

Cleaning Tips

Here are some cleaning tips passed on from our Housekeepers and Clients.

Please note that we cannot accept liability for any product damages, health issues or other issues that may occur when using these tips. It is therefore strongly advised that a small inconspicuous area is tested before full use.

We also are not intending or endorse product brands; these are simply the opinions of our readers.

Lime-scale Build Up

- Lime-scale build up in toilet bowls is a very common problem. However we have found that the various brands advertising specifically for this problem are much better than bleach.
- Lime-scale on taps – an excellent alternative to the usual chemicals is a mixture of white distilled vinegar and water. Spray on using a water sprayer and leave for a few minutes before thoroughly rinsing with water. For persistent areas repeat and use an old discarded toothbrush to scrub away.
- Lime-scale on glass shower enclosures, tiles, sinks and in kettles. The above works here also. In the kettle fill to maximum with the vinegar and water mix and boil. You must boil again in plain water and then rinse very well before making your next drink!

Hot Tip for Shower Enclosures

The most common problem I come upon when visiting clients is the build up of lime-scale on glass shower enclosures.

Once you have removed your lime-scale either with a branded product or our vinegar tip above. How do you stop it from creeping back again?

The “hot tip” to keep the lime-scale away is to use a window squeegee like the window cleaners use. Make sure you use it after every shower and the lime scale will be kept away, with only the need to use a product on the odd occasion. This really works and will save you a fortune in cleaning products and cleaning hours! I would then suggest your cleaner uses a glass cleaner every few weeks just to keep up the sparkle!

Mouldy Black Spots – Watch out, if you have a recurring mould problem, particularly in bathrooms and kitchens, you may have an extraction problem! Ensure you ventilate the room well when in use.

To eliminate black spots use neat bleach on a soft cloth (do not use on fabrics and other materials and products that may colour fade). This will work on plastic and wooden window frames, grout and fabric shower curtains.

Dust – For allergy sufferers it is especially beneficial to use a lightly dampened cloth for dusting rather than a dry cloth. This will catch the dust and mites rather than spread them in the air.

Cotton Buds – are very useful for small tricky areas of cleaning. Try it in corners of shower enclosures, around window locks in-between hinges etc.

Cobwebs – I’m not a fan of feather dusters, in my experience the cobweb usually lands on my head! Instead use the nozzle of your Hoover – much more effective. Be careful around fragile items such as light fittings and curtain poles.

Old toothbrushes – are a fantastic cleaning tool for those hard to reach areas around taps, on grout, even under the toilet seat. However make sure cleaning tools used on the toilet are kept separate from other tools in order to avoid any cross contamination.

Washing Up Liquid – is a good all round cleaner. Ideal on floors and surfaces, especially if you use an anti-bacterial variety. It is also good on leather upholstery – however ONLY A VERY WEAK SOLUTION must be used and the cloth kept damp, not wet.

Windows - everyone has their own tips in this area. I have found a very good foam cleaner available in Wilkinson's, called Gumption. This even works with children's sticky finger marks! I would recommend using a lint free tissue paper to wipe off – you can get beauty rolls (or couch rolls) from beauty suppliers such as Sally's and Bondlink.

HOW TO GET THE BEST FROM YOUR HOUSEKEEPER

In order to use your housekeeping time effectively ensure you keep your home tidy. If the housekeeper is moving "chaos" and "clutter" in every room in order to clean surfaces she will be wasting valuable time.

If necessary you could ask the housekeeper to help you clear clutter during her first visits to your home but she will need you to be present in order to make decisions as to what to throw away and where to keep essential items. Be ruthless! If it hasn't been used for 12 months it probably isn't needed.

Ensure you let the Housekeeper know which products are to be used on what surfaces. For example, only very weak detergent should be used on laminate floors and some furniture; you may have a preferential product used in the bathroom and the kitchen. After all, you will want the cleaning done just the way you like it!

If you are in when the Housekeeper calls you will probably strike up a good relationship, however, if you are often out when she calls the best way to get a good relationship is by leaving a friendly note. It's always good to leave a note with instructions for the day but remember to use positive communication also! Comment on a good job done last week, or thank her for following your last instructions etc. A happy housekeeper is a loyal housekeeper!

Don't expect too much. Be realistic in what can be achieved in the time booked. A two hour job on a 6 bed roomed house will not be long enough to do every task. In this case think about the jobs that you can do easily between visits and ask for more specific cleaning such as the kitchen and bathrooms.

Instead of cancelling your housekeeper visits during a holiday, why not ask her to do some task that are not normally tackled in the weekly visit. i.e. clean the front door, Hoover curtains, wash down woodwork, clean inside cupboards. Do speak with your housekeeper first to ensure she is happy and willing to do the jobs you are requesting.

Not only will it be a joy to come home to a sparkly house but also great to know your home is being looked after while you are away, letters will not be left poking through the letterbox and perhaps lights could be left on etc.