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About the Author

Amanda Pearson has a [job](#) she [loves](#) and a family she is crazy about.

Amanda said, " People work hard and often feel overwhelmed when they decide to clean up around their home."

"They make resolutions which often don't last as long as the Christmas dinner leftovers."

"My [book](#) will help them to get on top of their cleaning and still have time and energy to have plenty of quality time with their friends and family.

"I don't have a magic button and it will take some planning. But, if I can do it – anybody can!"

I use some methods which are handed down from earlier generations and warn readers about some that should have been dropped years ago."

"Doing that isn't always as easy as the [advertisements](#) tell us. But, there are ways to get great results without our cleaning having a negative impact on the environment or family, including our [pets](#)."

I think many readers will find they can adapt many of these methods without disturbing their other activities."

Although not everything will suit every reader, they should find plenty to make their home more comfortable and their lives less stressed."

Introduction

Most people I know are busy and stressed from the competing demands on your time and energy from your family, [business](#) and social commitments.

It seems almost impossible to always find the time and energy to keep everything clean and organized as well!

But, cleaning does not have to be hard work.

If your New Year's Resolution to clean up your [home](#) didn't last longer than the Christmas pudding, this book will help you finish the [job](#).

I promise that it will be much easier than you [thought](#)!

If you follow the suggestions in my [ebook](#), your cleaning can take less time and effort and be fitted in with your family situation and other commitments.

This book will show you a system which is very flexible. You can adapt it to reduce the [stress](#) and prevent any mess building up ever again while giving you more time for doing what you want to do.

The focus is to help you improve the results you get, deal with any problems you have and do all that with less time and effort, leaving you more time to enjoy your family time and other activities.

The wonderful advances in technology and [chemistry](#) have given us products which make many [jobs](#), including cleaning our homes, a lot easier.

But, some of those "advances" have also made some problems we had worse or created new hazards which were not discovered before a lot of damage occurred.

I'll share the best ways I've found to get my [house](#) clean and keep it that way while it has been occupied by an active family and their friends through several years.

Some tips will be more useful to your situation than others but you will get great results, clear up most cleaning problems and give you back some of the time and [money](#) you put into your cleaning now.

Plan to Succeed

When most people decide that they need to clean their home or a particular area, they usually attack it with the enthusiasm of a [child](#) given a strawberry ice-cream.

But, after a busy week, you may not have the energy or time to get very far before you start to feel discouraged.

It's easy to feel overwhelmed.

If you see professional cleaners at [work](#), you might wonder how they maintain their cheerful attitude.

They know they will always have plenty of work because there are plenty of people who willingly [pay](#) for them to do things like cleaning.

Also, they have a plan for getting it done with less time and effort.

This [book](#) shows you in broad terms how to make a similar plan that suits your needs and circumstances.

I'll also show you some tactics which will make some of the tasks a lot easier to get done.

Few of us really like making lists and [drawing](#) up plans. Try to focus on your goal, and remind yourself it's a step to more freedom and enjoyment for you and all of your family.

As the [Army](#) says, "Every successful [campaign](#) starts with a plan!"

If you don't plan, you won't succeed!

That plan must be built on good research.

So, get some paper and look around your home to see what needs to be done.

Note down those things which are problems right now for you or other family members.

That may [sound](#) as big a task as the actual cleaning but it will save you hours each time you do any cleaning in the future.

You can, of course, do that on a [computer](#) or other device instead of making a written list.

Give the information to the other members of the [family](#) so they can give you their suggestions and questions.

Involving them will get you more cooperation in preparing the plan and actually doing the cleaning.

It's important to do an actual visual survey so that you list all the important items and particular problem areas.

While you're doing the survey, make a list of items which you probably aren't using anymore.

Getting rid of some of the [clutter](#) is a certain way to significantly reduce the amount of cleaning you do!

Decide where you are going to put that stuff until you are ready to get rid of it. If you've got some spare space in your [home](#) or a shed, that will be a great help.

Start to move the stuff there as soon as possible but don't rush it or you will feel pressured.

Just keep moving at a comfortable pace in the right direction.

You'll cut the amount of cleaning needed if everybody just picks up anything they [notice](#) as they go around your home each day and put it with the other discards.

There is no need to make it a priority task.

A Step at a Time!

Decide on a reasonable target for your first major [cleaning](#) session.

That might be one room or more.

Set a time limit for the session. Accept that you will take longer than you expect for this session because you are not used to this kind of concentrated effort.

But, your efficiency will quickly improve after one or two sessions.

As the [light](#) fades, you will not be able to pick out the messy bits as clearly.

Stop before you start to become tired or sloppy.

It is better to do a bit less but do it properly.

Each room will need two sessions:

One will be for the surfaces from ceiling to [floor](#) in the room.

The other will be to sort and [store](#) or discard the contents of all the furniture and fittings in the room.

If you try to do a bit of each, you will find yourself going over the same areas and wasting time.

You may find you can do both sessions in one day but don't worry if you can't.

Make it easy to start by getting all your clothes, cleaning gear and other items laid out the day before you do the session.

Now, I'll show you how to get through a solid cleaning session and still be smiling!

Job #1 Cleaning the Surfaces

I



make this the first session because I then have plenty of space to lay out the [contents](#) of each cupboard as I clean and organize them.

Saving time and effort is the core of the system.

in

First, reduce the amount of stuff you have to clean the session by moving everything which doesn't belong in that room back to where it should be.

Do

that in two stages:

1. Gather all the items which don't belong in the room which you are cleaning in an area close by where they will not get in your way while you are working..
2. Wait until you have a few things to go to the same place. Then, just make one trip to take them there. If the pile doesn't get so big that it becomes a hazard itself, you can probably leave moving that stuff until you finish the actual cleaning session.

You may find things that you are not sure that you need any longer. Put them in your storage area and wait.

These could probably go into the discard [box](#) after three weeks because it's likely you never will use them.

Don't take risks by standing on furniture. Get a strong ladder which will get you high enough to reach the fans and lights on the ceiling.

Try to have someone with you at least while you are doing these areas.

Gather Your Tools and Supplies

You can get a lot of your supplies from the discount [stores](#) but please get quality tools and equipment.

Cheap tools are made to a price. They will fail when you most need them, usually when all the stores are shut.

They are not made for comfort or strength. You can expect them to break and possibly cause you some injury when they do.

One friend described the quality of some he bought as "case-hardened cheese". A good set might cost five times as much and outlast twenty cheap tools.

A caddy for carrying your main supplies in is very handy. But, please take out anything which might cause harm to kids or [pets](#) after each session and lock them away,

A typical selection which would handle most domestic clean-ups might be:

Tool Kit: Screwdrivers, scrapers, wrench, pliers, flash light, drill.

First aid kit: Go for quality – you and your family deserve it.



Safety gear: Coveralls, dust masks with refills, eye protection, gloves - regular latex and some heavier ones for use with any harsh chemicals if you must use them.

Getting a set of coveralls is a worthwhile investment instead of continuing to wear old jeans and other gear which won't protect you.

Vacuum cleaner: A small, battery operated one might be worthwhile in addition to your larger cleaner if you have lots of small nooks which collect dust and other mess.

Cloths: Cut up old T-shirts are okay for some things but microfiber cloths and other types can [work](#) better for some tasks.

Spray bottles: Use cheap, new ones rather than risk mixing what you put in with unknown residues.



Use Permanent ink marking [pens](#) to mark the bottles with the name of the contents. Only use abbreviations if everyone that helps or is likely to use them later knows what all the shorthand means.

Sundries: Grit cloth, pumice stone,

Cutters with replaceable blades: [Pay](#) a little more for a quality brand as cheap versions cause lots of unnecessary cuts to people.

Terry cloth pieces: From your auto store. A pack of two dozen or more. Wash and dry before their first use. As soon as they become wet or dirty, replace them with a new one.

Micro Fiber Cloths: Wash before first use. Wash separate from other cloths. Don't use on heavy dirt or grease. Keep away from bleach.

Cheap hard and soft toothbrushes: Use each one for applying only one chemical or cleaner to stay safe. Get a variety of colors if possible so you can tell them apart. Use them for removing grime from grooves and also applying cleaner to some surfaces, Get bulk packs so you don't [mind](#) getting rid of each one after only a little use.



Ladder or step-stool: Go for quality. If they break, you probably will too. Make sure you can lift and move it comfortably or only do so when you have some help available.

Look for wide steps and stability. A shelf for putting your tray on and anything which makes it safer would be good points to look for.

Prepare to Attack



Bring your cleaning gear in its tray or wheeled cart to the room you will clean.

Check the plastic sheets or shower curtains you use; do not let [water](#) through or you might cause problems.

Switch off any lights you won't need and unplug any other [electrical](#) equipment in the room. You don't want to drop or [spray](#) any chemicals into live equipment or sockets.

Open curtains and blinds to give as much natural light as possible so that you can judge how well the cleaning is progressing and when extra attention may be required. Sometimes, you may want to take a note of something to [work](#) on later rather than interrupt the flow of the session.

Dress for the session.

You may want to clear a space outside of the room and lay a spare shower curtain or strong plastic sheet down where you can put stuff you remove from the room to wash and clean.

Use your vacuum and, if necessary, your ladder or step-stool to start by cleaning the edges of the ceiling, top of the picture rail if you have one and anything else you can reach.

Use a gentle duster for your ceiling lights, not your vacuum.

Where possible, move small items of furniture from under the area you are cleaning to avoid splashes or stains. Then, put a plastic sheet on the floor or over any item which cannot be easily moved.

Safety Tip: Always climb down and move your ladder instead of leaning or stretching to reach any high area.

Safety Tip: Always wear eye protection, cap or shower cap and mask to avoid getting cleaner or lots of grime etc., dropping on your [head](#).

Move any delicate or valuable items to another room before doing any cleaning where they are kept.

Some ceiling fans are more delicate than you may realize. Set your ladder

under and slightly to the side (on the right if you are left-handed and vice-versa).

Support each fan blade with your free hand when you carefully clean it. A broken blade may be difficult to replace and require that you replace the whole fan!

Keep Safe



Cleaning, even with environmentally-friendly products, should always be done carefully to minimize any damage to yourself, the items being cleaned and anyone else that might be affected.

Most items are safe to use but always be cautious. Wear gloves and other safety gear. Protect yourself, especially sensitive areas like your eyes, cuts or broken [skin](#), skin creases and around your fingernails.

Labels: Read labels and check any information which you do not understand.

Risky Mixtures: Do not mix cleaning chemicals. Some products are safe and effective in certain situations but mixing them with other materials may cause serious problems.

Dangerous fumes or volatile substances may be formed.

Be cautious about using U cleaning chemicals, even the natural or simple compounds we've used for years. Use them only as directed and don't mix them with anything else. Some can become volatile when mixed together and cause injury or serious damage.

Used containers may have residues of other chemicals which react with whatever you store in them later on. I always put a couple of holes in old containers and, when safe to do so, crush them to prevent re-use.

A simple example would be bleach and ammonia. They each have their uses but should never be mixed.

Many different types of cleaning products have some ammonia. Adding bleach could seriously harm you or any other people or [animals](#) which the fumes could reach.

Before you Buy more Storage

Providing storage units is a growing [business](#). Their main use is to store stuff we don't use and probably never will. But, we think it's valuable and may be useful one day. And we're prepared to [pay](#) someone else to store it away from our sight.

We worry that someone might steal it.

We don't understand that a lot of this stuff costs us [money](#) and time to maintain and insure. It also affects our quality of [life](#).

If we keep it in our [home](#), it can cause accidents by restricting our ability to move easily around our home.

We could make better use of the space just as clear space and sell it for some handy [cash](#) for it or even give it to someone who could really use it!

But, we will probably buy more storage.

That could be those ugly plastic boxes, shelving or furniture with storage built in to it.

These things aren't really good solutions because they hide the problem without solving it.

They cost money and the eventually fill up, adding to the problem.

Also, unless we spend more time organizing the gear we stuff out of sight, we probably will waste more time trying to find the rare item we need later on.

To solve the problem, the owner must decide whether they are likely to use it or if it is too valuable to discard.

If it's something with sentimental or real monetary value, consider whether that makes it worth the effort and worry needed to look after it?

But, make a decision instead of continuing to hide the problem.

Quick Tips

These are some tips I've picked up which might be helpful to you.

Custom Gutter Cleaner: Cut the [head](#) of a kid's plastic spade to fit the contour of your gutters and you will usually be able to remove all the litter in just one pass.

Then, get covers for your gutters and almost completely eliminate the task of cleaning your gutters for ever.

Finding small items on the floor: If you drop something small and can't see it easily, crouch down and put your torch at floor level. When you switch it on, the beam will throw the item into relief which makes the item much easier to find!

Removing dust and webs: When you buy gift wrap, keep the cardboard tube inside the roll and tape it to the nozzle of your vacuum cleaner to get dust and cobwebs from picture railings and other spots, such as under furniture.

The tube will extend the usefulness of your vacuum, probably last for a few weeks at least and is easily replaced. It reduces the number of times you have to take the risk of climbing up or bending down to get at hard-to-reach places!

Gadgets are intriguing and we can be tempted when we see a demonstrator show it off. But, that person has probably done the same [routine](#) hundreds of times.

Before you invest, think about how often you would use it. Would it [pay](#) itself or just end up taking up space in the back of your cupboard?

Vinegar: Vinegar is a highly regarded cleaning agent but some people don't like the lingering smell. Try putting a little bit of lavender in the sprayer and that will mask the smell naturally which is much better than using artificial odor-masking sprays.

A more Hygienic Toilet Brush: "Toilet Wands" are a bit dearer than the regular toilet brush which sits in its holder in the corner of the bathroom.

If you feel uncertain about continually using the same brush and wonder about possible build-up of germs, check out the Clorox Toilet Wand. (**BTW**

I have **no** connection with the product or companies involved.)

It's shaped like some ordinary plastic toilet brushes. But, the [heads](#) snap on and off the handle. You use each head only once and then unclip it from the handle straight into the trash.

If you think the throw-away plastic head is too wasteful, you might not want to try it. I accept the trade-off because it seems more hygienic - you don't have to touch the heads at all.

The heads must not be flushed.

You might want to get some small plastic bags to drop each head in before you put it in your trash.

There are some points that also need to be considered about this product:

- ? There are reports that the foam cleaner in the heads may change the [color](#) of parts of your toilet with a dye that may not be removable.
- ? The plastic parts may scratch the surface of some toilets.

Don't touch the release button when using the wand or it may drop the head and block your toilet!

Involving Your Children

Involving all of your family members in cleaning and other [household](#) tasks is important.

It helps the [kids](#) learn good values and prepare them for their own family [life](#) later on.

Whatever you give young children to do has to be safe and well within their capabilities and butterfly-like attention span.

Always consider what the [child](#) thinks but the final decision has to be yours.

I think it's important to [focus](#) on their contribution to the family's comfort rather than any small reward they might get.

But, there should be some reward beyond you recognizing their effort.

Young children can gather their toys, tidy their [room](#) and set the table, or just clear away the dishes if you think they might break something. This is more about helping the child to avoid taking on a task which they could fail at through no fault of their own than the actual risk of breaking the item.

As your kids grow, you could teach them to cook some basic meals (yes, both boys and girls). They will probably realize the likely value of that [knowledge](#) when they go to [college](#) or on trips.

In return, get them to set everything up for the family meals and clean up afterward.

Don't think you are being too hard or robbing your kids of their childhood. You know that you are looking to help them learn the life-skills and not just off-loading some tasks on them.

If you don't teach them, who will?

Who knows them better than you?

Give them [vocal](#) support, just like your team coach or a good teacher gave you when you were learning.

Basic Cleaning Routine

To clean a room efficiently, we need to have a plan which lets us move around the room once without backtracking.

Of course, before you make your plan, you need to survey each room and set it up, as far as you can, to make your cleaning task easier.

Each person should accept full responsibility for cleaning their own room.

The only exception is young [children](#), but they can help by putting away their toys, binning their rubbish and putting their used clothes in the hamper.

Everyone else should be able to do the cleaning of their own room.

And, if each person can be encouraged to pick up any rubbish or anything which has been left in the wrong part of the [house](#) when they see it, you'll probably find the whole task much easier in future.

Try to remove anything which doesn't need to be in a room to the part of your [home](#) where it will be used.

Here are a few suggestions which will help anyone clean any room more quickly.

Have a quality ladder available. Get one which is easy for you or any adult in your home to handle.

If someone cannot carry or move it, they won't use it.



Have a basic set of cleaning tools and materials in a tray with a handle where everybody can find it. The ideal would be to have one in each room.

Efficient Room Cleaning

Start your cleaning of each room from the wall which is farthest from the door. That way you do not back-track and you won't spread any of the rubbish [back](#) onto the area you have already cleaned.

Use knee-pads as part of your cleaning gear. They reduce the strain on your legs which may be hardly noticed most of the time but have serious effects over a year.

Keep stretching and bending to a minimum for the same reason.

Look around the whole room and clear all the clutter away before you pick up your first cleaning gear. Then, you will have a smooth area to clean and will be amazed at the time and effort you save!

Invest in quality tools for better results and greater safety.

Get some clean rags for general use but buy some white terry toweling cloths for walls and even floors. They can usually be used a few times if you wash them in bleach between uses.



The only things which you backtrack to get are your larger tools like your vacuum and mop and bucket. Keep them just outside the door between uses so they don't get in your way.

When you scrub or wipe, have a cloth or sponge in each hand so you cover twice as much in the same time.

Try to get someone to help you. Two people will usually get more than twice the amount one would get done. They not only support each other, an element of competition will ensure that they each do their best.

Cleaning Hardwood Floors

Hardwood floors have retained their popularity despite all the newer and more heavily promoted types of flooring.

They are fairly easy to clean if you do a little regularly instead of leaving it until spills soak into the [wood](#) or dents appear from mis-use.

Put mats on all areas where there is frequent [traffic](#). Have a mat both inside and outside your doors. Then, your family can clean off dirt on the outside mat and stand on the indoor mat while they remove their footwear and put it aside so they don't track any dirt into the rest of the [house](#).

The mats will pick up grit so they must be taken out and brushed to clean it all out again. Otherwise, the grit in the mats could scratch the floor when people move them around as they walk on them.

Ask all family members to not wear heavy boots or heels over the floor which can be easily scratched. Encourage them to let you know if anything happens which might damage the floor, such as dropping something which could damage it, so that [action](#) can be taken as soon as possible.

Sweeping the floor with a gentle broom at least weekly will usually keep it clean but do it more often if you have young kids and [pets](#).

Make sure everyone knows where the cleaners and mops are and also which ones should be used on any particular surfaces.

Even water may cause floors to warp unless you get it up quickly.

Use floor protectors under your [furniture](#).

Even some pet hair can scratch your wooden floor if left in contact with it for a while.

Electrostatic cloths can be rubbed over the floor to take up small pieces of trash before they can cause damage.

Cleaning Your Bathroom

This is as important as your kitchen for everyone's [health](#).

When you can clean it more efficiently, you save time and energy while also making your whole family safer.

In the bathroom I suggest you [deal](#) with groups of things, such as the bath and basin, [glass](#) and mirrors etc so that you don't have to change the equipment or cleaners you are using as frequently as you might if you followed the usual routine of working from the far wall toward the door.

Use your all-purpose [spray](#) on all the surfaces around the bath, basin and shower.

But, don't clean them off yet. Give the magic liquid time to start working and you won't have to do so much.

Put your favorite toilet cleaner in the toilet and under the rim, then give it a through scrub with the brush.

If you want to be a bit greener, try sprinkling baking soda in the bowl and then slosh that around with the brush!

Grab your all-purpose cleaner and do the outside of the pedestal and the other outside surfaces.

Clean down the bath and the basin.

When you are cleaning, always move downward. If you clean anything from the bottom up, you risk having the stuff you clean off falling on to an area which you had already cleaned.

Cleaning Your Kitchen

This could be the most important cleaning [job](#) in your [home](#).

Your family are dependent on the quality and safety of everything which is done there.

With more activity than almost anywhere else in your home, it would be easy to overlook something that could cause illness to someone with long-lasting consequences.

The Cleaning Track: This is my term for the path I follow through each room as I clean them. I start at one side of my refrigerator and [work](#) around the room. That way, I make sure that I cover all the gear and don't have to go back to an area because I could not handle some task in that part for any reason.

You will save time and duplicated effort by working out your own track so you don't backtrack to any great degree.

Cleaning the Freezer

Another vital task. Most auto-defrost systems do not do as good a [job](#) as a full defrost.

If you have a combination refrigerator/freezer, remove the contents of the fridge part to cooler boxes or another freezer as well.

Arrange for cool storage of the contents before you take anything out.

Time is critical, so have the other cool storage ready.

Have someone make a list of everything which comes out and the "Best Before" [date](#).

Switch off the electricity and have sponge mops ready (no metal handles!) to get up any [water](#) on or near the unit quickly and carefully.

Let the ice melt naturally. That saves your electricity bill and removes most of the risk of electrocution.

If you want to hack at any ice because it's taking too long to melt, use a plastic tool or you'll waste energy and risk hurting yourself or damaging the freezer.

A better idea would be to go where it's warm for a few minutes while you can.

Try to avoid excess ice formation in future by always firmly closing the doors and making sure the seals are in good condition. This will maximize the efficiency of your [machine](#) and keep the cost of electricity a little lower.

When everything is clean you can start the routine to get your freezer down below -5 degrees Fahrenheit so that you can start to get your [food](#) back in it.

Cleaning the Refrigerator

This is a bit more complicated than doing most of the other gear.

It needs to be done weekly so that nothing can quietly spoil in silence and then spoil your meal, or worse, later on.

If you have ceramic or glass shelves and fittings, put them on a clean bench. Don't try to start cleaning them until they have time to warm up to room temperature.

Don't try to rush this step. If you do, you might damage them.

Then, follow your manufacturer's instructions for cleaning them.

Put all the plastic and metal racks and other fittings in the sink. Add some warm water and your favorite detergent.

Let them soak while you use a mild cleaning solution to wipe the refrigerator's interior.

Start at the top and [work](#) down so that you don't have any residues you are cleaning up [fall](#) down onto the area you have already cleaned.

Dry off the interior

Get a cheap soft toothbrush to clean the seals. Dip it in your cleaning solution and rub it over them, pressing it lightly into the corners and [grooves](#) where grime and residue from any spills or breakages will hide and become a breeding ground for more nasties.

Make sure you get every speck from these areas. Use a wooden toothpick on any spots or stains which the toothbrush can't move. This will also ensure that your seals don't develop cracks.

If your refrigerator has a drip tray for condensation, clean and dry it.

Now you can clean the racks in your sink. When you have put them [back](#), you just have to wipe over the exterior,

It is also important to keep the air conditioning ducts of your refrigerator clean. Mold and dust can build up there fairly quickly.

Cleaning Your Stove

This advice will be mostly helpful to people that have a stove which is out of warranty and has accumulated some historical stains and deposits.

If you have a new stove, always follow the directions of the supplier to ensure that you don't risk your warranty. Check with their customer support before you use anything which might damage the surfaces or operation of the appliance.

If you have a stove which is out of its warranty period, you can consider these suggestions while keeping in [mind](#) the advice which the supplier provided.

If you inherited the stove when you moved in to the [house](#), and it's hard to actually see parts of the stove for residues, you might find these tips will help you get the stove [back](#) to a state where it's safe and pleasant to use.

The best way to clean your stove is to do some light cleaning each day that you use it.

That is the only way to ensure that it doesn't [gunk](#) up.

Even some self-cleaning ovens are not problem-free if you forget to remove what's left after its cleaning routine burns most of the residues away.

Some cleaners are too risky: Look closely at the labels of whatever stove cleaning products you have. Most contain strong chemicals which reduce the effort you need to use but can have serious effects on people and [pets](#).

You may suffer some effects when using some cleaners even if you never have your [skin](#) in contact with them because the fumes may cause damage to your skin or [eyes](#).

Unfortunately, many of the cleaners claimed to be more environmentally friendly aren't strong enough to [deal](#) with hardened deposits unless you use more and scrub more.

The best I have found is Grandma's favorite - baking soda.

Add boiling [water](#) to a couple of tablespoons of baking soda, stir the mixture and then let the water cool off.

Always pour the water gently onto the powder so it does not splash around.

Give the mixture another stir and then fill a clean [spray](#) bottle with it.

Clear out the fittings if they can be easily removed from inside the stove. Drop them in a bowl of cleaning solution while you clean the stove's interior.

Spray a thin layer over the interior. Don't make it too thick. That will probably not be any more effective and you might leave some liquid in the stove. If your first treatment doesn't clean everything perfectly, a second thin layer of spray will usually fix it.

If you have a big mess inside the stove, you can make a paste with the baking soda and water.

Spread the paste all over the interior. A cloth is better than a spatula because the cloth will push the paste into ridges and the underside of fittings better.

Wait about forty-five minutes for the baking soda to penetrate.

Use a plastic scraper to lift most of the remaining residue off the interior. Then, wipe it all over with a damp cloth to remove what's left.

Clean Your Dishwasher

This appliance needs regular maintenance and cleaning or it can become a [health](#) hazard to your entire family.

Regular cleaning after each use will make it easy to get fresh spills off and reduce any build-up of grime around the hinge and seals.

If that stuff sets in place, it will be *much* harder to remove.

Safety Tip: Always wear a mask and [eye](#) protection when you are using strong chemicals. This is very important when you are in a confined space or spraying anything because you may not be able to avoid any vapor

Take out the racks and set them in your sink with an approved detergent.

Carefully check the spinners.

Clean off any residues. Clear the holes gently with a toothpick.

Some spinners are easily scratched, so be very careful.

Remove and clean your filter if it is easy to do.

Be careful that you always follow the recommendations and warnings provided by your machine's supplier.

Avoid using bleach in a stainless-steel dishwasher.

Reclaim Your Closets!

Do you have more clothes than closets?

The main reason for that problem is that we all can think of many reasons why we should keep clothes that we don't wear "just in case".

Some excuses for hanging on to them are:

- It was very expensive.
- It's still got a lot of wear in it.
- Someone gave it to me. I don't want them to think I don't appreciate it.
- It will come back in fashion some time.
- It's an incentive for me to [lose weight](#) so I can wear it again.

And, you can probably think of a few more!

We procrastinate because the stuff is out of sight.

But, the clothes are deteriorating, we get stressed about looking after them and we aren't using them. Some probably don't fit and are unlikely to become popular again. Some may even need expensive repair.

While we think we are protecting the clothes and saving [money](#) by not having to buy new gear, dust and other rubbish build up can cause more damage to the clothes we are actually using!

Cleaning a closet is much easier if you get a trusted friend to help. They can give you an unbiased opinion about the clothes that you are keeping because of a sentimental attachment but never wear.

You might arrange to do the same for them on another day.

Arrange boxes or clear areas where you can put items as you take them from the closet.

This is how you might sort the gear as you take it from the closet:

- 1.** What you wear now.
- 2.** Special occasion gear which you will wear
- 3.** Scrap – dispose or cut up for cleaning cloths.

4. Donate or sell.

You could use similar categories for any other possessions you sort out.

Be firm about making decisions on the spot. If there are some items you can't decide on, put them in a [box](#) in another room. Then, go through that box no more than three weeks later. If you haven't needed anything which was in the box in three weeks, you should be able to dispose of it without any further worry or wasted time.

Focus on the [benefits](#) you get from clearing the clutter and organizing what's left.

These questions can help you make good choices:

- ? Do I really like wearing this?
- ? Does your friend think it suits you?
- ? Did you wear it recently or picked something else each time?
- ? Is it comfortable?
- ? When will I wear it again?

When you have completed this project and delivered what you don't want to the charity, you will be more [confident](#) about doing the same with the contents of other cupboards etc., and you will find that you become more selective about the clothes or other items you buy and more practical about what you keep in future.

This will save you [money](#) and time.

Vacuum Cleaning Tips



You may have bought your last vacuum cleaner because someone recommended it or it was on sale. Before you buy your next one, make a list of what you like about your present unit and what does not suit you.

That will help you make the best decision about your next machine. It might not save you [money](#) but it will save you possible discomfort and make you feel better each time you do that essential task in the future.

Although it can be awkward, always clean under chairs, couches and appliances as thoroughly as possible.

Those are the areas where dust hides and seems to multiply. Each person that walks through a [room](#) creates a draught which blows the stuff under the [furniture](#) and also draws out some from there as well.

It is worthwhile to get some help to move large pieces so you can clean under them regularly. When you move them, put sliders or even wheels under the corners so that you can move them by yourself in the future.

This may seem a big effort, but you will soon notice that you see less dust and there is less to collect each time you clean!

Always take a few minutes before you start your cleaner to walk around the room with a small brush or broom.

Look for areas where grime has collected.

Brushing it out with your broom will avoid the need to stop the cleaner, attach the small nozzle and then take it off again before you do the rest of the room.

It also will reduce the amount of bending and twisting you need to do in that session.

Check and clean the brush or roller on your vacuum cleaner each time before you start to use it.

That will ensure your vacuum is cleaning at its maximum efficiency and you won't have to go over any area a second time.

Using the machine when there are bits of string or other items in those areas adds more strain and can shorten the [life](#) of the motor as well as reduce the machine's effectiveness.

Use re-usable bags when they are available. Always wear gloves and a mask when you empty the bags because a lot of the material will be very fine and you could inhale or swallow it easily.

Empty bags when they are about half full. The machine is likely to be less effective if you keep using a bag which is over half-full.

Most one-use bags can be emptied and re-used a few times unless they are designed in a way which prevents you doing that.

Get the belt checked for damage regularly. If you replace the belt, make certain that it is correctly set up or your motor will be put under extra strain and the effectiveness reduced.

Check and clean or replace the vacuum cleaners filters regularly or you will get poor results and put extra strain on the motor.

You can use your vacuum cleaner to remove dust etc., from your bookshelves more quickly and with less risk of damaging the [books](#) if you are careful about it.

Vacuum your pillows to clear some of the skin-flakes and dust which accumulates between regular washes.

Put your pillows inside a strong plastic bag. Then, [draw](#) the air out with your vacuum.

Remove the pillow from the bag and fluff it up again.

People who have [pets](#) that shed fur need to check the suitability of the machines they buy for lifting and removing it from their furniture and other areas.

The [power](#) level is an important factor.

Are there any features which are there to help do a great [job](#) of removing the hair?

A roller brush can do a good [job](#) on hair but they scrape wooden floors. Some machines have removable brushes which makes them better to use on wooden floor or where you have partly carpeted areas.

There are advantages to both bagless and regular vacuum cleaners.

Bagless models mean you don't have to buy bags but cleaning the filters and inside of the machines can become more messy than with an equivalent regular cleaner.

Both types can be as good as the other on specific surfaces such as carpet. That depends on the [design](#) and manufacturer of the particular model.

Carpet is best vacuumed by moving the [head](#) gently up and down the length of the carpet and then doing the same carpet again by moving the head of the machine from side to side.

Top Green Cleaning Tips

Read the labels of all the cleaning products you use. You may be horrified by what some companies still put in their products.

Check how you can safely dispose of cleaning products you no longer want to use and the waste produced from your cleaning so you minimize any bad effects on other people or sensitive parts of your environment.

Your local council or environmental organization will have the information you want.

Don't pour anything nasty into your drains or gutters to get rid of it. Most of the material disposed that way is flushed directly into the nearest waterway or seafront.

In a lake or river it can encourage growth of algae and other unwelcome materials as well as affect the [fish](#) and other creatures there.

Many traditional compounds are effective for a lot of cleaning [jobs](#). Some may require more preparation or effort to use but they are often much safer for you and everyone else around you.

We can improve our environment by opening windows in good weather to improve air circulation and getting outdoors more often to improve our circulation and being more active.

Some estimates say that this would have a significant effect on our general [health](#) and also save a lot of [money](#) because we could stop using so many proprietary health products which only fill gaps in our [diet](#).

Bring some plants inside. They can filter the air and make the general atmosphere much more pleasant.

Reduce use of anti-bacterial cleaners except in [medical](#) areas. Some reports seem to confirm that most people would clean their hands as well with soap and water if they did a thorough job of it as they do with the powerful anti-bacterial cleaners which are heavily promoted these days.

While the special cleaners are effective, their current level of use could lead to bugs becoming more resistant to the agents used in the cleaners.

Resources

This section has some [links](#) which will help you to continue to make your [home](#) and [business](#) cleaner, safer and more pleasant to use.

All the links were valid when compiled but the Internet is constantly changing.

We cannot take responsibility for any consequences of using any links. Always keep your computer or other device protected with the current version of a reliable antivirus program and a firewall.

The Freecycle Network

<http://www.freecycle.org/>

The Freecycle [Network](#) is a world-wide non-profit network of more than five thousand [groups](#) with nine [million](#) members who are dedicated to reducing the amount of useful items which end up in the landfill.

Members offer items which they no longer need to other members for free. Items must be free, legal to distribute in the areas concerned and appropriate for all involved.

Environmental Protection Agency U.S.A.

Tips for protecting your [health](#) and "greening" your home

www.epa.gov/greenhomes/protectingyourhealth.htm

National Health Service U.K.

Information about [Food](#) Safety and Cleaning Tips

<http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/homehygiene/>

Your Cleaner Brighter Future!

I hope that the ideas and tactics in this [ebook](#) have helped you to see more clearly how simple and painless it can be to move toward a happier and brighter future for yourself and all your family.

You have started on a journey which will guarantee that you have more time for your favorite activities and a better environment as well.

You will also be helping your [kids](#) to learn how to approach and overcome problems, help each other and [enjoy](#) every minute a bit more.

I wish you the success which your efforts and enthusiasm deserve!

Amanda Pearson

[Another eBookWholesaler Publication](#)