



Housecleaning made simple

Fast, easy, and low-cost ways to clean every room in your home.

Keeping your home clean has many benefits. It will help you:

- Get your security deposit back when you move
- Keep good relations with your neighbors and landlord
- Stop you from being evicted. When homes are very dirty and messy the landlord can force you to leave your home by using the eviction process



Use this room-by-room guide to plan what chores you need to do, when to do them, and what supplies you will need.

General Maintenance

Trash/Garbage/Recycling

- Place all trash in plastic garbage bags that you can tie closed
- When you have a full trash bag, tie it and place it inside the trash dumpster that the property management company has provided for your building. DO NOT place it on the ground next to the dumpster.
- If your building provides a separate container for recycling, place items like cans, bottles, and paper in that container. Check to see which items can be recycled.



Living Room

Daily:

- Clean up any spills or crumbs
- Put away or recycle papers, mail, or boxes
- Take dirty dishes to the kitchen, put clothes away, and put any other items away

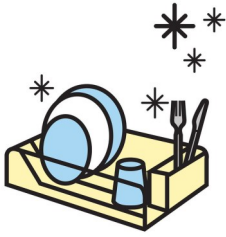
Weekly

- Dust tables, shelves, and furniture
- Vacuum the room if you have carpet, sweep the floor if you have wood, tile, or some other floor covering
- Empty waste baskets into your large plastic trash bag for the dumpster
- Clean any spots you find on walls, floors, or woodwork



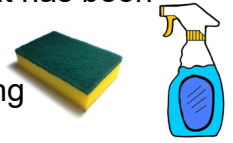


Kitchen



Daily

- Wash dirty dishes or load the dishwasher if you have one
- Wipe counters with a clean rag or sponge and dish soap or all-purpose cleaner. Rinse counters with the same rag or sponge after it has been rinsed of soap or cleaner
- Wipe the sink, stove top, and inside of microwave after using
- Clean up any spills or crumbs on the floor



Weekly

- Sweep and mop the floor with a product designed to clean the kind of floor that you have (tile, vinyl, wood, linoleum). If you are not sure, ask your landlord what he/she would like you to use.
- It is a good idea to disinfect your counters, sink, and cutting boards with one teaspoon of bleach in a quart of water.
- Label any leftovers you put in the fridge so you can throw them out if you haven't eaten them after a few days.

Monthly

- Clean oven
- Clean refrigerator—remove crisper drawers and clean them with dish soap, rinse, and dry them before putting them back. Clean the shelves and doors in the refrigerator with a damp sponge. Throw out older leftovers or spoiled food.

Special Note: Be careful what you put down the sink drain, especially if you don't have a garbage disposal. If you do not have a garbage disposal, water and other liquids (NOT grease or oil) are the only things that should go down the drain.

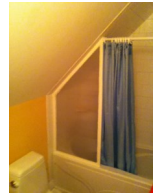
If you do have a garbage disposal, only use it to grind up food scraps. Do not put egg shells, fruit or vegetable peels, or bones in the disposal. Also, do not put things like spoons, forks, knives, toothbrushes, children's small toys, popsicle sticks, paper, plastic wrap, aluminum foil, or grease down the drain. Doing so can clog and damage the drain, costing extra money and also stopping you from using the sink.

Food: Keep food in sealed containers in the refrigerator, freezer, or in cupboards. Leaving food uncovered on counters can attract pests like mice and insects (ants, cockroaches).





Bathroom



General practices

- Close shower doors and put plastic shower curtain liners inside the bath tub
- Place a bathmat on the floor outside the tub or shower



Daily

- Hang up towels on racks or hooks
- Rinse and wipe out the sink and bath tub or shower

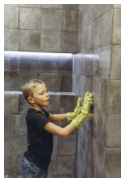
Weekly

- Clean your sink and tub or shower with all-purpose cleaner or baking soda
- Clean the toilet bowl with toilet bowl cleaner
- Clean the toilet seat and outside of the toilet bowl with all-purpose cleaner
- Sweep and mop the floor



Monthly

- Clean drains in the sink and tub or shower with baking soda and vinegar
- Scrub any mold that is on tiles or the wall with a solution of 1/4 cup bleach added to 1 quart of water



Special Notes: Only toilet paper should be thrown in the toilet. Put things like sanitary pads and diapers in the trash can. Catch any hair before it goes down the sink, shower, or tub drains and throw it in the trash can too. Letting too much hair go down the drain can clog your sink or tub. These clogs can be costly to repair and can stop you from using your sink and shower.

Teach your children to keep everything besides toilet paper out of the toilet and to stop things like hair from clogging the drains.

Keep all cleaning products away and out of the reach of children.





Cleaning with Baking Soda and Vinegar

There are many cleaning products that you can buy at the store, but you can also use two inexpensive items that many people use in cooking: baking soda and vinegar. They are low-cost and effective cleaning products that you can use in every room of your home.

Baking Soda

Baking soda is a useful multi-purpose cleaner. It can be used for scrubbing and deodorizing. Here are some specific examples on how to use baking soda:

- Sprinkle baking soda on a wet sponge and scrub the sink, bathtub or shower, and kitchen counters
- If you have burnt food at the bottom of a cooking pot or pan, sprinkle with baking soda, cover with water, and bring to a boil. Let boil for 3 minutes, turn off the heat and let cool. When cool enough to handle wipe with sponge or rag; the food should come off more easily.
- If your child(ren) has marked walls with crayons make a paste out of 3 parts baking soda to 1 part water and apply to the marks with an old toothbrush. This paste can remove stains from other surfaces as well, like your sink, tub, and counters.



Vinegar

White distilled vinegar is also a low-cost and effective cleaner and is often used together with baking soda. Here are some ideas of how to use vinegar in your home.

- Clean your sink and tub or shower drains by pouring 1 cup of baking soda and 1 cup of vinegar. Wait 5 minutes and then run hot water down the drain
- Make your own all-purpose cleanser by mixing 1/4 cup baking soda with a teaspoon of liquid dish soap. Add white vinegar until the mixture becomes thick and creamy. Use this cleanser to clean sinks, tubs, and counters
- Make your own mirror and window cleaner by mixing equal parts water and vinegar in a spray bottle. Spray on your bathroom mirror and wipe with a dry soft cloth.
- You can also use this solution to clean the shelves and drawers in your refrigerator
- To clean shower curtains and the grout around tiles in your tub or shower spray with full-strength vinegar and wipe with a damp sponge or cloth

