



In This Issue

[Spring Cleaning Mistakes](#)
[GotHealth Tip of the Month](#)

Quick Links

[Molly Maid](#)
[Merry Maids](#)
[Good Housekeeping](#)
[ICMS Website](#)

About Us

ICMS is a full service employee benefits consulting firm, utilizing creative and innovative solutions to assist clients in achieving greater value by increasing efficiencies, reducing cost, and enhancing employee productivity consistent with each client's unique culture.



Innovative Cost Management Services, Inc. APRIL 2015

Spring has Sprung!

Spring is a great time to shed old habits and make way for new growth, and "spring cleaning" is one simple way to do so! Studies have shown that clutter in the household can trigger depression, which can lead to a landslide of other health problems. This season, remember to avoid these common spring cleaning mistakes and you'll be well on your way to an overall healthy environment!

7 Spring Cleaning Mistakes to Avoid



Mistake #1: Not Getting Organized

Write down a game plan to help you prioritize and stay on task. "Start with your least favorite rooms, like the kitchen and bathrooms, which typically take the most work," says Meg Roberts, president of [Molly Maid](#), a national residential cleaning service. Then, gather your supplies in a bucket and carry them with you from room to room so you don't waste time running back to the cleaning closet.

Mistake #2: Going At It Alone

Doing the brunt of the work by yourself can lead to a long day and sore muscles. Delegate simple tasks, such as dusting, shaking out rugs, and clearing clutter to children. (For a printable kid chore chart, [click here](#).) Call on teenagers and able-bodied family to do some heavy lifting, such as moving furniture or cleaning the garage.

If you live by yourself, invite a good friend over so you can chat and drink coffee between tasks. If your friend also lives alone, offer to visit while they're cleaning. "Don't look at the work as chores but rather as exercise that you'll get," says Roberts. She recommends turning the afternoon into a workout by doing walking lunges as you move between rooms.

Mistake #3: Not Having the Right Equipment

Cleaning often takes a long time because people tend to use the wrong tools, says Debra Johnson, training manager for [Merry Maids](#), a national residential cleaning company. She suggests stocking up on four must-haves: microfiber cloths, steam, extension wand, and a vacuum with attachments.

"While other cloths push dust around, microfiber grabs and removes dust," she says. Johnson also recommends steam, especially on floors, as steam requires no chemicals or products and helps surfaces stay cleaner longer.

Meanwhile, an extension wand helps you reach high ceilings and hanging light fixtures, while a vacuum with attachments allows you to clean upholstery and tight spaces.



Mistake #4: Working Too Hard

To lighten the load, follow a few simple tips from Roberts. First, dust surfaces with a microfiber cloth so you don't have to use cleaning solution. When cleaning tubs and sinks, apply the cleaning solution and let it soak for 10 minutes before wiping the surface. Remove baked-on food in your microwave by filling a glass with water and heating the liquid on high for one minute; the steam will loosen stains, making it easier to clean. To ease toilet-bowl scrubbing, drop two Polident denture-cleaning tablets in the bowl and let fizz for 10 minutes.

Mistake #5: Overlooking Grimy Spots

Roberts shares her cheat sheet for [easy-to-forget spots](#).

Dishwasher: Remove baskets and debris from the bottom. Spray a water and vinegar solution onto a cleaning cloth or clean sponge to wipe down the inside of the door and top and bottom racks. Run the empty machine on its highest temperature setting without detergent for a thorough rinse.

Window blinds: Shut blinds and use a microfiber cloth to dust them. Close blinds in opposite direction for a quick, complete wipe-down.

Trash cans: Remove the bag and sprinkle baking soda in the bottom of the can before adding about two inches of water. Allow the mixture to sit and then swish it with clean water. Wipe down the sides and rinse. Dry it with an old towel or let air dry.

"Most people fail to look up," adds Johnson. Search for cobwebs in corners, around fireplaces, on top of lampshades, and between windows. Dust can also collect on ceiling fans, especially if you never turn them off, so clean each blade.

Mistake #6: Continuing to Use the Same Dirty Cloth



If you wonder why you have streaks on surfaces, blame a soiled cloth. Keep a stack of clean cloths nearby and switch them out frequently, says Johnson. But you don't need piles of microfiber cloths, as you can clean them. Just rinse in clean water and wring out. If you're dusting, use a dry microfiber; then hold it inside a garbage bag and shake it to remove the dust.

Mistake #7: Waiting Until Spring

"Incorporating easy tricks into your daily and weekly routines can make maintenance easier," says Roberts. Try putting a squeegee in the shower and run the tool over the walls to minimize build-up. Line bathroom and bedroom trashcans with plastic shopping bags to reduce sticky residue. Ask family members to spend five to 10 minutes each night putting away clothes, toys, shoes, and mail. "By keeping clutter to a minimum, you'll spend less time preparing to clean," she says. Finally, don't make cleaning a weekly or bi-weekly chore. Spread tasks throughout the week, tackling one room at a time.

Sources: Karen Asp, Good Housekeeping, <http://www.goodhousekeeping.com>



GotHealth?

Tip: Feeling stressed out? Bring your anxiety level down a notch by smiling. Researchers have found that wearing a smile — even a fake one — can help lower stress.