

Spring Cleaning

GUIDE

by *Marvelous Maids*





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Introduction

Spring is a time of renewal. The snow stops falling, the sun comes out, trees and flowers begin to bloom... and people begin cleaning their houses. Wait, what?!

Yep, spring is a time for cleaning as well!

Open your home's windows, let the fresh air in, and begin straightening up the mess that winter left behind.

The gray skies and freezing cold temperatures of winter make it difficult to get up off the couch and get moving. Once spring rolls around, the changes in weather can give you the energy to make up for those lost winter months of motivation.

So get up, plan out your "mission" and get ready to start cleaning!

Pro-Tip!

Throughout this book, you will see Pro Tips that are best practices from real professional cleaning service owners from all over the nation. We've collected their BEST kept secrets and we're sharing them with you. Happy Spring Cleaning!





The Game Plan

Start off your next bout of spring cleaning by choosing a cleaning method...

- **Standard** – This is the most well-known type of cleaning. It uses chemical-based solvents and cleaning solutions that can be found in most stores.
- **Green** – Green cleaning utilizes chemical based solvents and solution much like standard cleaning methods. However, these chemicals are less harmful to the environment. These can also be made easily at home using items you probably already have such as white vinegar, baking soda, lemons, and olive oil.
- **Chemical Free** – A quick look at the ingredients of a conventional cleaner can be a little frightening. Many of the green cleaning ingredients can also be used to do chemical free cleaning! Clean with lemons? Yes sir!
- **Steam Cleaning** – Not just for carpets and rugs anymore! Steam cleaners now can be used to sanitize and disinfect all types of non-porous surfaces without using any chemicals. Also excellent for powering through soap scum and emulsifying grease on contact!

Pro-Tip!

Everyone loves a fresh-smelling home. Essential oils are a fantastic alternative to sprays and plug in air fresheners! They have potent antimicrobial effects along with their clean, pleasant natural aromas. Especially good aromas for a fresh, clean, smelling home are: lemon, peppermint, and lavender. Available at most health grocery stores and come in a wide assortment of fragrances.



Pro-Tip!

If you're looking into purchasing organic, non-toxic, or natural products, always do your research. Unfortunately, some cleaning brands that label themselves as such are far from that claim. Check out the company online, look for MSDS sheets, and make sure that your products aren't wolves in natural, organic, biodegradable clothing.



Cleaning Tools

After you've chosen your favorite method of cleaning, gather the tools you'll need!

Here are a few suggestions:

- Cleaning cloths (microfiber) or cotton rags
- Cleaning solutions: all-purpose, bathroom, floor, toilet, glass, furniture polish
- Dusting cloths or extension dusters (for cleaning the tops of tall furniture, shelving, cobwebs, and ceiling fans)
- A vacuum, complete with attachments, tools and extra bags

***Pro Tip!** Make sure you keep up with your vacuum cleaner maintenance. Check for clogs, clean upholstery brushes, and be aware of belts and replaceable filters to keep things running smoothly.*

- A brush for cleaning your toilet(s)
- Scrubby sponges for hard to remove stains and areas like the top of your stove and your shower grout
- A broom, dustpan, bucket and mop

Pro-Tip!

Just in case, always carry extra cloths. You always want to make sure that your cloth is not making a bigger mess by moving dirt from one place to another. We always recommend microfiber. Also double check to make sure you aren't cross-contaminating by using clean cloths for every new area of the home.

Pro-Tip!

Magic Erasers. Seriously, they are magical and the best invention since sliced bread. Fantastic for: Kool-Aid stains on the countertop, dirty knuckle marks on the cabinets, and for the beautiful crayon artwork your two-year-old made on their bedroom door.



Motivation

Sometimes you need a little motivation in order to start your spring cleaning session off right. If the thought of a sparkling clean house isn't enough, try these:

- 1) **Music!** Nothing gets you moving like some awesome tunes.
- 2) **Bribery!** If you finish your spring cleaning, you get to treat yourself to something nice. (Or ice cream... Everyone loves ice cream!)
- 3) **Clean in a group!** Get your whole family involved to make the effort more fun – and go faster. (Kids don't seem excited? Don't forget to mention the ice cream!)
- 4) **Use the timer trick.** Set it for 15 minutes, and see what everyone can get done in that time. Make a contest between the kiddos to see who can finish their room before the timer goes off!
- 5) **Start with one room at a time.** Before you know it, you'll be on to the next one!





Pro-Tip!

Having a caddy fully-stocked with all of your cleaning essentials means that you can simply bring your bucket along with you to each room!

How to Clean the...

Now, we'll walk you through a room by room analysis of everything that should be cleaned.

Before you get started, make sure you have all of your supplies ready to go. It helps to keep it streamlined. Have two separate caddies: One filled with the items to clean the "Wet Rooms" (Kitchen, bathrooms, and utility room) and one with all of the items you need to clean "Dry Rooms" (Bedrooms and living areas).

"Wet Room" Caddy:

- Cleaning cloths (Microfiber or cotton rags)
- Cleaning solutions: all-purpose, floor, oven, bathroom, toilet, glass
- Dusting cloths or extension dusters (for the tops of cabinets and/or your ceiling fan)
- Scrubby sponges for hard to remove build up
- Magic Erasers
- Toilet brush
- A broom, dustpan, bucket and mop

"Dry Room" Caddy:

- Cleaning cloths (microfiber)
- Cleaning solutions: all-purpose, furniture polish, floor cleaner, glass cleaner
- Dusting cloths and extension dusters (for light fixtures, ceiling fans, and the top of a china cabinet, if necessary)
- A broom, dustpan, and feather duster
- Vacuum or bucket and mop as needed

Pro-Tip!

Don't forget all of the other ways to utilize your vacuum, other than just for the floors. If you have excessive dust buildup on curtains, blinds, ceiling fans, or even baseboards, a quick swipe with a vacuum attachment can take away the bulk of the buildup before you even hand-wipe!



Kitchen

Before you start cleaning the kitchen, grab your “Wet Room” caddy with all of your supplies and cleaning cloths. To get to the nitty-gritty inside your cabinets and drawers, you may also need a step-ladder and new contact paper if needed.

The easiest way to approach the kitchen is to start by emptying out your cabinets from top to bottom, wiping each shelf and drawer completely, putting down contact paper if necessary, and replacing the contents in an organized fashion. Since this is the task you’ve been dreading, it actually helps to go ahead and get it out of the way first. Plus, if you start with your countertops and floor, you tend to get them dirty again when you take everything out of your cabinets.

It’s easiest to approach your refrigerator in the same fashion. Take everything out, give the shelves and walls a good scrub and place everything back neatly. (This also gives you a chance to check out the expiration on that yogurt that’s leftover from your New Year’s Resolution healthier eating kick. When in doubt, throw it out.)



Pro-Tip!

Drains moving extra slow? Clear clogs without using caustic chemicals in your sink. Pour a pot of boiling water down the drain, dump in about 1/2 cup of baking soda and let sit for a few minutes. Then, pour a mixture of 1 cup vinegar and 1 cup very hot water on top of the baking soda. Cover the drain and let it sit for 5-10 minutes. Flush one more time with pot of boiling water.



Kitchen Checklist

- ☐ Clean out refrigerator and freezer
- ☐ Clean out pantry
- ☐ Clean/organize cabinets and drawers
- ☐ Scrub oven and stovetop
- ☐ Clean dishwasher
- ☐ Clean inside sink, faucets, and fixtures
- ☐ Wipe down the fronts of cabinets and appliances
- ☐ Wash your counters well and rinse as needed. *Don't forget the backsplash and the walls.*
- ☐ Dust mini blinds and wash curtains
- ☐ Clean light fixtures
- ☐ Wipe down baseboards and door frames
- ☐ Lastly, sweep/vacuum and mop the kitchen floor

Pro-Tip!

Steam before you clean! Is the inside of your microwave caked with stuck on food? Simply pour one cup of vinegar into a 2-cup measuring glass container and add one cup of hot water. Depending on how powerful your microwave is, simply set your microwave for 5-10 minutes. Remove the cup using an oven mitt (liquids will be extremely hot!) and then wipe the inside of your microwave with a wet microfiber cloth. The steam will loosen any stuck on food from the inside of your microwave, making the cleanup super easy!



Dining Room

Grab your “Dry Room” caddy and crank up the radio, it’s time to spruce up your dining room!

Since there are normally less cabinets and drawers in the dining area, these areas tend to be less complicated to clean than the kitchen. Just keep in mind that dining rooms are notorious for being catch-all rooms for kids’ backpacks and clutter. Once it’s organized, cleaned and clutter free, make sure that it stays that way. (See our organizing tips for more details!)

Dining Room Checklist

- ☐ Inside/outside China cabinet
- ☐ Wipe down dining room table, chairs, and other furniture
- ☐ Wash curtains and table linens (tablecloth, placemats, runner, etc.)
- ☐ Clean any windows
- ☐ Wipe down mini blinds
- ☐ Clean light fixtures
- ☐ Wipe down baseboards and door frames
- ☐ Sweep/vacuum and/or mop the floor

Pro-Tip!

The dining room can be a breeze to clean if it is used for only the purpose of “dining.” If you have a multi-purpose dining area, consider adding special storage for the other uses. IE: A cubby for homework essentials. This will help keep clutter to a minimum, and make maintaining this room a simple task!





Living Room/Family Room

This is the space that tends to get the most use – also known as the space with the most clutter, and most in need of a thorough cleaning! Grab your “Dry Room” caddy and let’s get to work!

Living/Family Room Checklist

- ☐ Begin by removing all clutter. (Anything that doesn’t belong in your living room goes straight back to its “home.”)
- ☐ Start with ceiling fans and check high corners for cobwebs.
- ☐ Clean dust from all flat surfaces – coffee table, television stand, end tables, etc. (As you dust each surface, pick up items on that surface and give them a quick wipe too.)
- ☐ Dust all appliances – game consoles, TV, DVD player, and all of the assorted remotes that go along with them.
- ☐ Wipe down the mini blinds, and toss the curtains in the wash (if needed.)
- ☐ Wipe down baseboards, door frames, and light fixtures.
- ☐ Remove dirt and pet hair from upholstered furniture (vacuum attachments work wonders on upholstery!)
- ☐ Sweep/vacuum and/or mop floors.

Pro-Tip!

Start at the top! Always start with dusting cob-webs and ceiling fans before you start dusting eye level surfaces so that you aren’t having to reclean as dust settles.



Pro-Tip!

When removing pet hair from couches and upholstery, rubbing a wet microfiber cloth along the couch in a circular manner can help clump the hair for easy removal.



Bathroom

Just the idea of cleaning a bathroom tends to be intimidating. However, if you break it down and look at the room in sections, it isn't so bad and can be a fairly enjoyable task!

Bathroom Checklist

- ☐ Toilet: Remove the toilet cover and rug that sits around the base – if you have them. Clean the inside of the toilet, the outside of it, and, of course, the seat.
- ☐ Sink: Move your toiletries out of the way (wipe each bottle/item as you move it) and wash the inside of the sink, the counter, and the mirror. Organize everything in the cabinet under your sink, and make sure to wash both the inside and the outside of the cabinet. Replace your toiletries on the counter, and place any products/items that aren't used on a regular basis underneath the cabinet and out of the way.
- ☐ Bathtub and Shower: Take down your shower curtain and its liner. Now is a good time to replace them with fresh ones. (Or clean the glass, if you have a glass shower door.) Like you did with the sink, move the toiletries elsewhere so that you have complete access to the tub and shower walls.
- ☐ Take down your towels and clean the bars and hooks that they hang on.
- ☐ Wash the other walls in the bathroom, the curtains or mini blinds, baseboards and the floor. Don't forget to wash your bathmats!
- ☐ Sweep/vacuum and or mop the floor

Pro-Tip!

Soap scum and hard water deposits can be difficult to remove, and extremely annoying. Once you have your shower glass clear and sparkling, you can prevent more from accruing and keep it looking great between cleanings by keeping a squeegee handy and doing a simple swipe of glass after each shower.



Pro-Tip!

Pre-spraying surfaces before hand allows your cleaning product to work its magic. More Dwell time means less elbow grease for you! Another great tip from the pros is to clean bathrooms from top to bottom, left to right. Work carefully to prevent back-tracking.



Bedrooms

Time for your dry caddy again! This is normally the most “lived in” room in your home, so before you start cleaning your bedroom, you first need to CLEAN it. You know what we mean – all of the clothes, shoes, toys and other items that have wound up on the floor, shelves, bed and other places need to be cleaned up, organized, and put into the right places. Once this is done, you can move on to the nitty-gritty.

Depending on when you last organized your closet, now is a good time to do it. The same is true of your shelves and drawers. Go through your clothing, shoes, and other items and get rid of things that you do not wear or no longer fit. There are plenty of wonderful charities that are always looking for donations!

Once you’ve finished one bedroom, move on to the next bedroom until all of them are finished!



Pro-Tip!

Clean your ceiling fans and high areas before you strip the bedding off of your bed to be washed. It’s much easier to shake a sheet than it is to vacuum dust from a mattress. Use your already dirty sheets as a dirt catcher since you’re going to wash them thoroughly anyway.



Bedroom Checklist

- ☐ Wipe baseboards, door frames, and ceiling fans.
- ☐ Strip your bedding off. Wash all pillowcases, sheets, bedspreads, and blankets. (It's also a great time to rotate your mattress!)
- ☐ Clean all flat surfaces and furniture with furniture polish. (Also give the items on each surface a quick wipe as you put them back.)
- ☐ Wipe down windows and put curtains in the wash.
- ☐ Wipe down blinds.
- ☐ Sweep/vacuum and mop if necessary.

Pro-Tip!

If you toss your pillows into the wash, they can sometimes come out looking matted and clumped. Throw a few tennis balls in the dryer with them to break up lumps and fluff those pillows up again!

Pro-Tip!

Vacuum from the back of the room and move backwards toward the doorway. Because, well, everyone loves those beautiful vacuum lines, so don't stomp on them!



Hallways and Staircases

The hallways and staircases in your home need to be cleaned as well. For this you can go ahead and grab your “Dry Caddy.”

Hallways and staircases are usually neglected when it comes to cleaning. It’s easy to overlook them, as they don’t get cluttered and no one really spends a lot of time in them.

Hallway/Staircase Checklist

- ☐ Dust off any hanging picture frames
- ☐ Clean decorations – small tables, shelves, etc.
- ☐ Wash the doors and door knobs
- ☐ Spot check the walls
- ☐ Wipe down baseboards and door frames
- ☐ Wipe down banister, posts, and handrails
- ☐ Sweep/vacuum and or mop the floor

**These instructions can also apply to the foyer or entrance of your home, as well as other small sections that don’t quite qualify as a “room.”*



Pro-Tip!

Keep a small, natural bristle paint brush in your apron to remove the dust from those tiny crevices in picture frames and knick knacks.

**So, how does that feel?
Your home is now completely spotless, right?!**

Not yet? Did reading this step-by-step cleaning guide exhaust you enough? Have a seat, prop your feet up, and give Marvelous Maids a call at:

**(636) 240-5845 or visit
www.MarvelousMaids.com**

for a quick, no obligation, hassle free, quote.

