathroom cleaning product. Apply cleaner liberally, and let it stand for a few minutes before wiping or scrubbing with a plastic or other surface-friendly scrubbing brush, as needed.

Storage Cabinets — Few cleaning projects are more worthwhile than making the medicine cabinet, grooming supplies drawers, and cleaning supplies cabinet in your bathroom fresh and reorganized. Empty all, and use fresh-smelling, regular-strength, all-purpose household spray cleaner, or dilute a disinfectant cleaner. Clean each item, and restore order in these important daily-use storages.

Living room

Dusting — Through the winter months, everyone is likely to have spent more time inside, which means all the activity has been generating more dust than lower indoor traffic seasons. So, throw open the windows and doors, and air out the furniture and living spaces. Use a clean soft cloth for dusting, and another cloth dampened for polishing with a solution appropriate for your wood, metal, and glass surfaces, including tops of photo frames, and your electronics center. Vacuum and clean upholstery according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Bedroom

Mattress — Mattresses get surprisingly dirty over the course of a year. Remove and wash all bed linens, mattress covers, and pads. (If you keep your mattress fully encased in a waterproof cover that is sealed by a zipper, leave it on, and just wipe down the covering with a fresh-smelling appropriate cleaning agent. To clean your mattress, if you use a regular cloth mattress cover, first vacuum the mattress. Then, apply a natural cleaning

and freshening agent, such as baking soda to help freshen the mattress. Sprinkle on the baking soda, leave it on for a few hours, then vacuum it up thoroughly. Or, use a type of cleaning agent and method recommended by the manufacturer.

Closet — No single other task in spring cleaning is as emotionally satisfying as reorganizing your closets. Take everything out, if necessary, and build piles of older clothes and other items to recycle or donate. As you put things away, make any needed changes in your organizational system, to improve the convenience of daily use. You'll now know the joy and inner peace of entering a just-cleaned closet.

Whole House

Doors and Windows — Clean windows tend to open and close more easily, let in more natural light, and make the most of your beautiful view of springtime in the glorious Sonoran desert. The best solution for cleaning windows is to apply streak-free window cleaner and use a microfiber cloth to remove the cleaning solution. Use a recommended solution for cleaning window frames, based on your frame material — vinyl, aluminum, or wood. For safety, invest in a convenient squeegee with an extendable handle, especially for cleaning outside windows where window tops are higher and the ground is less stable.

Blinds and Drapes — Either send drapes for dry cleaning or vacuum them thoroughly. Dust vinyl blinds thoroughly. Then, remove them and soak them in a tub with a very mild bleach and water solution, rinse thoroughly, then hang outdoors to dry before reinstalling.

Light Fixtures — Clean all light fixtures and bulbs carefully with a dry cloth. If it is necessary to dampen the cloth for a more thorough cleaning, let the fixture and bulb dry thoroughly for some hours, before turning on lamps.

Walls — Wipe each wall with a clean dry cloth. Use a gentle cleaning solution and cloth to remove marks. Clean outlet and switch cover with a medium-strength household cleaner. Touch up paint throughout the house, as needed.

Floors — Have carpets, hardwoods, tile, and decorative concrete floors professionally cleaned, or follow manufacturer's instructions for DIY floor cleaning and revitalization.

Celebrate Your Accomplishment

You did it! Another spring cleaning — done! Yes, it was a lot. But, being stuck at home really doesn't get better than this. So, go ahead — do a little dance from room to room, basking in the glow of a big satisfying achievement. Then, kick back and just enjoy your freshly deep-cleaned living spaces. Maybe binge on movies, or curl up with that book you've wanted to finish, or just lounge around and do as little as possible for a couple of days.

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