



It's time for Spring-Cleaning!

Spring-Cleaning tips on 8 Major points you shouldn't miss. Get a jump on spring-cleaning this year by focusing on these essentials.

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Ready to give your home a top-to-bottom buffing? Start by focusing your efforts on the big pieces and on the places that make the most difference to you: furnishings, appliances, and carpeting. Once you've covered these 8 major tasks, you'll have your home spring-cleaned in no time.

1. Make doormats welcoming

Shake 'em, wash 'em, swat 'em with a broom. Give them the toughest cleaning they can take. Along with other indoor rugs and walk-off mats, they are your front line against tracked-in dirt -- so keep them clean enough to function at peak efficiency.



2. Vacuum with Intelligence

The old rules mandated that you go through the labor-intensive task of dragging every stick of furniture off the carpet, just so the vacuum cleaner could cover every nook and cranny. The new rules will save you time and you'll still get the corner-to-corner cleaning done: Simply move those big items a little to the left or to the right. Vacuum the area previously occupied by the furniture and then move it back into place. Voila! Done!

3. Clean Carpets and Upholstery

Fabrics that have absorbed a winter's worth of dirt, body oil, and germs will need a really deep cleaning to get them ready for another season of wear -- and for that close inspection by your relaxing guests.

If ever you are shampooing carpets or cleaning upholstery with a rented machine, practice first in an unobtrusive area to make sure you have the knack of the machine and that the treatment won't discolor fabrics or cause dyes to run.

Save time by moving furniture just slightly -- not out of the room or against the wall, as the old rules dictated -- and place the legs of each piece back on top of small wax paper squares after shampooing. The wax paper will protect your carpet and keep the furniture legs from getting wet as the carpet dries.

Open the windows to speed the drying process, which can take a day or more.



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If you're not the furniture-shifting and machine-renting type, make it easy on yourself. Call in a professional carpet and upholstery cleaner like **PRIDE Cleaning and Restoration** to do the work for you, and take the morning off for yourself.

4. Re-finish your Floors

To protect the floors in your kitchen from another year of wear and tear, wax or apply a sealer following label directions. The simplest method: Use a combination wash-and-wax floor cleaner. Don't feel guilty about saving time!

No-wax floors don't need a polishing treatment, but an occasional makeover will keep them looking fresher -- and add a protective buffer that could help them last longer. Use a floor cleaner that cleans shines, or both. It's best to follow label directions for proper use of each product. If you have wood floors, move furniture and rugs aside, then apply a wood cleaner and either liquid or paste polish to clean and add a new wax coating.

Dealing with hard floors like tile and grout is a little challenging and back breaking some times. The best solution is to have a professional cleaning company Like **PRIDE Cleaning and Restoration** take care of stripping, cleaning, sealing and buffing your tile floors.



5. Wash Walls, Cabinets, baseboards, and Woodwork

The walls may not look as if they need a bath -- after all, dust and soot fall to the floor, right? Most of it does, but just enough clings to vertical surfaces to warrant a seasonal or pre-holiday bath. Use a sponge and hand dishwashing detergent, washing the surface in sections. A sponge mop makes it easier to reach higher spots. Use two buckets: one for dishwashing detergent solution and another for wringing your sponge. Dry the walls and woodwork with a clean cloth.

6. Clean your Light Fixtures and Ceiling Fixtures

A few minutes with a stepladder, all-purpose cleaner, a sponge, and a polish cloth will give new light to your life. If your home has skylights or tall ceilings, consider investing in a stepladder and extended-reach dust-and-dirt-removal tools, all of which are available at your local hardware store and at home -- and janitorial -- supply stores.

Remove dust and dirt from ceiling fans and air-conditioner vents with a cloth and a vacuum with a soft nozzle attachment.





7. Check your Coils

You should clean the refrigerator's condenser coil, usually found behind the toe grille, with a long-handled bottle brush and a vacuum cleaner with an attachment hose to remove dust and lint. Built-up dust can shut down the unit by causing it to overheat.

To remove dust from coils attached to the hard-to-reach back side of the fridge, carefully pull the refrigerator out several feet (newer models roll on casters) and vacuum thoroughly; finish by sweeping or vacuuming the floor area you've revealed.

Expect to rediscover coins, bottle caps, and twist ties that you and the cat knocked in there over the past year.



8. Don't forget your Air Conditioner (HVAC unit) and Air ducts

Getting your HVAC unit checked out at least once a year should be mandatory, and doing your air ducts at least every other year is a must.

The amount of dust, dirt, pollens, dust mites, etc. that accumulate in your air ducts every year might astound you. **Dirt in air ducts is one of the leading causes of sick building syndrome and accounts for a large portion of indoor allergies.** Keeping your air ducts and HVAC Clean is a major step in promoting and maintaining health Indoor Air Quality.

Few routine chores will pay off more handsomely, both in comfort and in dollars saved, than a simple air conditioner cleaning. You can bet that a year's worth of dirt and debris has clogged the cooling fins and lowered the unit's efficiency. A dirty air conditioner may even stop cooling altogether. Several contractors we spoke with estimated that more than 90 percent of air-conditioner failures were the result of the owner's failing to maintain them!

Most central air conditioners have two basic parts: an outdoor unit (compressor/condenser) that sits next to your home and an indoor unit (evaporator) that's located in a central duct near your furnace. If you have a heat pump instead of a furnace, the indoor unit will be in the air handler.

The most important maintenance steps are fairly simple, but if this is the first time you've cleaned the unit, allow about a half day to carefully work through the steps.

If you're not up to the task, call a pro like **PRIDE Cleaning and Restoration**. Cleaning and servicing a central air conditioner costs between \$100 to \$250.





The Most Important Step: Clean the Outdoor Unit



Two copper tubes connect the outdoor compressor and its condenser coil (a “coil” is a combination of fins and tubes) to the indoor evaporator coil that’s located in the plenum above the furnace blower. One tube is covered with foam insulation. If you have a heat pump, both tubes will be insulated.

Outside, your main job is to clean the condenser coil. The fan inside the condenser coil sucks air through the fins, and as a result, pulls dirt and debris with it. Dust, leaves, dead grass and anything else that collects on the fins will block airflow and reduce the unit’s efficiency. Grass clippings thrown by the lawn mower and “cotton” from cottonwood trees and dandelions are particularly bad offenders. You might have to clear the fins weekly or even daily during the spring “cotton” season!

Next, Clean the Indoor Unit

You usually don’t have easy access to the evaporator coil that’s inside the plenum or a main duct near the furnace. If you can get to it, vacuum the bottom side of its fins with a soft brush attachment. Other-wise, have a pro like **PRIDE Cleaning and Restoration** clean it at least every 2 years.

The best prevention is to keep the air that flows through it clean. Begin by turning off the furnace. There’s usually a switch mounted on, or close to it. (On heat pumps, the switch might be a circuit breaker.) Or shut off the power to the furnace at the main electrical panel. Then replace the furnace filter (\$1 to \$5) if it’s dirty and vacuum up any dust in the blower cabinet.



PRIDE Cleaning and Restoration is a local provider of fire, water and mold damage restoration and reconstruction services for residential and commercial properties.

PRIDE also offers a range of cleaning services for carpets and rugs, upholstery, tile and grout, hard floors, blinds and soft goods. We also do post construction cleaning, and odor removal. No job is too big or too small for us to handle – give us a call for more details

PRIDE is locally owned and operated, fully licensed, bonded and insured, with certifications from leading industry organizations like The Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC). Founded in 1987, PRIDE Cleaning and Restoration proudly serves the Saint Louis Bi-State Metro area. More info at: www.priderestoration.com



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