

— YOUR —

2015

GUIDE

— TO A —

CLEAN HOME

ALL YEAR

# Before Getting Started: Time Savers



Each of the following suggestions will save you time and frustration, while allowing you to be more efficient and keep a cleaner home.

## Supplies

Keep a labeled bottle of cleaner and roll of paper towels or other cleaning rags in the kitchen and each bathroom.

## Storage

Corral your cleaning supplies in a carry-all that is stored a central and easy-to-access location.

## Spot clean:

Everyone makes small messes throughout the day when preparing a snack or using the coffee table, for example. Clean up behind yourself as a way to save time later.

# The Kitchen



Typically, this is the place that families spend the most time. It's also a room that you want to be the cleanest. **Some helpful tips for keeping this area organized and spotless include the following:**

- ★ **The "one shelf a day" rule:** Go through the pantry or refrigerator and clear out expired and stale food one shelf at a time, each day or as often as needed.
- ★ **Toss out the take out:** Be efficient about getting rid of the take out containers to maximize the space in your kitchen.
- ★ **The "clean as you cook" mentality:** Rinse and place pots, pans, and utensils in the dishwasher as you cook to keep you from having to do one massive, time-consuming kitchen clean-up later.
- ★ **Maximize the dishwasher:** If there is extra space in the dishwasher and you need to run it, put in a refrigerator shelf, the baby's high chair tray, or anything that needs a good cleaning and is dishwasher safe. You might even be able to clean some toys this way.
- ★ **Clean out the junk:** While you are on the phone, on hold with the cable company, or just have a spare minute, clean out the kitchen junk drawer, your purse, or the diaper bag.

# The Bathroom



One of a family's least favorite places to clean is the bathroom, but a few quick tips will keep you from taking the entire afternoon to clean. **Instead, spot clean daily to save you time later.**

- ★ **Floors:** Store your mop or other duster with disposable cloths in or near the bathroom. This will allow you to clean the floors when you have a spare moment instead of making a big to-do out of it. Every so often, have your carpets, tile, and wood floors deep cleaned by a professional.
- ★ **The sink and counter:** If you use disposable make up wipes, rinse them out and reuse them to clean the sink and counter.
- ★ **Teeth brushing and shaving:** Use your wash cloth to wipe up the mirror, faucet handles, and sink area after you brush your teeth or shave in order to keep build up from happening. Then, toss your washcloth in the laundry basket.

# The Family Room



- ★ **Magazines:** Discard outdated magazines and ones that you have finished reading every couple of weeks.
- ★ **Vacuuming:** To save time, vacuum only the high traffic areas of your home on a regular basis.
- ★ **Before bed:** Do a quick pick up of the area, fluff pillows, fold blankets, and put away remote controls and toys.
- ★ **Artificial plants and flowers:** Use the vacuum attachment to give them a quick-clean.
- ★ **Pillows:** Freshen pillowing by putting them in the dryer on the air cycle with a dryer sheet, if you wish.
- ★ **Lamp shades & electronics:** Use the suction attachment to dust these areas of your home. Oftentimes, these are the two places that bring about all those dust bunnies!
- ★ **Toys:** Every few days, use a disinfecting spray or wipes to clean the toys that are used most frequently.

# The Laundry Room

- ★ **No more "laundry day":** Depending on the size of your family, do a load of laundry every day to save from all the dirty clothes piling up and waiting for you on a Saturday.
- ★ **Pre-sort your laundry:** Have baskets that differentiate the various loads of whites, colors, towels, sports gear, etc.
- ★ **Cleaning:** Before starting a load of laundry, wipe down the front, sides, and insides of your washer and dryer with a damp cloth; then, toss the cloth in with the load you are doing.
- ★ **Linen organization:** Fold the flat sheet and pillow cases. At the end, fold the fitted sheet around the rest of the set. This keeps linens together and organized and allows other family members to more easily find their set and all the pieces that go in it.
- ★ **Don't forget the dryer vent:** Get First Coast Home Pros to clean out the dryer vent once every 1-2 years depending on usage and vent design; you will find it saves you time on laundry and your electric bill, while keeping your home free of this potential fire hazard.

# The Bedroom



- ★ **Under the Bed:** When you vacuum the bedroom, just take the few extra moments and clean under the bed. This will keep the dust bunnies from piling up.
- ★ **Nightstands:** Once a week, during your morning routine, clean out the drawer and throw away unnecessary items, such as ticket stubs, receipts, mail, etc. In addition, disinfect the top and your phone.
- ★ **Reading items:** Keep the 2 or 3 items you want to read for the week and put away the rest of the items in the book shelf or magazine basket.
- ★ **Quick dust:** If you don't have time to wipe down everything, use the upholstery attachment to clean the headboard, blinds, shutters, and electronics. When you need to do a thorough cleaning, check out First Coast Home Pros.

Overall, your new cleaning regime should be about dividing and conquering the tasks on your list and cleaning as you go. If you stick to these tips, you save yourself from hours of cleaning on the weekend or your days off.