



Spring Into the Dream

Your Ultimate Guide to Cleaning &
Organizing Your Home

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A photograph of a kitchen sink area. A white ceramic vase filled with several bright yellow roses sits on a white windowsill. Below the window is a white kitchen sink with a chrome faucet and handles. The countertop is light-colored wood. The background is a white wall with a window frame.

Welcome to the Spring Season!

The spring season is upon us and Homes.com® is “blooming” with excitement! Take advantage of this ultimate cleaning and organizational resource that is guaranteed to freshen your home.

This kit will be a helpful resource for you as you plan to revamp your space for the new season. In this guide you'll find:

- Tips on cleaning with ordinary products
- How to clear the clutter
- Storage and organizational solutions for any space
- Guidance on searching for your new home
- Advice on going green

Homes.com® is thrilled to be your partner as you renew your apartment, house, loft or wherever you call home. Let this guide provide you with the necessary short cuts, to spend more time creating memories with your family and friends during this time of year.

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Spring Cleaning

Inspiring
A Clean Start

Uncommon Uses for Common Things

Did you know that there are multiple uses for everyday items around your home? Some may be uncommon, but work like a charm. Let your savings bloom by following these tips to help you begin with your fresh start.

Dryer Sheets



Be static and streak-free! Add a few drops of water to a used dryer sheet and wipe down faucets to remove stubborn soap scum from glass shower doors.

Can't get the baked on food off your pots and pans? Soak with hot water and 1-2 new or used dryer sheets overnight for an easy wash the next day.

Vinegar



Need to get rid of mildew or mildew stains? Apply white vinegar to your tile, plastic shower curtains, and even on the bottom of rugs and carpet to remove. This will also prevent mildew from forming.

Also, keep your coffee tasting great by brewing vinegar in your coffee maker through one cycle. Rinse thoroughly by running water two more brew cycles. Be sure to check the appliance manufacturer's note on using cleaning vinegar before getting started.



Baking Soda



Are your pots and pans looking dull? Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of baking soda and hydrogen peroxide in a small glass bowl until it makes a paste. Rub it on your pots and pans to add a new sparkle!

Soak your stale sponges in 4 tablespoons of baking soda and 1 quart of warm water to disinfect and re-use.

Lemon



Did you know that lemons kill bacteria? Cut a lemon in half and squeeze the juice on your cutting board, in your microwave, refrigerator shelves, mirrors, and windows. Also, clean your garbage disposal by grinding cut lemon pieces or rinds. Not only will this sanitize and remove stains, but it will also leave a clean scent inside your space.

Brighten your laundry whites without bleach! Squeeze $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of lemon juice to a regular load of laundry to remove stains and whiten clothing.

Clear The Clutter



The new season allows you the opportunity to start fresh by ridding yourself of things that no longer have use. The easiest way to alleviate space woes is to calm the chaos. Here are a few tips to help you clear the clutter in your home:

- Look at each article of clothing or file and ask yourself, “Is this something that I absolutely need?” If the answer is no, then toss it out (be sure to shred files first), host a garage sale, or give it away to charity.
- Tip for cleaning out your closet: After you wear an article of clothing, flip the hanger so by the end of the month you can see what you haven’t worn and what you might want to get rid of.
- If the items hold sentimental value, think about displaying them on your wall. Create a wall gallery by framing family photos and old birthday cards or place photos inside of an album on a shelf.
- Purchase storage containers that fit under your bed. This allows you to get rid of the clutter and create more living space. Use for seasonal decorations and clothing options.
- When you label your storage bins try not to use abbreviations, unless they are abbreviations that you definitely know and use on a daily basis. You can also color code based on the holiday or season.

Home Organization

Discovering
Extra Space



Clearing The Kitchen

The kitchen is a high traffic area full of activity. You create and share meals in and around the kitchen and kitchen table. Mail, homework or other items tend to collect at the table which can quickly become a mess. Gain control and peace of mind by utilizing these helpful suggestions on how to keep your kitchen orderly and clutter-free:

- Create a “command center” with a shared white board on which you keep family notes and reminders.
- Reorganize your cupboards by grouping similar objects to maximize space.
- Store spices and foods in labeled jars and clear storage containers. The ability to see through the containers makes it easy to know when it’s time to restock.
- Use labels to categorize and stay organized. You can buy labels or print them on the Internet for free!
- Use unconventional objects to organize. For example, a magazine holder tipped on its side can hold aluminum cans, or an under-cabinet paper towel holder could be used to hang kitchen utensils.





Expanding The Living Room

Imagine yourself lounging in a living room where all of the books are neatly filed, floors are spotless, and the coffee table and end tables are polished and clear. You can achieve this with your living room by trying these recommendations to make your organization dream a reality:

- When short on floor space, use your wall space! Consider using built-in bookshelves or hanging individual shelves to make the most of empty space.
- Use multi-purpose furniture, such as a storage bench or ottoman, to add style as well as storage.
- Use baskets as a go-to solution for controlling clutter and disguising messes. Strategically place them on shelving units, end tables, or beneath coffee tables.
- Use your living room furniture to create a clear traffic path for your visitors. If you are lacking space, consider swapping large and bulky furniture for smaller scale pieces.

Stashing Things Away in Any Room

Organization is key in a home, but you must find a system that works for you and your family. Browse these tips to tidy up your messy closets and de-clutter your “junk” spaces:

Drawers



Stash similar items together. Keep pots and pans, lids, cooking utensils, eating utensils and plastic containers together.

Use recycled tuna cans, clear sectional organizers, drawer dividers, or muffin tins to keep items like paper clips, pens, rubber bands, belts and lingerie organized in your drawers.

If you have children, designate a drawer, low cupboard, or basket for their dishes, crafts, or other kid supplies so that they don't have to ask for help.

Closets



Create an easy-to-use system in your existing closet with coordinating labeled bins, crates, or baskets.

Make use of the back of your closet's door by securing baskets or hanging shoe organizers in which you can store small items such as your child's toys, craft items, cleaning supplies, toiletries, or cooking ingredients.

Need more storage? Add wall hooks to your entry way to hang your keys, purse, coats, and umbrella.



Cabinets



Create your own storage cabinet by using a bookshelf and organized bins with labels.

If you don't have space in your kitchen for a mini home office, then try using the empty space at the end of a set of cabinets, to mount reminders and lists of important events for the week.

Install a magnetic strip to magnetize or add hangers to the back of your cabinet doors to hold spices, notes, measuring cups, or kitchen utensils.

Multi-Functional Furniture



Store items inside of ottomans, benches, and window seats which double as extra seating for guests.

Choose coffee and end table designs that come with built-in shelving underneath.

Consider a folding kitchen table or Murphy bed (beds that fold down from the wall) to maximize on small spaces.



New Home Search

Fresh Start
In Your New Home

New Home Check-

Location Nearby...

Y N

- School?
- Hospital?
- Entertainment/Shopping?
- Public Transportation?
- Employment?

Parking

Y N

- Garage?
- Parking Spots?
- N/A

Bathroom

Y N

- Stain-free?
- Mildew/Mold-free?
- Leak-free?
- Cabinet & Storage Space?
- Working Fans?
- Functioning Toilet?

Flooring, Windows & Ceiling

FLOOR

- Age? _____
- Condition? _____

WINDOWS

- Condition? _____

CEILING

- Condition? _____

Doors

Y N

- Open & Close Properly
- Weather Proofed
- Working Doorbell

Neighborhood

Y N

- Community Events?
- Neighborhood Crime Watch?
- Gated Community?
- Amenities?

Rooms

Y N

- Natural Lighting?
- Even Floors?
- Smoke Detectors?
- Carbon Monoxide Detector?

Kitchen

Y N

- Stain-free?
- Mildew/Mold-free?
- Leak-free?
- Cabinet & Storage Space?
- Working Fans?
- Working Garbage Disposal?
- Appliances Included?

Stairs

Y N

- Creaky?
- Signs of Damage?

Walls

Y N

- Stains?
- Need Re-painting?
- Soundproof?

Going Green With Your Move

Going green not only helps the planet be a better place to live; it's also a great way to save money. Whether you are moving by yourself or hiring movers to help, be sure you follow these eco-friendly tips to save money and the environment at the same time!

- When you're ready to pack, don't throw everything away. Instead, donate unopened food and lightly used clothing to charities. Recycle papers, ink cartridges, and broken electronics that no longer have use to you.
- Rent reusable hand trucks or dollies when moving.
- Rent reusable recycled plastic moving boxes and crates.
- Recycle boxes after your move by breaking them down and dropping them off at your local recycling drop-off center.
- Rent late model moving trucks that meet or exceed clean air standards. Diesel trucks are a better option than trucks that use regular gas.
- Rent or purchase eco-friendly blankets made from 100% recycled cotton.
- Depending on how much you have, consider renting a POD (portable moving container) to reduce costs.
- Stay hydrated on your move! Use your own reusable water bottle to reduce waste.



Concluding Thoughts

Whether it's cleaning tips, organizing a space or moving into a new home, this guide is intended to inspire you for the upcoming spring season.

Homes.com® wants to be more than your partner when searching for a new house or apartment. Take advantage of this resource and discover who you are, starting with where you live and inspiring you to dream big!

About Us

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