



Realistic Cleaning Checklist

Here's a complete but realistic cleaning checklist that works for living spaces of any size, no matter how many occupants there are. The trick is to be consistent in doing the "Daily Must-Do" chores and devoting between 15 and 30 minutes to "Extra Cleaning Tasks" which include other housekeeping tasks that need ongoing attention.

Using a two-part realistic cleaning checklist is the secret. The result is that housecleaning work will never build up beyond your capacity, your living space will look fresh and clean, and you won't ever be overwhelmed.

Part 1: Must-Do Daily Chores

If you miss a day, don't fret, just get back into the swing of the realistic cleaning checklist the very next day.

- ☐ Do dishes by hand or in a dishwasher. Don't leave undone dishes overnight.
- ☐ Do, or at least start, one load of laundry any time during the day.
- ☐ Make all beds as soon as you get up.
- ☐ Empty the dryer and put clothes away in closets or drawers.
- ☐ Pick up main areas before going to bed.
- ☐ Wipe down kitchen and bathroom counters and sink areas.
- ☐ Sweep floors if necessary.

Part 2: Daily Extras

These to-do items consist of chores that are not part of typical daily housekeeping. Reference your realistic cleaning checklist to mark off each task as you complete it.

Some will take longer than others. No worries. Just keep plugging away each day until you can place a checkmark next to each entry. Consider posting a paper copy of the realistic cleaning checklist on your fridge or in another highly visible spot.

Extra Cleaning Tasks

- ☐ Dust all flat surfaces except for sink areas and kitchen counters.
- ☐ Clean bathroom sinks.
- ☐ Clean tubs and showers.
- ☐ Clean toilets.
- ☐ Mop floors.
- ☐ Vacuum all carpeted areas.

- Shake out small rugs.
- Scour the kitchen sink.
- Wash linens and towels.
- Organize office and work desk areas by filing loose papers and throwing away junk mail and unneeded papers.
- Declutter closets.
- Wipe down closet shelves and vacuum carpeted closet areas.
- Launder curtains, quilts, and blankets.
- Wipe down and clean all furniture items.
- Clean out, declutter, and organize the kitchen pantry.
- Wipe out and clean off the stove top, using special cleansers if necessary.
- Clean out the oven with a high-quality cleaning agent, and remember to wear a mask while tackling this chore.
- Vacuum cobwebs out of all high corners of rooms.
- Remove and clean window screens.
- Use a damp cloth and disinfectant to clean all doorknobs.
- Clean windows.
- Clean ceiling fans and related fixtures.
- Declutter and clean out the garage (if you have one).
- Declutter and clean the attic (if you have one).
- Declutter and clean the basement (if you have one).
- Do touch-up painting on walls, ceilings, and wherever needed.
- Clean behind all large appliances, remembering to unplug them first.
- Sweep and mop front and back porches and decks.

Leverage the power of a realistic cleaning checklist to keep your home looking and smelling fantastic. Minimizing clutter and maintaining a hygienic, clean living space should not take up more than about 45 minutes per day for most homeowners and apartment dwellers.

A two-part realistic cleaning checklist, like the one above, is the road to success. Add or remove items as needed to create a tailor-made, realistic cleaning checklist that suits the amount of space you have. Happy cleaning!



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