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Spring Cleaning 101: Five Places to Start

Maid Brigade Reveals Simple Spring Cleaning Tips for a Green, Organized Home

ATLANTA—With temperatures on the rise and spring on the horizon, it's time to get your home clean and organized so you can turn your attention to outdoor activities and fun.

“For many performing a deep and thorough spring cleaning can often be overwhelming,” says Marie Stegner, consumer health advocate for Maid Brigade, the leading [maid service](#) company. “And, the majority of people don't know where to begin.”

Below are five areas to kick-start your spring cleaning endeavor along with easy cleaning tips to ensure you're creating a safe and healthy living space.

1. Closets

If the clothes and shoes don't fit, get rid of them. If you haven't worn something in a year, chances are you won't wear it in the year to come. Oftentimes, gently used clothing items can be taken to donation centers where they are tax deductible. Once that is done, separate clothes by like groups—styles or colors work best. If you are holding onto a pair of pants that need to be hemmed or a shirt with a missing button, take them out and set them aside so that you remember to repair them. You can also reduce clutter by placing seasonal items in the back or off to the side to free up space. And, one more tip to prevent the clutter in the first place – if you purchase something and haven't taken it out of the bag for over a week, return it.

2. Kitchen

For the fridge and pantry area, remove all food and throw away any expired items. Shelves that can be taken out should be set aside for cleaning. Baking soda can be used in the kitchen as an excellent all-around cleaner in lieu of an abrasive cleaning product. For cleaning no wax floors, Leslie Reichert – Maid Brigade Advisory Board member and author of [The Joy of Green Cleaning](#) – uses an all natural solution of ¼ cup lemon juice, eight drops of dish soap, and three tbsps, skim or powdered milk. Combine ingredients in a spray bottle and spray directly onto the floor. Use a microfiber cloth to clean. Rinse the floor as needed. This green cleaning mixture uses less cleaner and water than traditional methods and is toxin-free.

3. Home Office

With one in five Americans now working from home, keeping your work and personal life separate is very important. Although many of us have a hard time giving up the paper trail, to reduce clutter, sign up for e-statements and e-bills to reduce paper and waste. For things that can only be done the old-fashioned way, deal with it as soon as it comes in the mail. Have a folder, or two if you have a home business, to organize receipts after you clean out your purse or briefcase. This will prevent the clutter from piling up on your desk or the floor. A general rule

of thumb is to make sure you can see your desk. If you don't have space to work, it's time to get rid of something. Also remember that if you are using your computer as your "filing cabinet," be sure to have a reliable online backup service or an external hard drive to back up your files regularly.

4. Garage

The first step to cleaning a garage is to identify its purpose. Is it a workshop, storage space, or strictly for parking your vehicle? The next move is to get rid of items that don't work for the intended purpose. Once that is done, use storage containers to keep the critters out and protect your treasures. And label the containers on the top and the side. Nothing is worse than not being able to find something when you need it the most.

5. Children's Area

For children's play spaces, place bins and other forms of storage on lower shelves for easier access. By storing children's items where they can be reached, children can get more involved in the cleaning process. To eliminate germs, remember that disinfectant needs to remain on the surface being cleaned for up to 10 minutes to successfully kill lingering bacteria. Also remember that proper disinfection occurs on a surface that has been pre-cleaned.

For more spring cleaning tips download the Maid Brigade Spring Cleaning Go to Guide at <http://viewer.zmags.com/publication/ddedbe6a#/ddedbe6a/1>

About Maid Brigade

Headquartered in Atlanta, Maid Brigade is the only [house cleaning service](#) that is Green Clean Certified® with more than 400 franchise service areas in the United States and Canada. Established in 1979, Maid Brigade is the green cleaning industry leader and has a longstanding legacy of providing quality customer service and consistent and thorough cleaning using the most advanced techniques and equipment. The company has also implemented a consumer advocacy program in response to reports from the Environmental Protection Agency linking chemicals in traditional cleaning products to a wide range of health risks. For more information visit www.maidbrigade.com or call 866-800-7434.

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