

Spring clean your home in 1 day



Before you get stuck in...

1. Work from 'top-to-bottom'. Start upstairs and work your way down. In each room, clean the ceiling and light fittings first with a feather duster, and vacuum carpets last. This way, any dirt you dislodge gets swept up later on
2. Open windows wide to allow fumes to escape
3. Enlist some help. Get family members to clean the outside of windows and take duvets to the launderette

9:00 am (laundry round up)

1. Start by gathering up everything to go in the washing machine. Bed linen, towels, mattress toppers, bath mats, cushion covers and cuddly toys can all be washed and then dried outside. Use lavender-fragranced detergent — the scent repels moths

9:15 am (bathroom)

1. Start with cupboards and medicine cabinets – you'll be amazed at the out-of-date items lurking there! Take everything out, wipe the shelves and return only what you'll use
2. Spritz the sink, bath and shower with multi-purpose cleaner and leave to soak
3. Dust and wipe walls, then clean the toilet. Spritz with multi-purpose spray and wipe with a disposable cloth, doing the handle first and the seat last to prevent germs spreading
4. Bin the used cloth, then squirt toilet cleaner around the bowl and leave to soak. Next, wipe down all the surfaces you sprayed a few minutes ago. Scrub the shower head, taps and plug-holes with a toothbrush, then rinse thoroughly
5. Once you've rinsed off the cleaning spray, if tile grouting still looks grotty, mix 50:50 bleach and water, then brush it on with an old toothbrush. And if your taps are tarnished with limescale cover them with kitchen roll drenched in vinegar. Leave a few hours, then rinse down.
6. Clean mirrors and windows with a splash of clear vinegar and a clean microfibre cloth. Finally, scrub the toilet again and flush

10:30 am (bedrooms)

1. Start by decluttering and dusting the bedrooms, not forgetting the tops of doors and windows. Take down pictures and mirrors, clean with vinegar and re-hang
2. Get rid of any clothes you've not worn all year. Take them to a charity shop, or recycle if they're tatty. Store winter clothes in space-saving vacuum bags
3. Let the room breathe. A good airing will reduce the allergens and germs in mattresses, even if you can't lug them outside. Throw the bed open, by taking off the clothes; open the windows (except in rainy weather), and leave the room to air. Just half an hour is fine, but if it isn't too cold, a few hours is even better.
4. Head to the washing machine. Once all the linens (sheets, pillowcases, quilts, duvet covers, mattress pads etc) are off the beds, wash them in order of what goes on the bed first so you can put them back on the beds as they come out of the dryer and not have to worry about them sitting in a heap and getting wrinkled. If you're switching over to lighter quilts, wash the winter bedding before putting it away.
5. Most pillows and duvets can be washed and tumble-dried. Check the labels first, and use a third of the usual amount of detergent to prevent a bubbly mess
6. Lastly vacuum thoroughly, moving furniture as you go. Then have a well-deserved lunch break.

1:00 pm (work your way downstairs)

1. Dust from top to bottom and wipe paintwork, doors and radiators. Tackle marks on walls with a damp microfibre cloth, sprinkling on baking powder to cut through stubborn grime
2. Vacuum carpets, using the crevice attachment in corners
3. If you don't already ban shoes indoors, make it a rule now

1:30 pm (living areas)

Your living room is probably the most heavily used room in the house, so give it extra attention.

1. Pull furniture away from the walls, and take rugs and sofa cushions outside to give them a good beating with a clean broom. Vacuum the underneath and tops of rugs, and leave them to air outside
2. Wash the windows with warm water plus a drop of washing up liquid, and dry with a microfibre cloth. With the glass sparkling clean, dirt inside will be that bit more visible so prepare to be horrified. For general dustiness, use a damp, soapy terry cloth — old towels are ideal
3. Clean fabric lampshades with a lint roller. Wipe ornaments and lamp bases with a damp cloth
4. Vacuum chairs, sofas and curtains with the upholstery attachment. For Venetian blinds, rinse an old sock in warm soapy water, put it over your hand and run your fingers over the slats
5. A damp white cloth can be used to scrub away marks on soft furnishings, but always test on an area that doesn't show first
6. Vacuum behind the furniture, then replace
7. Unplug and dust the TV, then wipe with a tumble-dryer sheet to reduce static. This will stop the screen gathering dust again too quickly. Vacuum, mop hard floors, and break for a cup of tea

3:30 pm (Kitchen)

1. In the kitchen, dust may be welded on with a layer of cooking grease. Cut through it with a solution of warm water and washing soda, using up to a cup of soda per 500ml of warm water
2. Then empty one shelf or cupboard at a time, working from top to bottom. Throw out any out-of-date flour or nuts. Wipe shelves with a damp cloth, getting right into corners, and buff dry
3. To clean the microwave, put two lemon slices and two teaspoons of vinegar in a bowl of water. Microwave for two minutes, then leave the door closed for 15 minutes
4. Wipe smaller kitchen appliances with warm, soapy water, then wipe out and dry the microwave
5. If your regular oven needs a deep clean, use a commercial oven cleaning product like 'Oven Pride'
6. To clean your dishwasher, use a special cleaning product or run it, empty, with a cup of clear vinegar in the soap drawer. Now spritz the hob with multipurpose spray
7. Unplug the fridge, empty the contents into a cool bag and wash the shelves in warm soapy water. Wipe the interior and door seals, then dry with a clean cloth
8. Pull out the fridge, vacuum the cooling elements (the coils) with the upholstery attachment, then wipe with a damp soapy cloth
9. Put an old, dry sock over a broom handle, secure with a rubber band, then use it to dust under the fridge. Push the fridge back into position, refill and switch on
10. Wipe kitchen surfaces and clean the cooker hood. Dry stainless steel surfaces with kitchen towel

5:30 pm (nearly done)

1. Dust, wipe and vacuum your hallway, and clean your front door
2. Reward yourself with a lovely dinner, a nice cold drink and your favourite movie!

