

Here Is Your 15 Minute Clean Routine



[Source](#)

Let's face it: We've all got busy lives, and we don't often have the time to make sure that our homes are sparkling clean. Or do we? There are a few strategies you can use to help keep your living space tidy, and many of them only take a few minutes at a time. Here are some tactics to cut down on your cleaning time and still have a presentable home.

Start Fresh

First, carve out the time to give your home one thorough, [top-to-bottom cleaning](#). If you don't have time for this (and who does?), consider hiring cleaning services. New York City residents will then have a clean slate to start with. After all, it's

easier to keep a tidy home that way than to have to do a full-on cleaning every time.

Take Responsibility

Nobody likes cleaning up other people's messes. Try to get your whole family in the habit of tidying up after themselves. That means that if you make a bowl of cereal, either put the bowl in the dishwasher or wash it in the sink when you're done. And no, just leaving it sitting in the sink doesn't count! Sometimes, I'll use a rewards system for this: If I find that the boys are backsliding, I'll promise them that if I don't find any dirty dishes in the sink for a whole week, I'll take them out for ice cream. Works like a charm!

Everything in its Place

When you're cleaning up, take a look at the organization of your home and see how it can be improved. For instance, it used to drive me nuts when my husband would grab the mail, look through it, and then leave it in a heap all over the kitchen table. Every night, I'd have to clean off the table so we could sit down for dinner. But I realized one day that part of the problem might be that we needed a better way to deal with the mail. I put a small recycle bin near the kitchen table, and I also got a new mail-sorting rack to put on a side table nearby, which has slots in which to place bills to be paid, magazines to read later, and the rare actual letter or invitation. When there's a clear, handy place to put things, they're much more likely to get put away instead of left all over the house.

Don't Procrastinate

How often have you set something down and thought, "oh, I'll put that away later," only to find it still sitting there, gathering dust, days later? I know I've done that when in a rush. If you have something that needs to be cleaned up or put away, do it now. That goes double for things like countertop spills, which can dry on and be harder to clean up later if you don't do it right away.

Take a Top-Down Approach

When you do need to clean, always start with dusting, and always start from the top of the room and work your way downward. Otherwise, that dust from the

highest shelves will end up falling all over your freshly cleaned counters or just-vacuumed carpet. Then, you'll just have to do those chores all over again. If you're trying to save time, the last thing you want to have to do is wipe down surfaces or clean the floors twice!

One Chore, Every Room

Here's a tactic used by most cleaning services. [New York City](#) residences are so much quicker to clean when you skip the one-room-at-a-time approach. It makes sense in your head to clean up one room before moving to the next, but you'll be constantly switching gears, picking up and putting down the duster, the sponge, or the broom. Instead, pick one chore, such as cleaning windows and mirrors, and do it throughout the house.

Sunny Day? Skip the Windows

When the sunlight's having a hard time streaming through your filthy windows, it might be tempting to give them a good cleaning. But avoid temptation if you don't want to make the problem worse. The sunshine will have warmed the windowpanes, meaning that when you spray on cleaning solution, it will dry too quickly. That leads to unsightly streaks.

Take Off Your Shoes

You might think of this in the wintertime when your shoes are caked with snow and salt, but it's a good tip to follow all year long. If you take off your shoes when you enter the house, you'll keep your carpets cleaner longer, which will save you vacuuming time. I like to use two doormats, one outside of the door and one inside, to help keep outside dirt outside. And I have a bench right next to the door that's handy for sitting down and taking off your shoes before proceeding into the rest of the house.

Last-Minute Company?

I'm not proud of this one, but I've definitely done it a few times when I suddenly found out that my in-laws were on the way over. If you need to clean up the house and are under the gun to do it, focus on the spaces your company is most likely to see and leave the rest for another time. Glance around and pick up any trash

lying around. Quickly sweep and vacuum the floors. Wipe down the counters in your kitchen and especially in the bathroom (and make sure you've got enough soap and toilet paper and a clean hand towel in there, while you're at it). And if you've got a bunch of clutter lying around, stuff that really needs to be sorted through and put away... toss it all into a laundry basket and hide it in a bedroom closet until you can get to it later. I know, I know, it's shameful, but it's better than the disapproving stares of your mother-in-law, right?

Source: [Cleaning Building Services](#)