

CLEAN ROUTINE

Keep Your House in Tip-Top Shape

Believe it or not, some people find house cleaning relaxing. If you're not one of those people, read on for some ways to keep your house clean without even trying. OK, so maybe barely trying.

ESTABLISH A ROUTINE

A great way to keep your house looking its best with minimal effort is to establish and stick to a regular rotation of chores. Mondays, clean the bathrooms. Tuesdays are for the kitchen. Wednesdays for floors, and so on. Pay attention to the routines of your household to determine the best days for you. The key is to do a little at a time to keep the whole thing clean all of the time.

USE THE RIGHT TOOLS

You're not using a dirty sock to wipe down your windows, right? Right? Take a trip to the store and grab a few great cleaning tools and use the right tool for the job. Get a good duster. A good broom. A good vacuum and mop. Make sure all your tools are easy to hold and carry. Get a carrier or a bucket to put them all in as you go from room to room. For some green points, replace paper towels with lint-



© ADOBE STOCK

free towels or cleaning rags.

GET ON THE GRID

When you tackle a room, clean from left to right and

top to bottom. That way, you don't miss any part of the room.

Vacuum in rows, leaving no carpet fiber untouched. Dust

and wipe down in rows, too, using small circles if you're working on a surface prone to streaks. Think wax on, wax off.

DEEP CLEANING VS. MAINTENANCE CLEANING

You don't have to clean all the things at once. Schedule (either by yourself or by a professional. More on that later.) a regular deep cleaning of your whole house. Then get on that routine and do regular maintenance cleanings that take a fraction of the time but keep your house looking pristine.

HIRING A PROFESSIONAL

There's a lot to consider when it comes to hiring a person that may look at your underwear drawer (at least on the outside) every few weeks. Are you going to go with a big company — that probably does background checks — or a sole proprietor, where the same person comes every week? Ask around to your friends and family, and your neighbors, about cleaning professionals they've used. Either service may offer a discount for spending the day in your neighborhood. Either will also want to come check out your house before their first cleaning, and should give you a written estimate. Be upfront about your expectations. Also, be prepared for that first cleaning to take longer and be more expensive than subsequent visits.



© ADOBE STOCK

CLEAN ROUTINE

Keep Your House in Tip-Top Shape

Believe it or not, some people find house cleaning relaxing. If you're not one of those people, read on for some ways to keep your house clean without even trying. OK, so maybe barely trying.

ESTABLISH A ROUTINE

A great way to keep your house looking its best with minimal effort is to establish

and stick to a regular rotation of chores. Mondays, clean the bathrooms. Tuesdays are for the kitchen. Wednesdays for floors, and so on. Pay attention to the routines of your household to determine the best days for you. The key is to do a little at a time to keep the whole thing clean all of the time.

USE THE RIGHT TOOLS

You're not using a dirty sock to wipe down your windows, right? Right? Take a trip to the store and grab a few great cleaning tools and use the right tool for the job. Get a good duster. A good broom. A good

vacuum and mop. Make sure all your tools are easy to hold and carry. Get a carrier or a bucket to put them all in as you go from room to room. For some green points, replace paper towels with lint-free towels or cleaning rags.

GET ON THE GRID

When you tackle a room, clean from left to right and top to bottom. That way, you don't miss any part of the room. Vacuum in rows, leaving no carpet fiber untouched. Dust and wipe down in rows, too, using small circles if you're working on a surface prone to streaks. Think wax on, wax off.

DEEP CLEANING VS. MAINTENANCE CLEANING

You don't have to clean all the things at once. Schedule (either by yourself or by a professional. More on that later.) a regular deep cleaning of your whole house. Then get on that routine and do regular maintenance cleanings that take a fraction of the time but keep your house looking pristine.

HIRING A PROFESSIONAL

There's a lot to consider when it comes to hiring a person that may look at your underwear drawer (at least on the outside) every few weeks. Are you going to go with a big

company — that probably does background checks — or a sole proprietor, where the same person comes every week? Ask around to your friends and family, and your neighbors, about cleaning professionals they've used. Either service may offer a discount for spending the day in your neighborhood. Either will also want to come check out your house before their first cleaning, and should give you a written estimate. Be upfront about your expectations. Also, be prepared for that first cleaning to take longer and be more expensive than subsequent visits.

REAL ESTATE 101



Turn a Profit

If you're giving your house a good spring cleaning, why not turn a profit while you've got your sleeves rolled up? Realtor.com encourages readers to make a quick buck off their cleaning efforts by loading up their cars with another man's treasure and making a run to the consignment store, pawn shop or electronics recycler. Consider listing your items for sale in the classified ads, or if you've got a particularly large pile of loot, have a garage sale. You might be able to trade in items such as used video games for store credit, and you can always help local charities by donating to charity shops.

HOMEWISE GLOSSARY

Interest accrual rate: The percentage rate at which interest accumulates or increases on a mortgage loan.

SOURCE: Federal Trade Commission

AD SPACE