

HOME MAINTENANCE:


# clean sweep

SHIFT INTO A SPRING WAY OF THINKING THIS SEASON  
WITH OUR GUIDE TO SPRUCING UP YOUR HOME

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AS THE DAYS warm up and the sun suggests we start shedding layers, the urge to strip back the home is just as strong. Embrace it – there's something undeniably therapeutic about having a spring clean. Start your blitz by rethinking clutter, advises organising guru Tanya Lewis of Eco Organiser. "Ask yourself, 'Do I need it? How does it make me feel? Does it add value to my life?'" she says. Restoring order makes for a speedier clean and promotes a healthier home and planet. Read on for your room-by-room, quick-clean checklist. >



*sparkling living space*

**ONCE-OVER:** Wipe all surfaces, clean behind electrical gear and rotate your cushions. Vacuum sofa cushions, inners and the frame.

**RUGS:** "Regularly give rugs sunlight and air," says Col Williamson of ChemDry ProClean. "Vacuum them before and after, too."

**WOODEN FURNITURE:** Apply a protective seal with beeswax or wood wax.

**BOOKSHELVES:** Using a shaggy microfibre dusting mitt, wipe shelves and books.

**FUTURE-PROOF:** "Ensure the carcasses of joinery are made with EO [low formaldehyde] boards, to minimise toxins," says Jessica Nixon of Okologi Sustainable Interiors. "If you want paint, go for zero-VOC [volatile organic compounds] finishes."

*annual sofa clean*

**UPHOLSTERED SOFA:** Check the care instructions on the base of your suite. "Your skin, body oils, and the soaps and moisturisers you use all transfer into fabric," says Col. Dry-cleaning is effective but hot water extraction is better.

**LEATHER:** "You need a cleaner good enough to remove the grime but not strip the colour," says Col. "Once cleaned, condition and replace the moisture to maintain the integrity of the leather."

## gleaming bathroom

**ONCE-OVER:** Look for a natural bathroom spray, or try vinegar and water. Apply it to the ceiling and walls, steaming up the room with hot water in the shower before mopping from top to bottom. Ventilate well. Baths, showers, sinks and toilets should be on a normal cleaning rotation, so focus on tapware. Clean around the showerhead, taps and spouts using an old, firm toothbrush. Replace or wash your shower curtain.

**GLASS:** Use a limescale spray to get rid of scum and grime, or make your own paste with baking soda and vinegar.

**ORGANISE:** Reorganise your make-up and beauty drawers and medicines. Throw out-of-date products away and ensure first-aid essentials are ready if needed.

**FUTURE-PROOF:** Design a wet room without a shower cubicle or choose a single pane of glass. Wall-hung toilets with in-built cisterns and wall-backed toilets also mean less cleaning. "Larger tiles mean less grout to clean, too," adds Jessica. Wall panels such as Laminex Aquapanel offer a grout-free easy clean.



*"Rethink the recipes you have collected over the years. Ask yourself, 'Do I still eat this way?'" ~ Tanya Lewis, Eco Organiser*



## healthy kitchen

**ONCE-OVER:** Start with an appliance blitz, cleaning out the fridge, freezer, oven, microwave, rangehood and cooktop. Still standing after all that? Pull out the fridge for a vacuum and dust behind and underneath. Give the splashback, benchtops and joinery a wipe down with a streak-free cloth. Give tapware a spray with a limescale remover and polish. Finally, vacuum drawers and cupboards and wipe them out.

**GROUT:** To update discoloured grout, wash it properly and apply a grout seal with an applicator or grout pen.

**PANTRY:** Wipe the shelves, check the used-by dates of your food and ensure it is well sealed ahead of summer. Identify your true food staples and plan ahead, to avoid food wastage and only store what you need.

**FUTURE-PROOF:** "Keep the design of your kitchen sleek and streamlined,



to reduce the opportunity of grime building up in hard-to-clean places," says Jessica. Consider low-maintenance benchtops such as engineered stone, stainless-steel or resin - they can be integrated with splashbacks for an easy, grout-free clean. >

## beautiful bedroom

**ONCE-OVER:** Let in plenty of sunshine, dust furniture with a damp microfibre cloth and pull out the bed to clean floors, backs and underside of the beds.

**MATTRESS:** Flip and rotate your mattress, giving it a good vacuum on both sides. Apply a dust-mite spray and then leave it in direct sunlight to kill them off. Sifted baking soda also works wonders to lift odours and absorb moisture. Place mattress in a sunny spot, then vacuum.

**LINEN:** Change bedding, giving winter blankets a wash before storing. Use a fragrant fabric softener, such as the Fluffy Temptations range, to add a welcoming aroma when you pull them out of the cupboard next year. Don't forget cushion covers and throws.

**FUTURE-PROOF:** Look for carpet that has built-in protection against spills, like the range from Stainmaster. Limit dust traps by extending built-in wardrobes to the ceiling.

## linen mess

**ONCE-OVER:** Wipe shelves with water and an essential oil such as lavender or cedar, which repel silverfish. Look for signs of cockroaches and consider natural baits. Shake out and refold items, or air and wash them if needed.

**SPECIAL TREATMENT:** Top-shelf items such as heirloom linen or knits will need an annual handwash and sunlight to prevent yellowing.

**STORING:** Don't over-pack shelves - linen needs air to breathe or mould will grow. Leave an open container of baking soda to absorb moisture, and steer clear of plastic bags.

**SCENTS:** Who wants a musty linen cupboard? Rub essential oil and water on shelves or try a linen spray, such as Jo Malone's Acqua di Limone Linen Spray, \$85/175ml. >





### general maintenance

**WALLS:** Wipe skirting boards, architraves, doorknobs and light-switch plates.

**WINDOWS:** Clean screens with a damp cloth, sweep down cobwebs on the outside and vacuum frames. Avoid windy or super-sunny days for washing and use two good-quality cloths – one to clean and a streak-free polisher.

**WINDOW TREATMENTS:** Clean blinds with a damp cloth. Curtains may be revived with a handheld steamer, handwashed or dry-cleaned – check the fabric care guide.

**FLOORS:** Clean hard floors as usual and consider booking a carpet cleaner.

**FANS/AIRCONDITIONING:** Wipe ceiling fans with a damp cloth, wipe internal airconditioning units and check external units for geckos. They're the cause of many electrical faults, and their damage may not be covered by your warranty so make sure you check the fine print! Every few months, throw in a couple of mothballs to repel the little blighters.

## 7

### tips from a pro cleaner

CLEANING EXPERT ANGIE KELSO FROM PLATINUM HOUSEKEEPING IN SYDNEY SHARES HER SECRETS

- 1 Spray the cloth, not the surface, so you don't have to spend time wiping off any excess.
- 2 Work the room and you won't miss anything. Start at the door and move clockwise around the room, cleaning everything on and against the wall, then clean furniture in the middle of the room.
- 3 Put a little essential oil on the light globe in a lamp. When it warms up, the scent will spread through the room.
- 4 Use a lint remover to remove dust on your lampshades and curtains.
- 5 Vacuum everything – the inside of the fridge, the oven, the toaster and the cutlery drawer.
- 6 A hair dryer can remove dust from a computer keyboard, the bottom of a handbag and the corner of a cupboard.
- 7 When you finish cleaning a room, close the door. Then, when you've finished cleaning every room, go back and inspect each one, leaving the door open when you're happy with the result. 