



The Ultimate Spring Cleaning Guide & Checklist

Part One & Two



Gem City
Cleaning Solutions

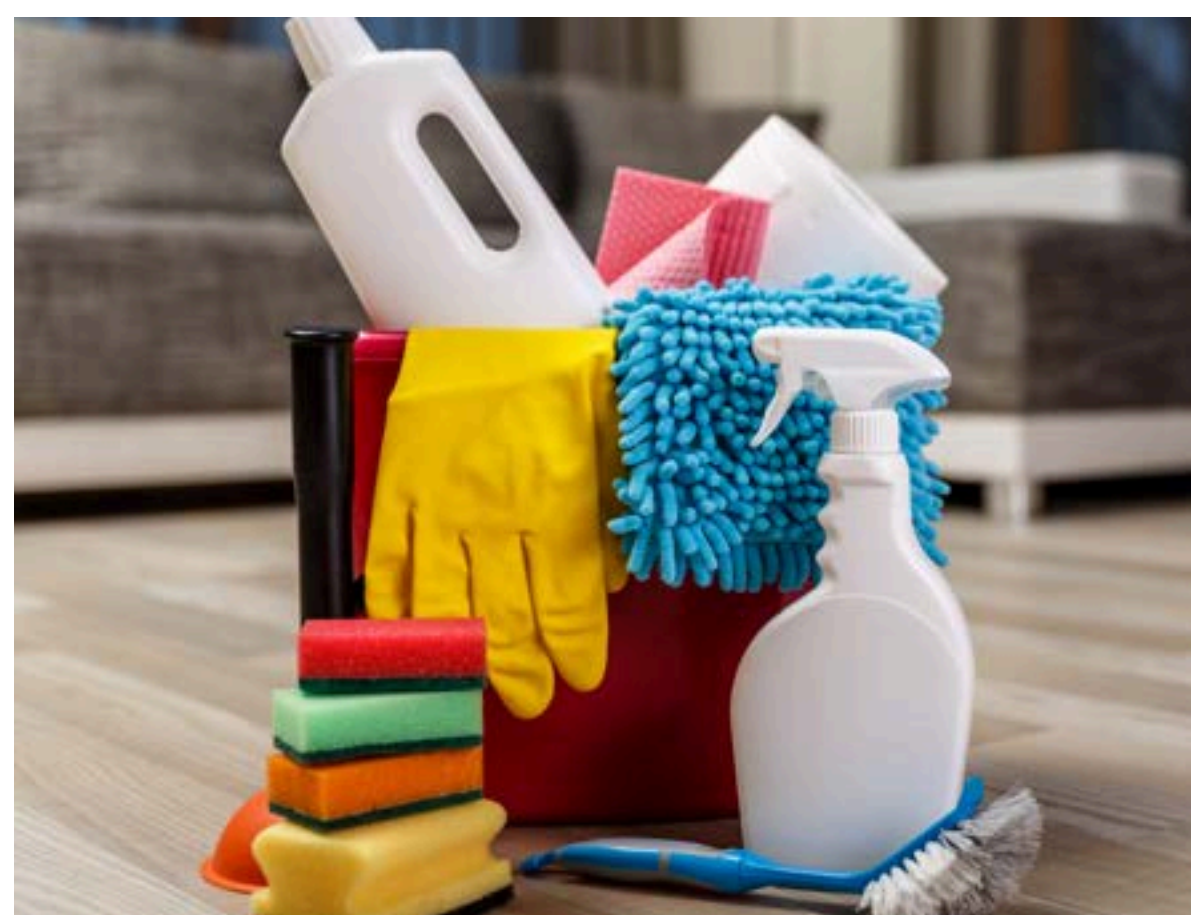
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INTRODUCTION

We're Here For All Of Life's Messes.

To help you start spring cleaning, Gem City Clean Solutions thought we'd shed some light on our approach to revitalizing your home with a thorough cleaning. From wiping down walls and cleaning baseboards to resetting the direction of your ceiling fans and replacing smoke alarms, we'll help you work your way through the entire house like a professional.



In Part One of our Ultimate Spring Cleaning Checklist, we'll provide some context around each to-do and some tips and tricks for getting the job done right. You'll also notice we recommend starting high and working your way down. In Part Two, we work our way down into the nitty-gritty of your baseboards, floors, furniture, and much more. Finally, we'll provide you with a printable room-by-room checklist.

Dust Your Ceilings

Between static electricity and excess humidity, there's a good chance the ceilings in your home have collected their fair share of dust and are in need of a thorough dusting. Depending on your ceiling height and texture, you'll want to equip yourself with a:

- Microfiber cloth/dusting cloth
- Dust brush vacuum attachment
- Extension pole with dusting tools

Bonus: If you already have your step stool or ladder out, take a moment to change the batteries in your smoke detectors.

By starting high, you'll reduce the amount of recleaning you'll have to do should any dust fall to the floor. Important note: Popcorn ceilings made before 1980 often contain asbestos; therefore, you'll want to be gentle while dusting.



Dust Ceiling Fans

If you haven't cleaned your fans in a while, you'll be amazed at how much dust comes off of the blades. Although you can certainly buy a ceiling fan duster tool, a microfiber cloth also works just fine unless your ceilings are especially high. Be gentle while dusting; you don't want to unbalance the fan blades.

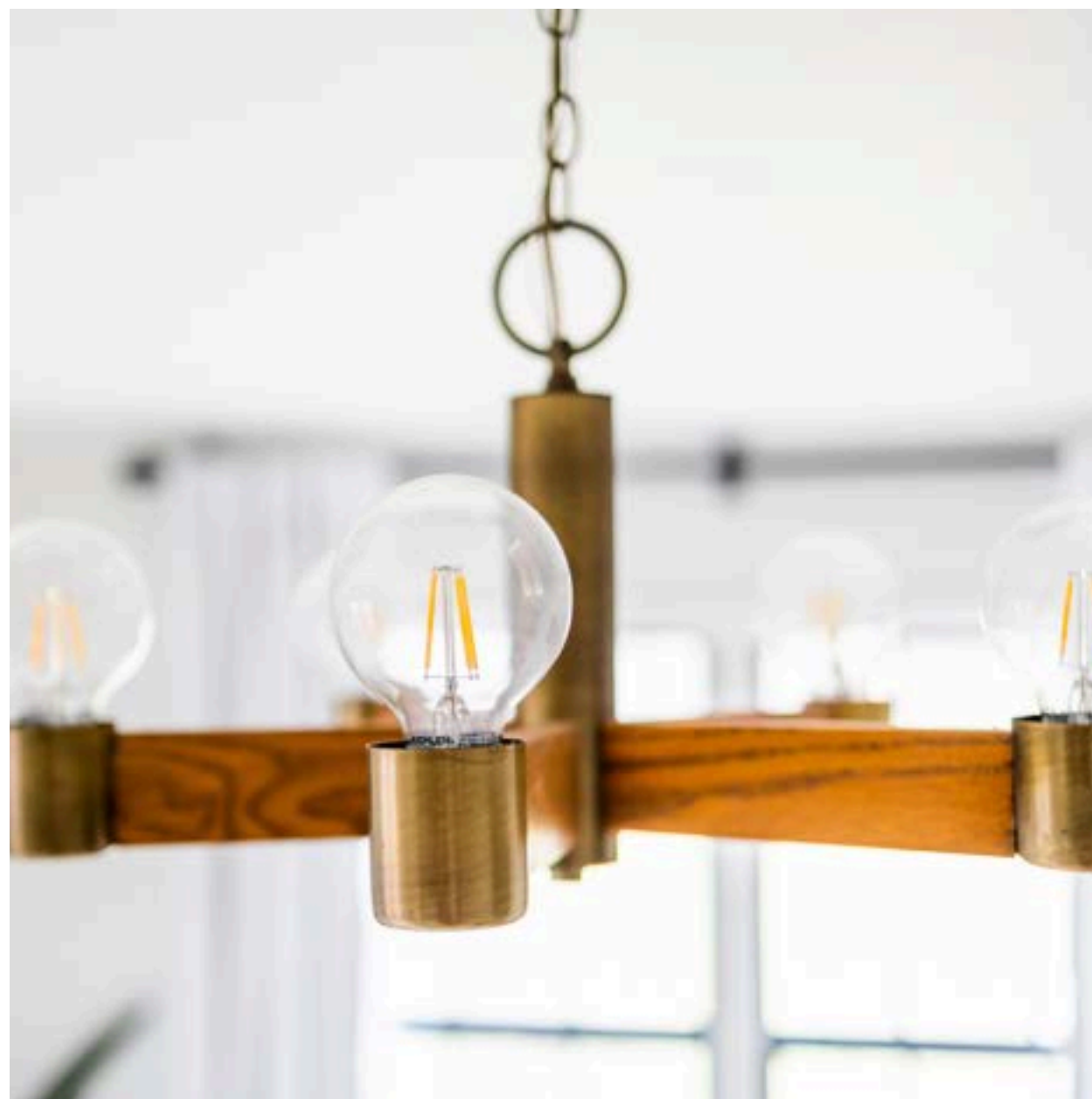
While you're up there, you may as well adjust your ceiling fan's direction. During the spring and summer, the blades should spin counterclockwise to push cool air down. The switch to control the direction is often on the fan housing. You may need to remove the light cover/globe to find it.

Clean Light Fixtures

Dusting fans and cleaning light fixtures often go hand in hand. To clean your light fixtures:

- Wear gloves to prevent smudging
- Remove globes or light covers to clean
- Use a dry microfiber cloth to dust the rest of the fixture
- Shut off the power to the light if using a damp rag or cloth

Make sure to avoid abrasive cleaners and rough textured cloths, as many light fixtures are fragile.



Clean Window Valances

There is a major dust collector that many people overlook during spring cleaning. It doesn't matter whether your window valances are fabric, wood, or plastic, they'll collect a significant amount of dust, pet hair, and airborne particles.

To clean fabric valances, vacuum them with a brush attachment to remove loose dust. Check the care label for deeper cleaning—some valances can be machine-washed on

a gentle cycle, while others may require hand washing. If machine washing isn't an option, a steam cleaner or a solution of mild detergent and water applied with a microfiber cloth can freshen up the fabric without causing damage.

For wood or plastic valances, dust with a microfiber cloth. If grime has settled in, particularly in high-humidity areas like the kitchen, a damp cloth with mild dish soap and warm water can cut through grease. Use minimal moisture on wood valances to prevent warping—simply wipe them down and follow up with a dry cloth. For an extra shine, consider a wood polish or a conditioning treatment to maintain the finish.



Clean Window Frames, Sills, & Tracks

Cleaning window frames, sills, and tracks is just as important as washing the glass itself, as these areas collect dust, dirt, pollen, and even mold. We recommend using a microfiber cloth for dusting and a vacuum attachment for any loose dirt and debris. For stubborn dirt and grime, a little dish soap and water will often do the trick.

To prevent warping, avoid excess moisture for wooden frames. Consider using a wood-safe cleaner or polish for added protection. Spring window maintenance will keep your windows looking fresh, extend their lifespan, and ensure functionality.

Clean Window Hardware & Screens

Don't forget to clean the window hardware. Knobs and cranks tend to accumulate oily grime. Simply use soapy water and a damp cloth to clean all of your hardware.

You'll also want to give your screens a once-over. Start by removing them from the window. Often, you'll be able to sweep screens clean with a hand broom or vacuum attachment. We recommend doing this outside to prevent dust from spreading around your house.

If there is heavy dirt on the screen, rinse them with warm, soapy water, using a soft brush. Finish by drying them thoroughly with a lint-free cloth.



Clean Window Blinds

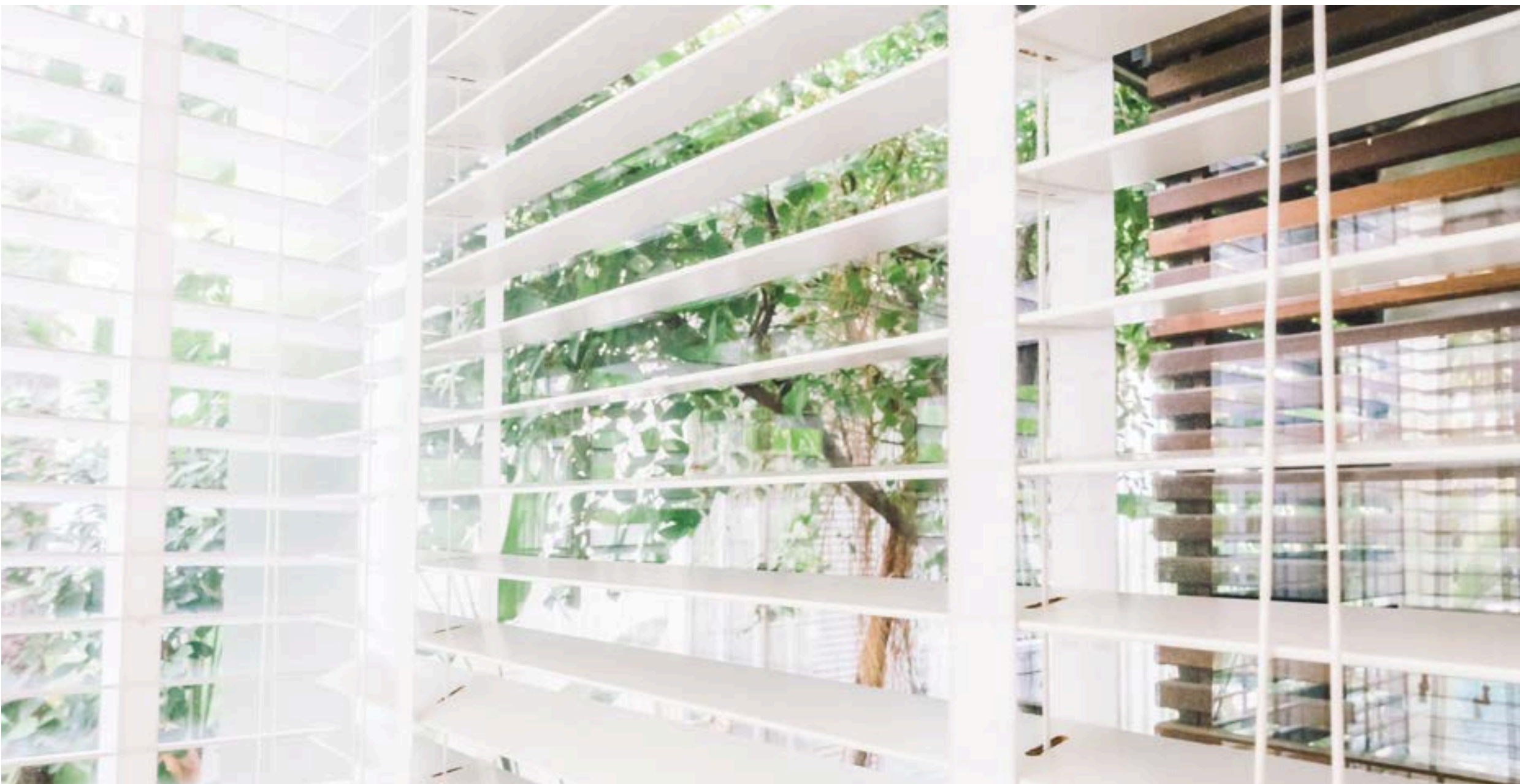
Cleaning window blinds isn't the most exciting task, but it's worth the effort. But it's worth the time and effort. Not only will you eliminate a lot of allergens from your home, but it'll also freshen up the look and feel of your rooms.

To remove dust and loose dirt, use a microfiber cloth, a duster, or a vacuum with a brush attachment. For vinyl, plastic, and metal blinds, wipe each slat down with a damp cloth and, if needed, a mild soapy solution.

If you have wooden blinds, do not oversaturate them with water, as this can cause warping. Simply wipe them down with a wood-safe cleaner and a slightly damp

cloth, followed by a dry microfiber cloth. Some people find it easier to use an old sock over their hand to get in between each slat.

Check the manufacturer's instructions for fabric blinds or Roman shades. Some can be vacuumed, spot-cleaned, or even taken down for gentle washing.



Clean Windows

Cleaning your windows is like hanging a new piece of art on your wall. With a clear view of the outdoors and more natural light coming into each room, it's one of the most impactful ways to refresh your home.

You can use a store-bought window cleaner or simply a mix of white vinegar, water, and a few drops of dishwashing liquid. Use a microfiber cloth for the inside, wiping in a consistent pattern—either side to side or top to bottom—to avoid streaks. For the outside, use a squeegee and bucket. Just be sure to change out your cleaning solution as it gets dirty to prevent transferring dirt back onto the glass!



Wipe Down Walls

There are a lot of seemingly thankless tasks when it comes to a thorough spring cleaning. But honestly, you'll be amazed at what a difference wiping down your walls will make, even if, at first glance, they appear clean. Because no matter how tight a ship you run, walls collect dust, fingerprints, and grime.

High-traffic areas, such as hallways, kitchens, and bathrooms, will likely require some extra time and care. Be sure to pay special attention to spots around light switches, door frames, and baseboards.

Start by dusting your walls with a microfiber cloth, duster, or vacuum with a brush attachment. For oily/grimy areas, use a warm water and mild dish soap solution. Be sure to wring out excess water to avoid over-saturating the wall.

For stubborn marks, a gentle scrub with a baking soda paste or a melamine sponge (e.g., Mr. Clean Magic Erasers) can help lift stains without damaging the finish. If your walls have wallpaper, use a barely damp cloth or a specialized wallpaper cleaner to prevent moisture damage. For glossy or semi-gloss finishes often found in kitchens and bathrooms, you can use a dish soap and water solution to remove buildup. After wiping down the walls, open windows or turn on fans to help them dry quickly.

Clean Baseboards

Baseboards are the pieces of molding that provide a transition between your walls and floor. Between scuffs from shoes and the dust from floor vents, it's more than likely that they need attention. To tidy up your baseboards, start by vacuuming them with a bristled brush hose attachment to suck up the heavy dust.

Once the heavy debris is gone, use a damp microfiber cloth and a mild all-purpose cleaner (even a homemade one will work). If you notice deep gouges or holes, this is a good time to fill those in with wood filler. Once dry, give it a light sanding and wipe it down with a microfiber cloth.

Bonus Tip: Depending on your meticulousness, you may be on your knees a lot while wiping down your baseboards. Consider investing in a foam kneeling pad to give yourself some relief.



Vacuum Your Floors

Vacuuming your floors is one of the most critical aspects of routine cleaning and deep spring cleaning. However, vacuuming can also be a significant source of particulate matter (PM), so we strongly encourage you to invest in a high-quality vacuum cleaner. A recent study showed that PM emission rates from bagged vacuums were much higher than those from bagless models with washable filters.

While vacuuming during spring cleaning, we suggest moving your furniture and vacuuming underneath it. Also, remember some often-forgotten areas, such as your stairs, closets, and pantry.

Mop Your Floors

With the heavy dust gone, it's time to give your floors a thorough scrub down. It's important to note that, much like vacuums, not all mops are created equal—especially for home cleaning. If you're still using a traditional string mop, you may want to consider an upgrade. For general use, we recommend a:

- **Microfiber Flat Mops:** Best for people with homes with moisture-sensitive floors.
- **Spray Mops:** Best for busy households that need a convenient cleaning option.
- **Spin Mops:** Best for deep cleaning, scrubbing stubborn stains, or larger tile and vinyl areas.
- **Steam Mops:** Best for tile when you want chemical-free, deep cleaning.
- **Sponge Mops:** Best for convenience as long as your home has smooth, sealed floors.

By and large, microfiber flat mops or spin mops will be the most versatile, convenient, and effective for most people's homes.



Shampoo Rugs

According to the American Lung Association, carpets and rugs trap pollutants and allergens such as dust mites, pet dander, cockroach allergens, particle pollution, lead, mold spores, pesticides, dirt, and dust. If you have children, you should definitely consider deep cleaning your carpets as they’re more exposed to these in-home pollutants.

You’ll likely be astonished at how much dirt comes out of your carpets and rugs. Consider renting or purchasing a carpet cleaner to give your home a thorough cleaning. After being shampooed, your carpets will likely return to a more vibrant color. That said, always check care labels to avoid shrinkage or color fading on carpets.

Take smaller rugs outside for a good shake and some fresh air when possible. Sunlight can help eliminate lingering odors.



Clean Grout Lines

Grout is the material between tiles on your floor, walls, or countertop. With it being cement-based, its porousness lends to it being stained easily. Because its discoloration happens somewhat evenly, it’s hard to tell when it’s become stained. However, once you clean it, you’ll notice how refreshed your tile looks. To preserve the look of your grout:

- **Prep the Area:** Sweep, vacuum, and wipe down grout lines.
- **Apply a Grout Cleaner:** An oxygen bleach-based cleaner or a specialized grout cleaner works well for removing deeply embedded dirt. If you’re aiming to minimize harsh cleaners, you can also create a paste with baking soda and water.
- **Scrub Gently:** Use a stiff-bristle brush, grout brush, or even an old toothbrush to loosen and lift grime. Avoid using wire brushes, which can damage the grout.
- **Rinse and Dry:** Thoroughly rinse the cleaner away with warm water, pat the grout lines dry with a cloth, and let them air-dry completely.



Reseal Grout Lines

It's important to note that grout isn't just for aesthetics; it acts as a moisture barrier to ensure water doesn't seep into your subfloor. To preserve the longevity of your grout, be sure to reseal it (when needed) by:

- **Choosing the Right Sealer:** Look for a penetrating grout sealer labeled for your specific grout type.
- **Apply Carefully:** Follow the product's instructions. Usually, you'll apply the sealer in a thin, even layer with a small foam brush or specialized sealant applicator bottle.
- **Let It Cure:** Most sealers require time to dry and cure. Avoid heavy foot traffic or water exposure for the recommended period (often 24 hours).



Resealing your grout helps prevent staining, protects against moisture damage, and keeps your tile surfaces looking fresh. By incorporating this step into your spring cleaning routine, you'll ensure your floors and walls remain beautiful and durable year-round.

Clean Upholstered Furnishings

Upholstered furniture and throw pillows harbor dust and dander. More than likely, there are a few spots and stains you've been hesitant to tackle. But refreshing your furnishings isn't as challenging as you might think. Simply start by:

- **Checking the Label:** Many decorative throw pillow covers and couch cushion covers have instructions on the label. Some can be tossed right in the washing machine, while others need to be dry cleaned. Always read the care label to ensure you use the safest cleaning method.
- **Beating Pillows Outside:** For pillows with removable covers, take them outside and give them a firm beating to remove dust. If the label allows for it, you may be able to wash them (be careful if you have an agitator in your washer).
- **Vacuuming and Surface Cleaning:** Vacuuming upholstery with a vacuum upholstery attachment will help remove dust, hair, and crumbs from the surface and crevices. You can also use a wet vacuum with an upholstery attachment (unless the cushion care instructions say otherwise) to spot-treat and extract moisture from cushions and pillows. Always test on a hidden area first.

This extra care during spring cleaning will help extend the life of your favorite furniture and rejuvenate your home.

Polish Doorknobs

In no place does the adage, *the devil is in the details*, apply better than polishing your doorknobs. Not only can a wipe down with some mild cleaner return them to their former glory, but it'll also minimize germs. On a single doorknob, there can be millions of bacteria, including *Staphylococcus aureus*, *escherichia coli*, coagulase-negative *Staphylococcus*, *bacillus* spp., *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, and coliforms.



Clean Wooden Surfaces

- Keep your wood looking good by giving it a thorough cleaning this spring. Regular upkeep will preserve the beauty of your wooden surfaces and protect them from long-term wear and tear. To keep wooden surfaces in top shape:
-
- **Dust with a microfiber cloth**
- **Choose a wood-specific cleaner** (e.g., Murphy's Oil Soap, TriNova Wood Cleaner, and Bona Hardwood Cleaner)
- **Polish and condition** (e.g., Guardsman Anytime Clean & Polish, ECOS Furniture Polish + Cleaner, Parker & Bailey Kitchen Cabinet Cream)

Regular cleaning and polishing keep wood surfaces looking rich and vibrant by removing dirt that can dull their finish. By staying on top of cleaning, you shield the wood and help maintain its protective coating. Well-cared-for wooden surfaces can last for generations. Proper maintenance prevents warping, staining, and other damage that could require costly refinishing or replacement.

Room-By-Room Checklist

Kitchen

- Empty and wipe down cabinets/drawers
- Clean and organize pantry
- Deep-clean refrigerator (inside/outside)
- Clean oven, stovetop, and range hood
- Wipe down small appliances (toaster, microwave, etc.)
- Disinfect countertops and backsplash
- Clean sink and faucet (including drains/disposals)
- Wash or wipe cupboard fronts
- Sweep, mop, or vacuum floors

Living/Family Room

- Dust all surfaces, shelves, and décor
- Vacuum or shake out couch cushions
- Spot-clean upholstery or slipcovers
- Wipe down tables, lamps, and TV screens
- Clean windows and mirrors
- Vacuum or sweep and mop floors (depending on the surface)
- Sanitize remote controls and light switches

Dining Room

- Dust table, chairs, and all décor
- Polish or wipe down dining table and chairs
- Vacuum or mop under the table and in corners
- Clean and shine any glass surfaces or china cabinets
- Launder table linens and placemats

Bedrooms

- Strip bedding and wash linens (comforters, mattress protectors)
- Flip or rotate mattresses (if applicable)
- Dust nightstands, dressers, and headboards
- Vacuum under beds and furniture
- Clean mirrors and windows
- Organize closets and drawers (donate unwanted items)

Bathrooms

- Scrub and disinfect toilet, tub/shower, sink, and faucets
- Wipe down mirrors and medicine cabinets
- Wash or replace shower curtains and liners
- Clean grout and reseal if necessary
- Sweep and mop floors
- Empty and sanitize trash bins

Home Office

- Dust computer, keyboard, and electronics (use compressed air for keyboards)
- Organize paperwork, shred unnecessary documents
- Wipe down desks and shelves
- Sanitize phone and light switches
- Vacuum or mop floors

Laundry Room

- Wipe down washer and dryer (inside lint traps, gaskets, and exteriors)
- Clean behind and underneath appliances if accessible
- Organize detergents and supplies
- Sweep and mop floor

Hallways & Stairs

- Dust wall art, picture frames, and banisters
- Vacuum or sweep stairs and hallways thoroughly
- Spot-clean walls and baseboards
- Wipe down switch plates and doorknobs

Entryway & Mudroom

- Shake out and clean rugs or mats
- Organize shoe racks and coat closets
- Wipe down doors (front and back), including frames
- Sweep and mop floors

Outdoor Areas

- Sweep porches, decks, and patios
- Wipe down outdoor furniture
- Clean or refill planters; check garden hoses
- Clear gutters and downspouts (if safe to do so)
- Power-wash walkways or decks as needed
- Tidy up garage and outdoor storage areas