

Spring Cleaning Checklist

For a Canadian home after a long winter. Work high to low, one room at a time, and start with the winter cleanup.

The winter cleanup, first

Salt, grit and months of closed windows are what actually needs undoing.

- ☐ Wash the winter mats and runners, and the entryway floors underneath them.
- ☐ Clean the salt residue off the entry floor, the baseboards and the boot racks.
- ☐ Check the window sills, frames and closet corners for damp spots and mould.
- ☐ Clean and dry any mildew properly rather than wiping it away.
- ☐ Air the home out: open the windows on the first mild day and let it move through.
- ☐ Empty and clean the coat closet, the boot racks and the shoe storage.

Declutter before you clean

You cannot wipe a surface that is covered. This pass halves the work of the next one.

- ☐ Sort each room into keep, donate, recycle and discard, and move the discards out the same day.
- ☐ Empty one drawer or shelf at a time, and put back only what belongs there.
- ☐ Check the clothes for fit and season, and pass on what has not been worn in a year.
- ☐ Clear the kitchen counters and the pantry of duplicates and expired items.
- ☐ Sort the bathroom and medicine cabinets, discarding what has expired.
- ☐ Deal with the paper piles: recycle what you can and file what you must keep.

Kitchen

The deep tasks that a normal week never reaches.

- ☐ Wipe the range hood, its filter, and the walls and cabinets above the stove.
- ☐ Clean the inside of the oven including the racks, and the microwave inside and out.
- ☐ Pull out the fridge and freezer, defrost the freezer, and clean behind and beneath.
- ☐ Clean the stovetop, drip trays, burners and backsplash, and degrease the appliance fronts.
- ☐ Empty, wash and restock the cabinets and pantry shelves, checking for expired food.
- ☐ Wash the dishwasher filter and the seals around its door.
- ☐ Deep clean the counters, sink, taps and the garbage bin.

Bathrooms

Scale and soap scum respond to product and dwell time, not force.

- ☐ Wash the shower walls, the tub and the glass doors, and descale the shower head.
- ☐ Clean the toilet inside and out, including the base and behind it.
- ☐ Scrub the grout and tile, and treat any mildew.
- ☐ Empty the vanity and medicine cabinet, and wipe the shelves.
- ☐ Wash the mirror, the fixtures and the cabinet fronts, and clean the exhaust fan and vent.
- ☐ Wash the bath mats, the towels and the shower curtain liner.

Bedrooms, living areas and floors

High to low, floors last. It is the whole trick.

- ☐ Vacuum the mattresses and wash or air the bedding, pillows and duvets.
- ☐ Dust the ceiling fans, light fixtures, high shelves and the tops of frames.
- ☐ Wash the curtains, blinds and window screens, and wipe the window tracks.
- ☐ Vacuum the upholstery, cushions and under the furniture, and flip or rotate the mattresses.
- ☐ Wipe the baseboards, door frames, the backs of doors and the light switches.
- ☐ Clean the carpets, then mop the hard floors last.
- ☐ Dust the stair treads, banisters and spindles, and the walls along the stairs.

Mistakes worth avoiding

Every one of these turns a good spring clean into a repeat of itself.

- ☐ Trying to do the whole house in one day and running out halfway.
- ☐ Dusting the surfaces but skipping the fans, vents and window tracks.
- ☐ Cleaning the floors before dusting above them.
- ☐ Using the wrong product on a finish and leaving damage or streaks.
- ☐ Wiping mould away without cleaning and drying the area.
- ☐ Skipping the entry mats and the salt, so the damage carries on.
- ☐ Cleaning around clutter instead of decluttering first.