

Organizing spring cleaning



Renew Cushions

Rotate and flip mattresses. Thoroughly vacuum them and the box springs. Sofa and chair cushions should also be flipped if their design and construction allows.

Reorganize the linen Closet

Wool blankets and down comforters should be aired, then washed or sent out to be cleaned before being put away for the season. Tablecloths should be stored un-ironed so that the fabric will not weaken along the creases.

Replace Filters

Vacuum and clean grates (and coils and condensers, if applicable) on furnaces, refrigerators, stoves, and air conditioners. Remove filters in furnaces and air conditioners, and either clean or replace them.

Perform a Safety Check

Check batteries frequently; replace every six months. Also check batteries in carbon monoxide detectors and flashlights; inspect pressure gauges on fire extinguishers.

Clean Refrigerator and Freezer

Unplug, and sort through contents. Discard anything past its prime. Add baking soda to the water to deodorize surfaces. *Refrigerator Tip:* Clean the gaskets on the doors with a gallon of soapy water mixed with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup bleach, or rub them with baking soda or whitewall tire cleaner.

Clean Windows

Use a soft brush to clean off dust, cobwebs, and dirt. Wash windows inside and out with a squeegee and rag to remove excess water. Choose a cloudy day (if possible) – the sun's heat can dry windows too fast, creating streaks.

Deep-Clean Rugs

Start with vacuuming. Many area rugs can be machine-washed. Air others on a clothesline; beat dirt and dust from them with a tennis racket, then shampoo at home or send out to a cleaner. *Vacuuming Tip:* Before heavy vacuuming, clean the machine. Cut away threads from the rotating beater, replace the motor's belt if stretched and install a new bag.

Wash and Wax Floors

Wash vinyl or linoleum floors with warm water and detergent. Seal with a water-based floor polish; buff. For urethane-coated wood floors, wash with a mop wrung of excess water, then buff. For waxed wood floors, vacuum, strip off old wax, then reseal with liquid or paste wax.

Freshen Curtains

Take down shades and curtains. Most fabrics will need to be handled by a dry cleaner. Those that can be cleaned at home should be either lightly steamed in place or hand-washing. Line dry in the shade.

Sort Through Wardrobes

Separate clothes into piles: off-season, give away, dry cleaner, tailor. Make sure clothing is clean and mended before putting back in the closet or away for longer storage. Invest in good hangers and garment bags that breathe. *Closet Tip:* Tuck acid-free tissue paper into the folds of clothing to prevent deep wrinkles and to keep brown spots from settling.



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