

One Pair of Hands of



A Comprehensive Guide to Spring Cleaning

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Introduction

Cleaning is one of the most important non-paid activities an individual can partake in. Not only does a tidy environment make for a happy one, it can also yield therapeutic benefits too.

The following guide on the art of spring cleaning, - which you're about to read - is sure to ease your housekeeping or homemaking workload.

Have you ever wondered how to remove red wine stains from your carpet or how to make lime scale disappear from around your bath? Well, if you have, this e-book is about to pleasantly surprise you.

With ease and comfort in mind we have compiled all the hints, tips, advice and “tricks of the trade” you'll need in order to save time when cleaning your home.

I hope you have fun trying out these techniques, good luck and happy spring cleaning.

Steph Pemberton & Nick Burke

Bathroom Cleaning Tips

The bathroom is one of the most heavily used rooms in the house, which means it can become dirty very quickly; moreover because it's the most humid room in the house - due to the gallons of hot water which is run through there daily – it's an ideal breeding ground for germs, mold and mildew.

The following hints, tips and advice will help you combat the aforementioned problems by helping you keep on top of things.

Baths & Sinks

- Remove scum and stubborn marks from baths, sinks and shower cubicles with half a lemon covered with a sprinkling of baking powder. The non-abrasive texture guarantees no scratches. Better still, avoid scum build up altogether by changing to liquid soap.
- Tiles, mirrors and paintwork sparkle like new when cleaned with a vinegar and water solution.
- Give taps and stainless steel fittings a mirror shine; polish with baby oil and a dry soft cloth.
- Another good bathroom cleaning tip is to give the bath/sink a quick dry after you have used them. This will stop the water droplets from drying, leaving those unsightly ring marks in your sink or bath.
- If you have a bath mat in your bathroom it is a good idea to remove it from the bath – when not in use – and hang it over the side. You need to do this, because, if it is left in the bath after use it will create a haven for breeding germs.

- To clean sensitive brass taps all you need to do is get a bowl, pour salt into it, now get a lemon, cut it in half and dip the cut side into the salt and proceed to wipe the taps with it. The theory behind this is that the salt will act as a scouring agent and the lemon juice will remove the grime.

Toilets

- Toilets benefit from a monthly dousing with white vinegar. regular cleaning with white vinegar and a brush prevents unsightly rings forming in toilet bowl.

Alternatively, why not try **Toilet Duck Fresh Brush**. Biodegradable cleansing pads impregnated with detergent, to be flushed away after each clean.

- Mold and mildew can be effectively removed using a 50:50 solution of hydrogen peroxide (which can be purchased at chemists and beauty care suppliers) and water. Spray affected area, repeating if necessary after 2 hours. This solution is environmentally friendly.
- This bathroom cleaning tip is very good for reducing the build up of mold. If you decide to paint your bathroom (especially the ceiling) with an anti-fungal paint. This will considerably reduce the chances of mould being able to breed.

Cost Saving - Dispensing with traditional bathroom cleaning products and replacing with lemon, baking soda and hydrogen peroxide will actually save money.

Labour Saving - Store these products in plastic containers in the bathroom so that they are easily accessible. Lemon stored in kitchen foil will stay fresh for a couple of weeks.

Bedroom Cleaning Tips

General

- In a lifetime the average person spends 30 years in their bedroom, therefore keeping it clutter free is not only aesthetically pleasing and easier to maintain but also conducive of a good nights sleep. Storing all non ornamental items such as sprays and bottles in lidless containers will help to achieve this, simultaneously preventing damage to furniture through leakage.

Furnishings

- Wherever possible leave a gap of an inch or so between furniture, bed and walls, to enable detailed cleaning behind; possibly with a long handled feather duster, without the need to pull furniture out.

Bedding

- Fitted bottom sheets do not move around during the night and are therefore more comfortable than flat sheets. The bed can be made up quicker in the morning.
- Reduce the frequency of laundering the duvet cover and battling to put it back on by using a top sheet, which can be easily removed and easily cleaned.

Dusting & Polishing

- Traditional yellow dusters have a tendency to redistribute dust. If this is your preferred method start with higher surfaces and allow loose particles to settle on lower surfaces before continuing.

- Micro fibre dusters (cloths or brushes) that trap dust particles are far more effective. Flash DustMaster, has a handle that extends up to a metre, its slim design enables cleaning of nooks, crannies and otherwise out of reach places.

Clothes Storage

- Adequate storage space for clothing is a must. If hanging space is limited, fold non creasing garments, such as woollens and store on shelves.
- Do not fold or pack garments immediately after ironing because they are likely to crease. Instead hang for a couple of hours.
- A hanger similar to the one pictured can serve this purpose. Alternatively hang discarded clothing prior to sorting and next day clothes to save valuable time in the mornings.

Kitchen Cleaning Tips

A clutter free kitchen is much easier to work in and less likely to harbour germs that may impair your health.

Get into the habit of putting items back where they belong immediately after use. This is easier to do if items that are used more frequently are stored in more accessible places whilst items used once in a while can inhabit those out of the way places such as high or low level cupboards.

Identify areas in your kitchen that accumulate clutter. Target these areas in particular and make a point of clearing. Start the day well. It's so much easier to get up in the morning to a clean and tidy kitchen. Dirty pots (supposedly soaking) left in the sink or on draining boards over night will not necessarily be easier to clean. below are some good tips on removing stubborn food remnants from pots and pans and other kitchen equipment.

Pan Cleaning

- To remove burnt food from pans add a squirt of washing up liquid into the pan to a half pint of water, then bring to the boil. Allow the liquid to cool in the pan, then simply wipe clean.

Oven Cleaning

- Removing spilled over food from the oven bottom couldn't be easier. Simply sprinkle a handful of salt over the spillage. The smoke will reduce and the spill will be easier to clean once the oven cools down.

Microwave Oven cleaning

- To clean your microwave oven pour 2 tablespoons of lemon juice or vinegar into a (1000ml +) microwavable container, containing 500ml of water and 'cook' on full-power for 3 minutes. Next, carefully remove the container and wipe the oven clean with paper towels. Repeat if necessary to remove more stubborn food splashes.
- This kitchen cleaning tip comes in handy when dealing with your microwave. Before you start to clean it place a damp cloth inside, put the timer on 40 seconds and turn on. The steam from the damp cloth should now have loosened the grime within the microwave, thus making it easier to remove grime. Please note; do not use a cloth that contains any metallic elements.

Other Kitchen Equipment

If plastic from the bread wrapper melts onto your **toaster**, allow it cool down then use nail polish remover to get it off.

- **Coffee makers** can be cleaned by running through the brew cycle using equal parts of white vinegar and water. Repeat this process two or three times but using fresh water each time.
- Clean your **blender** with washing up liquid and water. Fill to the half way line and blend away the mess. Rinse through with warm water to clear any residue.
- Another good kitchen cleaning tip where the **washing machine** is concerned, is to run the machine on empty using one cup of lemon juice and one cup of hot water, this is a very

good trick for keeping the drum clean.

- To clean the washing powder dispenser, leave it to soak in hot water and then clean the smaller parts with a cotton bud.
- To keep the **refrigerator** smelling fresh and odour-free, grab a piece of cotton wool and put droplets of vanilla essence onto it, and place it in the middle of the refrigerator, this will stop odours in their tracks.
- To keep your **bin** odour-free pour a good helping of talcum powder or baking soda into the bottom of it. This sure will keep those evil smells at bay.
- This is a gem of a cleaning tip, we all hate the site of what greets us when we remove the lid from our **kettles**, right? All that lime scale, yuck!! Well, this doesn't have to be the case. What you need to do, in order to remove the lime scale is to fill the kettle with 2/3 hot water and 1/3 brown vinegar and then leave it to soak for roughly 60 minutes. When you have done this pour the vinegar and water mixture away and fill the kettle with cold water and boil. Finally, pour the boiled water away and voilà! All the lime scale will be removed.
- A good tip to keep the element lime scale free is to use a oyster shell, yes an oyster shell, you did hear me right. What you need to do is boil the shell in order to remove any germs from it, and just pop it into the kettle and leave it there. The theory behind this - and it does actually work, - is that the lime scale will attach itself to this rather than the element.

- If you have any little cracks or holes in your **lino** a good tip is to find a crayon similar in colour to the lino, pop it in the microwave to make it soft and smear it over the crack, and wipe it with a cloth to make smooth. The theory behind this is that, the crayon will fill in the crack when it dries.
- **Stainless steel sinks** can be freed of lime scale and mineral deposits by placing paper towels soaked in vinegar around the sink. leave for an hour or so then buff with a dry paper towel for a clean and shiny effect.
- Sluggish **drains** may be cleaned using white vinegar and baking soda. Pour half a cup of baking soda down the drain

then add half a cup of white vinegar and cover. Allow the mixture to foam for a few minutes then pour down 8 more cups of boiling water. NB Do not use this mixture after using any other commercial cleaner.

- **Waste disposal systems** can be freshened up by putting lime or lemon pieces down them every few days. For added freshness sprinkle a couple of tablespoons of baking soda down the drain then add a couple of ice cubes and switch it on. Finally, run the hot water for a few minutes whilst the system is working.

Non commercial cleaning products

- Dry baking powder makes an excellent **polish for chrome**.
- **Clean porcelain** with a mix of cream of tartar and water dissolve 1/4 cup of baking soda in 2 pints water for a good **all purpose cleaner**

Lounge Cleaning Tips

The lounge is often the main communal room of the house and therefore not only prone to clutter but also dust, all of which is on show for impromptu or expected guests to freely observe whilst you busy yourself in the kitchen preparing beverages. Of course, it's your home, but putting aside the problem of inquisitive guests can you truly relax in a room degraded by clutter and dust? If for you the answer is no, then perhaps it's time to follow this simple guide on effective lounge cleaning techniques.

De-clutter

Vacuum Cleaning Techniques

Dusting

Mopping

- Make it a house rule that personal belongings such as clothes, shoes, personal stereos are not left in the lounge but placed in their owners rooms.
- Ornaments may add character or compliment a themed lounge, but remember 'less is more'. If for example you need to cover every surface with raffia artefacts and dried flowers to create a rustic theme then perhaps it's time to start again. For greater effect choose appropriate base colours for walls and carpets, compliment with carefully selected ornaments to enhance the theme.
- Don't be afraid to tell relatives and friends not to give ornaments to you as a gift unless of course it's one that you have chosen personally.

- Even more difficult to do is to put away bits and pieces given to you by your children and grandchildren. To save any upset simply announce you have put the items away for safe keeping. Remember dust does not discriminate, therefore you may have to.

Vacuum Cleaning

Probably the most versatile piece of cleaning equipment. Taking time to familiarise yourself with each of the attachments will - in the long run - save you time and energy.

I suggest when using an upright cleaner get into the habit of attaching the extension hose at the outset and vacuum all areas that require the extension hose before embarking on the centre of the room.

Lounge Suites

- The upholstered variety benefit from a periodic vacuuming. Remove all loose cushions and use the appropriate attachment, to access the out of the way places that harbour dust, crumbs, sweet wrappers etc.

Curtains

- To avoid pulling down curtains, drapes and scarves it is advisable to firstly reduce suction by opening the vent on the extension hose and selecting the preferred attachment. In a downward movement for vertical fittings and across for horizontal fittings, gently vacuum paying careful attention to folds as this is where most of the dust accumulates.

Walls

- Using either the vacuum extension hose or a long handled feather or micro fibre duster target the area where the ceiling meets the walls. Walls behind the television generally benefit from a routine vacuuming as the static electricity is a magnet for dust.

Picture Rails & Skirting Boards

- The brush type attachment is probably best for this job. Vacuumed regularly, then for that extra finish wipe down periodically with a damp cloth.

Floors

- Once again using the extension hose and selecting the longer cylindrical attachment with a squashed end, pay particular attention to the carpet or flooring edges and corners.

Dusting

Wall Hangings

- You may not be able to see the dust lurking behind but it will still be there. By using a feather or micro fibre handled duster it may be possible to clear the dust without removing the picture or hanging.

Vents & Grills

- Depending on the width and depth of the panel use either a new paintbrush, make up brush or handled duster. Always ensure naked flames are extinguished and electrical, gas or coal effect fires are allowed to cool before cleaning.

Carpets

- For upright vacuum cleaners, whenever possible adjust the brushes to suit depth of pile (this facility will be indicated on the case) for better results. If you have pets, in particular dogs and cats choose a more powerful vacuum cleaner (1600W+)it may cost more initially but the time and effort put in to removing hair and fur will definitely make it worthwhile.
- Vacuuming carpets under lounge suites can generally be done routinely rather than weekly. From my experience moving heavy furniture can cause undue wear and tear on the carpets and leave deep impressions if the furniture is not put back in the exact place. This latter inconvenience can however be easily remedied. Simply place ice cubes in the indentation, which will allow the carpet pile to expand to its usual depth.

Wooden Floors

- There are many trade brand cleaning substances readily available specifically for use on wooden flooring. For a natural solution to cleaning wooden floors, steep one tea bag (tannic acid in tea is great for wood) per litre of boiling water and allow it to cool to room temperature.

Laminate Flooring

- Vacuum regularly because dirt can cause invisible scratching that ultimately results in dullness.
- Never use soap based or citric oil products on laminate flooring because they may cause dulling.
- For a good finish try a water/vinegar solution. Fill a spray

bottle with a quarter cup of water to 40 fluid ounces water. Dampen the mop with tap water then spray the floor as you mop.

- Never use abrasives such as scouring powder. For the removal of spots stains such as heel marks and crayon, use nail polish remover containing acetone on a clean light coloured cloth. Other household stains can usually be removed with warm water.

Mopping Techniques

- Always squeeze excess water from mop before commencing mopping to prevent seepage

Mop in the direction of the grain to avoid streaking. For a sparkling finish, dry with a soft dry duster.

How To Clean Windows

I've included the section 'How to Clean Windows' to show that you don't necessarily need to employ a window cleaner to clean your windows. It's something that can easily be done yourself. The following tips will make your windows, patio doors and skylights sparkle in no time at all.

So without further a do, let's get cleaning those windows.

Cornstarch - An excellent window cleaning tip is to add 200g of cornstarch to 5 litres of warm water. Grab yourself a soft cloth and clean your windows the usual way and wipe dry with another soft cloth.

Ethanol and Apple Cider vinegar - This is an excellent window cleaning tip and will leave the glass free for streaks too. You'll need to grab yourself a spraying bottle and pour equal parts pure concentrated ethanol and apple cider vinegar into it. Before you spray it on your windows or mirrors give the bottle a thorough shake. For the best results use a paper towel to wipe.

You can use this solution to clean mirrors too, and what's more it'll stop them from steaming up too.

Air freshener - Believe it or not air freshener can be used to clean windows. Next time you clean your windows give it a go and see how effective it is.

Club soda – Another affective product for cleaning windows is club

soda. Pour some into a spray bottle, squirt it on your dirty window and wipe with a paper towel.

Vinegar and Water - Another proven window cleaning tip is to dilute your vinegar with water to a ratio of 1:4 (if you use 200ml of vinegar dilute it with 800ml of water). Pour the mixture into a spray bottle and buff with crumpled up newspaper for a perfect shine.

Baking Soda – For this window cleaning recipe make a thick paste by mixing water in a bowl containing 300g of baking soda. Next, apply the paste to the affected area and leave for thirty minutes. When the time has elapsed rinse away with water and spray with a solution of 50% vinegar 50% water.

Window Cleaning Techniques

- Before you start cleaning your windows see to it that you remove any cobwebs that are lurking. Wet cobwebs can become a huge hindrance.
- A good tip, which I think will come in handy for the purposes of this section is to clean the inside of your windows first. Do this because the outside windows will be much dirtier and therefore will dirty your cleaning apparatuses quicker.
- If possible avoid using ladders as this can be dangerous, try using an extension handle and a squeegee for out of reach windows.
- If you use soap to clean windows don't use too much of it, it'll make wiping the windows a much longer task, plus it'll

increase the chances of streaks.

- When you apply the cleaning solution to the window, don't spray it in the top of the window frame. Doing so will stop water runs.
- Don't use too much water when cleaning windows as this will increase your work load. Obviously if the windows are very dirty or it's a very hot day then using more water may be beneficial.
- If you're cleaning the windows on a hot day wash and wipe simultaneously, to avoid streaking.
- When considering how to clean windows see to it that you clean in the same direction that the wind is blowing, Doing so will prevent spray from landing on clean windows.
- When cleaning windows from the inside place a towel on the floor underneath it to absorb any water that is misplaced.
- To avoid streaking clean windows on a cloudy day. The sun will dry any solution you use, therefore leaving streaks.
- To clean window frames do so by wiping then with a cloth dampened by a fungicide. Employing the fungicide will stop mould and mildew from growing back. Alternatively you can use a solution of 1/3 bleach to 2/3 water.
- To clean window sills do so by using soapy water and a nylon

brush. For a beautiful shine, buff with a soft cloth.

- You should aim to clean your windows every three months. However if you live in a dusty environment or next to a busy road, you'll have to do it a lot more often than that.

How to Clean Gutters

How to clean gutters? Is a question that millions of people ponder every year. Within this section I aim to answer this question and provide you with a whole host of tips, in order to make your job very much easier.

Cleaning Gutters

- **Ladders** - When cleaning gutters, first-things-first you'll most probably need a ladder. Firstly, you'll need one that will comfortably reach the gutter, so you're not stretching too much (which can be very dangerous). Secondly see to it that you don't lean the ladder against the guttering because this may lead to fracturing. Next ensure that the ladder is free from damage and finally secure it safely to prevent movement.
- **Debris** - Remove any debris from the gutter, this may be in the form of leaves, twigs, moss or a dead pigeon. This task can be completed by using a gutter scoop, a trowel or even a large domestic spoon. Difficult to remove debris can be removed carefully by the first two tools.
- **Place debris in a bag** - In my opinion, placing debris from the gutter into a plastic bin bag is far better than placing it in a bucket. When you have filled the bag you can tie it then drop it. However ensure there are no people or cats walking past at the time of the drop
- **Disposing of debris** - As most of - if not all - of the debris is biodegradable, therefore it will make good fodder for your compost heap (see <http://www.oph-good-housekeeping.com/recycling-involvement.html>) for tips on how to make your own compost). It should be noted that if you're planning on going down the compost

heap route then you'll need to use a separate bag to dispose of the non-biodegradable items you find such as nails, tiles, plastic bags etc

If you don't want to try your hand at making your own compost then you can dispose of the debris the same way as you would do for household waste.

- **Deal with downspouts** - When you have followed the above gutter cleaning tasks see to it that the downspouts (the vertical pipe which carries the rainwater away)are not blocked. Unblocking a downspout can be achieved by forcing water up it via placing a garden hose in the opening. If you find this fails to unblock it then use a plumbers snake or an unravelled coathanger to remove what's causing the blockage. It must be noted that you should take care here, as some drains can be pretty flimsy and may fracture if you're too heavy handed.
- **Leaf blower** - Alternatively, if you don't want to use the garden hose to clean gutters then you can use a leaf blower, however I must admit the trowel and hose method is the way I much prefer. Leaf blowers can become cumbersome especially when being used at the top of a ladder.
- **Repair damage** - When considering how to clean gutters you should also take into account damage to them. While you're in the process of cleaning gutters keep your eye out for any damage and repair it straight away. Damage to the guttering system will diminish the efficiency levels of it.
- **Maintain gutters and downspouts** - It's very important to consider the maintenance of your guttering system in the overall scheme of cleaning them. This is because doing so will mean fewer

episodes of damage to the gutter and downspout, and could even treble the life of your guttering system, which - in turn - will save you money.

You should aim to inspect your gutter and downspout at least twice a year, however the more trees you have near-by the more often inspection should take place. In my opinion the best time to undertake inspection is March (after the winter and before the wet spring weather) and mid-October (during the autumn months, so fallen leaves and twigs can be removed)

When you're inspecting see to it that the gutter is pitched at an efficient angle for rainwater flow. Drains which are pitched wrongly will cause most of the problems associated with poor drainage, including build up of debris and accelerating the onset of rust.

How to repair a leaking gutter

No matter what type of gutter you have at some point you'll need to repair them. If larger leaks appear then you will probably have to replace entire sections of the guttering system, however for smaller leaks the following tips may be applied.

If your gutter has been eroded by rust, the first thing you need to do to repair it is to scrape off the rust with a steel brush. Once you have removed as much of it as possible you'll need to cover the section with an anti-rust paint. When the paint has dried, cover the hole with 0.3cm (thickness) of plastic cement, alternatively you can use ordinary roof cement.

For larger holes, just follow the same procedures as above but while the cement is still wet apply plastic or heavy aluminium foil to the

area, but ensure that you cut your material of choice to the size of the repair area. When you are satisfied with this stage of the job, press down hard on the material, to make sure that it fits firmly.

If you need to join more than one patch together see to it that you overlap (using cement) them in the direction of the rainwater flow otherwise you'll disrupt the drainage system.

Getting Rid of Mold & Its Prevention

In order to start getting rid of mold we first need to understand exactly what it is and how it grows.

Believe it or not mold spores are usually always present in the air, but in order for these to settle and flourish they need two conditions, a little bit of moisture and a good food source. The latter state is present on most surfaces throughout the family home, which means the main trigger to the growth of mold is excess moisture - or condensation as it is commonly known. It's the controlling of this factor which will go some way in helping you undertake mold prevention techniques, more on this later.

Mold detection is pretty easy; it's usually white or black in colour and has a distinct musty smell. It grows on a number of organic surfaces and materials such as wallpaper, carpets, wallboards, paint and wood and is generally an unsightly problem which is prevalent in many households.

The Dangers of Mold

Getting rid of mold is not only an important consideration in the overall aesthetics of your home, for some people health benefits can be garnered from the removal and prevention of it.

The latter benefits come from the fact that some forms of mold can be harmful to humans; although some such as penicillin can be good for us, where as others can be pretty toxic and emit fumes, which when inhaled can cause us ill harm

The dangers of mold are put into the spotlight because its existence can cause allergic reactions and asthma attacks in many people. Milder symptoms of mold illness can include nausea, migraines, flu-like symptoms, chronic fatigue syndrome and even nosebleeds. In fact researchers have gone as far as claiming that mold can have more serious health implications and attack the brain, central nervous system and immune system and in some cases may result in death. Therefore it's important that we leave no stone unturned in our efforts in removing mold.

What is Condensation?

As I discussed earlier one of the catalysts for the appearance of mold in houses is condensation. This is formed when moist air comes into contact with air or a surface with a lower temperature, this is the reason why we generally see a build up of moisture on tiles and windows.

The science behind this reaction is that the air which is involved in the condensation process contains water vapour, and the higher the air's temperature is the more of this vapour it holds. Therefore when this comes into contact with colder conditions the warmer air drops in temperature which means it'll have to lose some of that moisture, which then appears in the form of condensation on non-absorbent materials, which in turn enables the mold to prosper.

Causes of Condensation

In the northern hemisphere - especially in colder climates - condensation within the home can be rife. Because the warm moist

air that is produced by the households inhabitants mixes with the air in colder parts of the building, producing this watery reaction.

In order to prevent or reduce condensation and thus to implement mold prevention techniques, we first need to understand which everyday activities heighten the risk of condensation being produced.

- **Breathing** - In a day the average household pumps 1.2 litres of water into the atmosphere through breathing alone. But unfortunately this is something we have no control over.
- **Personal Hygiene** - Washing, showering and bathing contributes roughly 1 litre to the average households' moisture production, again it's not really feasible to cut down on this, but reducing the temperature on your shower's thermostat slightly will cut down on the amount of moisture which is released into your home's environment.

In addition to this – if you don't already have one fitted – an extractor fan will help pump some of that steam out of your home. In some cases people open windows to let the steam escape, but unless the temperature outside is warm the cooler air will get into your bathroom, mix with the hot air and produce even more condensation than would've been the case if you had kept the window shut. My suggestion would be – if you had to open the window – would be to open it slightly; just enough to let some of the warm air out and limit the amount of its cooler equivalent from getting into your home.

- **Cooking** - Cooking and preparing food may cause a significant amount of condensation to be produced especially when boiling food, as much as 3 litres of water daily may be produced. The only real way to control this is perhaps to have an extractor fan fitted in your

kitchen. Another way would be to microwave food where possible and place lids on boiling pans - where possible - to ensure most of the water vapour is kept within the pan itself.

- **Laundry** - Washing and drying clothes accounts for a massive 5.5 litres of your home's moisture levels. The good news, however, is that this condition is a little bit more malleable than the previous factors. One of the things you can do to reduce the amount of condensation produced by washing your clothes is to wash them at a lower temperature; people tend to do their laundry at an unnecessarily warm temperature on the premise that if they fail to do so then their clothes won't be cleaned properly, this is a complete fallacy, it doesn't make much difference, only heavily soiled clothes need be washed at high temperatures. Not only will this reduce condensation it'll help save you money on your electricity bills.

Additionally, if you dry clothes within your home then this will considerably add to you home's water vapour content, especially if you use radiators to speed up the drying process. Luckily there are a few alternatives to help you reduce condensation; firstly, where possible, try to dry clothes outside, admittedly this isn't always ideal, but try and give it a go.

Secondly if you have to dry your laundry indoors try not to place it on radiators, because, as I touched on earlier this will vastly increase the water that is released into the atmosphere. The final option, which is open to you is to invest in a washer dryer which will afford you the opportunity to dry your clothes indoors whilst reducing your household's condensation levels.

- **Heating** - It's hard to say how much your home's heating

system contributes to the overall daily water vapour of an individual household, this is because people use different forms of fuel to heat their homes and additionally use it in varying amounts. The bottom line is that all heating methods release water into the air, with paraffin heaters being the biggest culprit, for every litre which is burnt off, a litre of water vapour is released into the atmosphere.

Where heating and condensation is concerned the best advice I can offer here is to turn your thermostat down by a few degrees this will help you burn a lot less fuel than you think.

Secondly, when nobody is home ensure you turn the heating off or just turn it down a little.

The final bit of advice I have is to see to it that rooms which are badly affected by window condensation and perhaps suffering from mold damage are well heated; this will ensure that when warm moist air from hotter parts of your home reach these areas then the amount of water vapour which is released will be significantly less than would otherwise be the case.

Finally, in your attempts to reduce condensation why not purchase a couple of dehumidifiers? Doing so will enable you to reduce the amount of water vapour in the air, before it settles on windows, tiles and walls.

Now that we've covered condensation and the role it plays in mold growth, we can now discuss those handy little hints and tips on getting rid of mold and how to stop it from growing in the first place.

Getting Rid of Mold and Mildew

Let's get down to the nitty-gritty and teach you how to go about getting rid of mold.

- Grab yourself some vinegar and pour a good measure into a spraying bottle. In order to kill mold and mildew you need to spray the areas of your home where it is lurking, such as shower curtains, the underside of your faucets, in the grout of tiles.
- Mop your floor with vinegar regularly; it doesn't smell too pleasant but the odour should wear off pretty quickly.

N.B. Don't mix the vinegar with bleach or any other household chemical as the fumes it will produce are potentially lethal.

Why is vinegar used to get rid of mold? I hear you ask. Well, the simple answer to this question is that vinegar contains a substance known as acetic acid which reacts with the organic make-up of the mold, eventually killing it.

Other Tried and Tested Methods in Cleaning Mold and Mildew

- In addition to using the vinegar method in your attempt in getting rid of mold you can use **baking soda** too. This pretty much does the same thing as vinegar.
- Another tried and tested mold killer is **hydrogen peroxide**, which can be purchased from most chemists and beauty product suppliers. Just mix one part hydrogen peroxide with one part water

and clean the effected areas.

- **Mold killing agents** can purchased and used if you don't fancy using any the aforementioned methods to get rid of mold and mildew. But in my opinion they're no better than vinegar, hydrogen peroxide and baking soda.

Mold Prevention Techniques

We've already discussed the role that reducing condensation levels within the home can play in mold prevention, but leading on from this is the part that purifying the air has in the process.

The air within your home can be successfully purified by way of an ionising air purifier. This will help you stunt the growth of mold because it helps pull common household pollutants such as dust, pollen and most importantly mold spores out of the air before they settle on tiles, work surfaces and furniture and start to grow.

To further galvanize your mold prevention efforts, why not purchase anti-mold and condensation paint from your local D.I.Y. store. These handy paints reduce condensation by insulating the wall and increasing its surface temperature. In addition to this it contains an anti-fungal agent which protects your walls from mold growth.

De-clutter Your Home

Clutter control and de-cluttering is a necessary function of modern day living. De-cluttering your home not only makes it easier to clean but has the added benefit of providing a more relaxing environment to return to after a hard days work. Yes we all gather bits and pieces as we go through life, but somewhere you have to draw the line between what is treasure and what is effectively junk.

Benefits Of De-cluttering

A clutter free environment looks bigger and is easier to move around. A cluttered home may possibly make you feel that it is too small for you and your family and ultimately lead to your moving to bigger premises. Before you put your home up for sale, why not set about de-cluttering, it may be all you need to do.

- **Cleaning** is so much easier if your home is clutter free. The more nick-nakcs you have the more dust they attract, not to mention the additional dusting and polishing required.

De-cluttering may also help curb impulse spending for clothes, books, furniture, ornaments etc. perhaps making you see items as clutter therefore making them less attractive.

How To De-clutter Your Home

- **Discard items that you no longer use** - Take a pen and paper and go through your home room-by-room, cupboard-by-cupboard, into drawers, making a list of items you no longer use or in the case of ornaments, those which have no sentimental value. Try to be

objective, if an item is seldom used ask yourself can you justify keeping it? Consult other members of the household about the possibility of clearing out these unused items. If they agree, then you are on your way to a clutter free home. Tidy as you go. Get into the habit and save valuable time in the long run. Five minutes or so spent clearing up after yourself is far better than having an accumulated mess that may take hours to clean

- **Children And Clutter** - If you have young children get them to put away their toys after they have finished playing with them. Children who attend nursery or pre-school are always well groomed in this habit from a very young age, so there is no reason why it cannot be carried on in the home environment.
- Try to get your children into the habit of giving away toys they have out grown to charity shops. This will have a dual purpose as it will instil in them - from a young age - that other children are not as fortunate as themselves.
- Take control by encouraging friends and relatives to purchase bonds or put money into saving accounts for the childrens' future rather than buying toys and clothes when they are already plentiful.
- **Deal With Paperwork** - Filing documents away will serve the dual purpose of increasing security and of de-cluttering. Get into the habit of shredding unnecessary papers on a regular basis to prevent unnecessary accumulation.
- **Deal With Junk Mail** - Junk mail should be sorted through as soon as it arrives and not simply stuffed in draws and on tables and work surfaces. If you allow junk mail to accumulate, you may

possibly throw out important documentation when you come to dispose of it. People have been known to throw out passports, birth certificates and credit cards by accident as they've become hidden amongst the pile of junk.

What Should I Do If The Clutter Is So Bad That I Don't Know Where To Start?

- With any mammoth task divide it into manageable chunks. If the entire house needs de-cluttering then perhaps do it room-by-room. If the clutter is localised or within one room then do it one area at a time, maybe even one drawer at a time. Don't panic you'll get there.
- **Ornaments** - Too many ornaments make a home look busy and less contemporary. Cut down, if you cannot bear to throw them away then store in the loft or garage, but avoid just transferring clutter to another part of the house.

Adopting this style has additional benefit of cutting down on the amount of dusting you'll have to do, as less ornaments means less items which need to be cleared of dust.

- **De-clutter And selling** - Why not sell items that you no longer use? After all if someone is willing to pay for them, there is every possibility that they are going to a good home. eBay is ideal for this as you sell to a worldwide market. Alternatively car-boot sales are a great outlet particularly for heavier items.
- **De-clutter And Spending** - The buying of unnecessary goods from shops, auction sites, markets and car boot sales should be kept

to a minimum. Find another way of spending your hard earned cash, perhaps on a family holiday or a new car.

- **De-clutter And Storage** - Maximise storage space in drawers and cupboards by putting things away tidily. Folded items take up less room and in the case of clothes require little or no ironing when they are removed for usage.
- **Closet Organising** - How well you organize your closet or wardrobe can play a major role in the de-cluttering process. Clothing is transient. That is, it journeys around the home from closet to washing basket, to washing machine, to drier, to ironing basket then back the closet or wardrobe. Putting the clothes back in place can be a daunting task-unless you are organized.
- **Closet Organisation** - Empty your closet including all drawers, then place *like* items together. Sort through each pile, separating items that no longer fit or are no longer fashionable. Try to be objective, we all have our favourites outfits but more often than not there are items that simply take up wardrobe space that you never wear.
- **Closet Organiser** - Identify clothing that you can fold without creasing to put into drawers. Woollen items are ideal for this and you can free up some closet space to hang other items freely and prevent re-creasing.
- If your clothes are mainly separates that require a shorter hanging space, perhaps you can adjust your existing wardrobe to double hanging rods. Alternatively store longer garments at one end and the shorter garments at the other end of the closet which folded

items can be stored beneath.

How to Remove Pet Hair

Removing pet hair from furniture and carpets can be a major cause of concern for dog and cat owners, therefore I've decided that I should address this particular quandary by coming up with some key pointers.

In this section I'll be touching on four key aspects of removing pet hair, namely, how to reduce the amount your pet malts, choosing the correct fabrics for your home, removing pet hair from furniture and removing pet hair from clothing.

Right, now that we're done and dusted – no pun intended – with the obligatory introduction let's tackle the problem at hand.

How do I reduce the amount my cat and/or dog malts?

Although hair loss by animals is a normal occurrence it can also be triggered by artificial circumstances such as rapid temperature changes (this will obviously make your pet shed and grow hair more often). One of the ways in which this situation can be rectified is by making sure your pets aren't subjected to these conditions in the first place. For example if you keep your dogs outside for long periods of time then allow them into the warmth of the home – especially during the cold winter months – then the chances of them malting is

greatly increased.

Additionally, ensuring your home is maintained at a constant temperature will also work in favour. Usually when we leave the house to go to work we invariably switch the thermostat to a lower level or turn it off completely; then on our return to the home we set it to its highest setting, all this two-ing and throwing confuses your pets' internal temperature gauge, thus triggering hair gain, and invariably loss.

Another common circumstance – which we'll touch on here - that could lead to rapid hair loss amongst animals is their diet. If you have noticed your pet shedding excessively then it may be an idea to change their diet and see if this has the desired affect.

Try mixing olive oil with your pet's food, researchers have discovered that the introduction of olive oil into an animal's diet yields significant reductions in molting levels.

One final tip for removing pet hair in regards to reducing the amount of molting is to brush your pet regularly. Doing so will enable you to remove hair before it has been shed throughout your entire home.

Alternatively, bathing it occasionally will help to remove loose hair.

The best fabrics to use

The best fabrics to use within your home when you have dogs and cats - which shed hair on a regular basis – are nylon, polyester, denim and rayon. Therefore, as part of removing pet hair from your home I recommend that you buy or use throws, blankets, cushion covers etc made from these materials; not only will this reduce the amount of hair that is attracted to them, but will allow for ease of removal too.

Where furniture is concerned, I recommend that you opt for leather or suede. These materials are quick and simple to clean with little effort, if shed hair gets onto them.

In addition, in order to reduce the chances of animal hair getting on to your clothes I advise that you wear clothing made from the aforementioned materials. Seeing to it that clothing is placed in cupboards and drawers when you aren't wearing them, is also a good idea.

Removing pet hair from furniture & carpets

A great tip for removing pet hair from furniture and carpets is to use masking tape. This may sound like a strange concept, but all will be revealed. It's pretty simple really; just tear off a piece of tape and

place it over the area where the pet hair is lingering and pull away from the fabric quickly. You should now find that the area is free from pet hair.

Alternatively purchasing a lint roller to aid you in the battle to remove pet hair will help greatly; these can be purchased from most pet shops. As the name suggests you roll it against the piece of furniture and the hair should come off. The only real downside to using this gadget is that it has a habit of irritating one's nasal cavities, due to scattering pet hair.

Another method which I use to remove pet hair from my furniture is via a damp sponge, which proves to be pretty effective indeed. Additionally, ensuring that you vacuum clean regularly will prevent hair becoming embedded in furniture and carpets. **N.B.** Gently wiping down affected areas with a fabric softener sheet will help loosen up fur before you attack it with the sponge.

How do I remove pet hair from clothing?

As with furniture a fantastic tip for removing pet hair from clothing is to get hold of some masking tape. As with the tip above place it over the area where the cat or dog fur is residing and pull away quickly. Lint rollers may be used to, but be careful of the problems already discussed when using this method of fur removal.

When it comes to washing clothes I tend to use a fabric softener during the washing cycle and then use an additional fabric softener sheet in the dryer. This seems to do the trick.

How to Get Rid of Dust Mites

Killing dust mites should be of significant priority if you or any other household member suffers from allergies. Although these little critters are not especially visible to the naked eye they're literally everywhere in our homes and can have huge effect on your health.

The following tips will help you get rid of dust mites or at the very least control them, so they become less of a nuisance.

What are dust mites?

Dust mites are minute creatures that live within the home. They're very common due to the food they feed on, namely your dead skin cells. Although dust mites are abundant they don't really cause the associated health problems, it's the droppings they leave behind, which is the main problem. Therefore the only way to get rid of the droppings is to kill the dust mites.

Where do dust mites live?

Dust mites live in places that have a constant temperature of 20-25 degrees C with normal humidity levels, which makes the home a wonderful breeding ground for them. You'll usually find them living in and around soft furnishing, carpets, rugs, mattresses, cuddly toys and clothes especially if they are in regular contact with human skin.

What effects can dust mites have on my health?

Researchers have discovered that dust mites are one of the leading causes of asthma in the western world. This is down to the fact that their droppings contain an enzyme that irritates human airways, causing a whole host of respiratory problems. You'll also find that night-time is when your breathing problems worsen, this is because the favourite breeding ground for these pests are mattresses, pillows and bedding. Therefore killing dust mites should be high on the agenda.

How to kill dust mites

Dust mite control and elimination is of utmost importance if household members have respiratory problems. Although completely eliminating them may be an impossible task their numbers can be significantly controlled by adopting the following measures.

- **Clean bedding** - As we spend on average 1/3 of our lives in bed, therefore losing a lot of dead skin there, it is important to change and wash bedding at least once a week. When you wash the bedding ensure you do on a hot wash, as doing so on cold cycle will not kill all the dust mites.
- **Throw away dust mite friendly bedding** - Certain bedding like feather pillows and woollen blankets shouldn't be used if you have a dust mite problem. You're best off with Vellux or similar items as these are able to withstand hot washes, therefore killing dust mites.
- **Don't let pets lie on beds** - Certain household pets such as cats can spend hours lying on a comfy bed. Although they may look

cute and comfy, they're vastly increasing your dust mite problem by being there. This is because dust mites are as happy dining on dead animal skin as they are on the human equivalent. Therefore see to it that pets sleep in their own beds.

- **Plastic pet beds** - Leading nicely on from the above tip, if you want your cat or dog to have it's own bed ensure that it's made from a material that dust mites can't set up home in, such as plastic cribs or ones covered by plastic. Here you can easily keep these kind of beds nice and clean. Finally if your pet has it's own blanket see to it that you wash it on hot cycle at least once a week.
- **Kill carpet dwelling dust mites** - Carpets are a great place for dust mites to set up camp. Although this tip is going to sound a bit controversial it will vastly decrease your workload when getting rid of dust mites. You should think about removing as much carpeting from your home as possible. If you have less places for the dust mites to hide, you'll end up with far fewer of the critters.

If you would rather not follow the above piece of advice. Then you'll need to see to it that you steam clean carpets and rugs on a regular basis. The red hot steam will kill dust mites in no time.

- **Clean more** - I know - ironically - that cleaning for many people is a dirty word, but so are dust mites. You need to make sure that you dust at least twice a week, this is because a lot of what people think is household dust, is in fact dead skin - the prime food source for dust mites. So dust, dust, dust. I would use a static duster - which can be purchased in most hardware stores - as this will actually catch the dust rather than just disperse it.

Another good tip on killing dust mites is to use a mop to clean

hardwood flooring rather than a broom, the latter cleaning implement, sends too much of the dust into the air.

- **Reduce your home's humidity levels** - As is true of most household pests, dust mites prefer warm humid conditions to live in, Therefore by changing the parameters here you can turn the tables in your favour. Try turning the thermostat down a few notches. Use extractor fans, dehumidifiers and air conditioning to reduce humidity levels. In addition refrain from drying clothes on radiators, as this releases a lot of warm moisture into the air.
- **Cover mattresses** - Cover mattresses and pillows with a plastic or rubber casing, this will prevent dust mites from setting up camp, plus will be easier to clean.
- **Rid your home of clutter** - Having a lot of clutter in your home will make dusting a difficult task, therefore when killing dust mites, de-cluttering should be high on the agenda.

Odour Eliminating Tips

Bad smells from cooking, eating, pets etc, permeate our homes from time to time. Before you rush out and spend a small fortune on the latest high tech odour eliminating device, check out the following tips, tried and tested by OPH using natural remedies.

- **Garlic Breath** - Try chewing a few sprigs of mint. This usually does the trick, but as perspiration causes the garlic smell to come out of the pores you may need to avoid overheating.
- **Garlic Hands** - Scrub hands with salt and half a lemon then hold under running cold water. Alternatively rub hands and fingers with a stainless steel spoon whilst holding in the stream of cold water.
- **Cabbage** - Try these handy tips: Prevent cabbage smells by not overcooking as this releases the sulphur compounds which cause the smell.
 - Add cider vinegar or half a lemon during cooking.
 - Place a thick piece of rye bread on top of the cabbage during cooking as this will absorb the odour.
 - To cure the smell of cabbage, place a few cloves in a pan of vinegar. This will mask the odour.
- **Fridges** - Place a bowl of baking soda in the fridge to soak up odours.

- Regularly cleaning with white vinegar and water should keep your fridge smelling fresh.
- Whenever the fridge is unplugged, to prevent that musty smell. Leave the door slightly ajar.
- **Tobacco** - Tobacco smells have a tendency to linger. Try waxing ashtrays prior to use to prevent the ash from clinging, therefore making them easier to clean.
- Spraying clean ashtrays with air freshener then polishing dry is affective at minimising the smell of tobacco.
- **Pets** - As much as we love them, we don't want our homes smelling of them. Choose a vacuum cleaner that has a charcoal filter which will absorb the unpleasant smells. Remember to change the filter regularly in order for it to be effective.
- Bicarbonate of soda is great for absorbing odours such as cat urine. Sprinkle it on carpets and upholstery and leave overnight before vacuuming.
- **Toilets** - Smelly toilets can be a problem particularly if you move into a new house or flat in which the previous occupant hasn't been too clean.

Clean the bowl thoroughly with undiluted white vinegar paying attention to under the rim which can be done effectively with a hard toothbrush. You will also need to clean behind the toilet, any exposed

pipes and the gap between the tank and the bowl.

- Sealing can be porous and therefore may harbour odours. Clean this thoroughly with vinegar and then apply concentrated essential citrus oil.
- If the smell persists it is unlikely to be the toilet bowl as porcelain isn't porous. Wipe down the walls and paintwork with a solution of white vinegar and water (in the ratio 1:4) Allow to dry then using a spray bottle, mix a solution of essential citrus oil with water (ratio 1:4) and lightly spray walls and paintwork.

This should eliminate any odour but if it doesn't you may need to replace any floor covering and overlay.

- **Feet** - We have more sweat glands in our feet than any other part of our body. The offensive smell is caused by bacteria on the skin breaking down the sweat down. Treat the cause rather than mask the smell.

Personal hygiene is very important. Washing the feet thoroughly on a daily basis with an anti-bacterial soap will help to minimise the problem.

- Avoid wearing the same pair of shoes on consecutive days. A lot of sweat is absorbed on the upper shoe and inner soles, by allowing them to dry you will cut down or eliminate odour.
- Leather shoes that allow the feet to breathe are best. Socks made of natural fabrics such as wool and cotton will help with the problem.
- **Persistent Odours** - Sometimes it may be difficult to source

the smell, In the first instance place a bowl of white vinegar in the room where the smell is most noticeable and leave overnight. If the smell can still be detected then a detailed clean may be required.

- Wipe down walls and paintwork with white vinegar and water in the ratio 1 part vinegar to 4 parts water.
- Carpets and soft furnishing should also be cleaned. Don't be tempted to use too much detergent as this may have a negative effect: excess soap binds with the dirt making removal more difficult.
- Fresh air is great for eliminating odours. Open windows and doors to allow the air to circulate.
- Essential oils- a few drops on a light bulb will fragrance a room whenever the light or lamp is switched on.

Stain Removal A-Z

ACCIDENTS WILL HAPPEN. When they do, be prepared with OPH handy stain removal tips:

Unlike dirt and grime that can be removed fairly easily, stains actually bond with the fabric making removal more difficult to remove once set. The sooner we act the easier and more effective our stain removing efforts will be.

Visit <http://www.oph-good-housekeeping.com/stain-removal-techniques.html> to make the most of our individual stain removal tips.

A

Acids and Alkalis

Immediate action is needed. Hold affected area in the stream of running cold water. to restore colour faded by acid sponge with a weak solution of ammonia and water, followed by chloroform. For alkali stains hold affected area in cold running water then neutralise any traces by dabbing with white vinegar.

B

Beer

Washables

Whenever possible use the highest temperature washing method. if stain persists, sponge with a white vinegar and water solution.(except for acetate fabrics) (1 part vinegar to 5 parts water). Rinse in cold water and if necessary soak in a biological washing detergent then re-

rinse. If the stain is still visible, treat with hydrogen peroxide and water solution. (1 part HP to 6 parts water). Test fabric prior to the HP treatment.

Unwashables

Sponge with methylated spirit then rub a small amount of hardened soap into the mark. Allow to dry then brush with a soft nail brush.

Beetroot

Washables

Sponge with cold water then soak in cold water (preferably overnight). For persistent stains soak in a biological detergent, alternatively stretch the stained area over a bowl or other receptacle, sprinkle with borax, then pour boiling water over.

Unwashables

Dab with cold water. If staining persists have professionally cleaned.

Furnishings

Spray with soda water or cold water then sponge. repeat as necessary.

Carpets

Treatment as furnishings.

Bird Poo

Washables

Scrape off as much as possible then sponge the area with salt water. soak overnight in a biological detergent. Wash as usual.

Unwashables

Scrape off as much as possible then sponge with a solution of ammonia and water (60mls ammonia to 2 litres water) Follow up by dabbing on white vinegar then sponge off with cold water..

Furnishings

Use dry cleaning fluid.

Carpets

Use dry cleaning fluid.

Biro/ball point pen

Flush repeatedly with methylated spirits. Biro marks can be removed from suede by rubbing with a fine sandpaper. To remove Biro from walls brush with a soft nail brush.

Blood

Washables

Steep in 1 tablespoon of salt to 1200ml cold water. Follow with a short soak in a biological washing powder or bleach for white fabrics. Alternatively silks may be soaked in a borax and water solution (56grams to 0.5 litres of water). Rinse well and wash in the usual way.

Unwashables

First sponge the stain with cold water then apply a thick layer of a paste of starch mixed with cold water to affected area. leave it to dry and absorb the stain then brush off lightly with a soft brush.

Furnishing

Same procedure as unwashables but replace the starch/ water paste with a cornflour paste.

Carpets

sponge with cold water as soon as possible and allow to dry. Repeat until stain fades.

Never use hot water as this will cause blood to harden and make removal more difficult.

C

Chewing Gum

Washables

Scrape off as much as possible then put article in a plastic bag and place in freezer to allow the gum to harden and be easier to remove. Any remaining gum can be removed with methylated spirits.

Unwashables

See washables

Furnishings

Place ice cubes on the gum to harden it then pick off. Remove any remaining gum with methylated spirits.

Carpets

Treatment as furnishings.

Chocolate

Washables

Cool the affected area then scrape off as much as possible. Treat with a biological detergent applied to the back of the stain on a pad of tissues. Wash in the usual way.

Unwashables

Cool and scrape off as much of the chocolate as possible. Use a tetrachloride based stain remover to remove remains (remember to test on an unnoticeable area first)

Furnishings

Allow to cool and harden then scrape off as much as possible. treat any remaining stain with a carbon tetrachloride pre mixed solution.

Carpets

Treatment as furnishings.

NB liquid chocolate can be removed by spraying soda water on the affected part then sponging with warm water.

Coffee

Washables

Fresh stains can be removed with a soak in warm water and biological detergent. A mix of hydrogen peroxide and water (1:6) should remove any remaining stains. As an alternative stretch the stained area over a bowl, sprinkle on a small amount of borax and pour over boiling water from a height of about 3 feet. Rinse well then wash in the usual way.

Unwashables

Sponge with a grease solvent. If stain persists, dry clean.

Furnishings

Squirt the affected area with soda water then treat with a carpet shampoo.

Carpets

Treat as furnishings.

Collars and cuffs

Washables

markings are usually caused by body oils therefore the most effective treatment is rubbing hair shampoo into the stain then washing in the usual way.

Crayon

Washables

Dab with a solvent and flush any remaining colour with methylated spirits. Do not attempt to remove any stubborn traces on coloured

fabric because of the risk of removing the original colour as well.

Unwashables

Dry clean only.

Furnishings

Dab with methylated spirits.

Carpets

Vacuum to remove any crushed crayon first, then dab with methylated spirits.

Curry

washables

Rinse affected area with warm water then rub in petroleum jelly. Rinse once more before soaking and washing in detergent. If the fabric is colour-fast persistent stains may be removed with a solution of hydrogen peroxide and water (1:6).

unwashables

Sponge with a solution of borax dissolved in warm water. If stain persists, dry clean.

furnishings & carpets

Sponge with a solution of borax dissolved in warm water.

D

Deodorant

Washables

Treat the stain as soon as possible. Try rubbing affected area with pantihose to remove the stain Alternatively dab affected area with

detergent and water or apply white vinegar direct to stain then leave overnight in a white vinegar and water solution. If machine washable, wash garment inside out. Persistent stains may benefit from a poultice of baking soda and water applied to affected area and left overnight. This method of stain removal is not suitable for dark fabrics.

Unwashables

Dry cleaning is advisable. Remember to point out deodorant stain dye.

Washables

Immediate treatment is required using cold water to rinse affected area. Follow up with a soak in cold water and detergent preferably overnight. for persistent stains, providing the fabric is not delicate, sponge with a mix of hydrogen peroxide and water (1:6)

Unwashables

Dry clean as soon as possible

Furnishings

Dab with white spirit or dry cleaning fluid. if this fails to remove the stain, professional cleaning is necessary.

Carpets

Treat as furnishings

E

Egg

Washables

Soak the stain overnight in a biological detergent and cold water solution. wash in the usual way.

Unwashables

remove any excess then sponge with salt water. Allow to dry then follow by sponging with detergent and water lather.

Furnishings

Treat as unwashable fabrics.

Carpets

Shampoo affected area.

Eye Make Up

Washables

Try wetting the fabric then applying a small amount of liquid detergent. If stain persists apply oil of eucalyptus followed by a few drops of ammonia which can be dabbed on with a dry cloth. Rinse with warm water and wash in the usual way.

Unwashables

Treat with a dry cleaning solvent

Furnishings

Treat as unwashables

Carpets

Treat as Unwashables

E

Felt Tip Marker

Washables

Gently work methylated spirit into the stain (working from the back of the stain) then wash as normal. do not use this method on acetate. For persistent stains, dry clean.

Unwashables

Dry clean.

Furnishings

Try using a commercial stain remover followed by a shampoo. For persistent stains dry cleaning is necessary.

Carpets

Treat as furnishings.

Fruit (including juices)

Washables

Fresh stains may be removed by stretching affected area over a receptacle and pouring boiling water through it from a height of two feet. Follow up by washing at the highest permissible temperature for the fabric. Old stains may be treated with glycerine. Leave for approximately one hour before pouring boiling water through the stain, then wash in the usual way..

Unwashables

Dry clean

Furnishings

Sponge with dry cleaning fluid, then shampoo.

Carpets

Try blotting the stain then shampoo. Any remaining stain may be removed with white spirit.

G

Grass

Washables

Sponge with water, then with rubbing alcohol (3 parts water to 1 part alcohol) and allow to dry. **NB** Do not use rubbing alcohol on silk or wool. Dilute in the ratio 6:1 for acetate. Follow up by sponging with lukewarm water and detergent directly into the stain. Rinse and allow to dry. For persistent stains soak in a mixture of water and stain remover for an hour or so then launder in the usual way.

Grease

Washables

Blot fresh stains with tissue or other absorbent paper, sprinkle with talcum powder or corn flower then allow to dry. Gently brush off any excess grease then work liquid detergent into the stain. Hold affected area in the stream of the hot water tap then wash on the highest temperature for the fabric.

Unwashables

Dry clean

Furnishings

Mop up any excess with tissue paper then sprinkle on talcum powder or cornflour. Leave to dry then gently brush away any excess. Shampoo as necessary.

Carpets

Treat as furnishings

H

Hair Dye

Washables

Vegetable dyes such as henna may be washed out with liquid detergent then rinsed thoroughly. any residue can be treated with household ammonia.

Other dyes should be treated immediately with liquid detergent then white vinegar and wash in the usual way. Once left, stains are virtually impossible to remove.

Unwashables

Rinse with warm water immediately.

Furnishings

Sponge with white vinegar.

Carpets

Treat as furnishings.

I

Ink

Washables

Flush immediately with cold water then work in liquid detergent from the back of the stain. Rinse with cold water and remove any residue by treating with lemon juice and rinsing with household ammonia. Rinse thoroughly and wash in the usual way.

Unwashables

Ink, once dried requires an acid to remove. For white fabrics wet thoroughly with cold water then sponge with a solution of oxalic acid and warm water. Rinse well then wash in the usual way.

Furnishings

Fresh stains can be covered with a layer of Fullers earth and water mixed into a paste. Leave to dry then brush out, repeating as necessary.

Carpets

Treat as furnishings.

J

Jam

Washables

Fresh stains should be treated by scraping off as much as possible then soaking in a biological powder prior to washing in the normal

way. Once dry stains are more difficult to remove therefore soak over night in a biological powder then wash in the normal way.

Unwashables

Remove as much as possible before it is allowed to dry then dry clean.

Furnishings

Scrape off as much as possible then clean with upholstery shampoo.

Carpets

Scrape off as much as possible then shampoo.

Carefully remove as much as possible from the article. Do not allow the stain to dry, soak in a biological detergent for as long as possible. Wash as normal. Non Washable Fabrics

Remove as much as possible from the article, then dry clean. Carpets and Furnishings.

Carefully remove excess, sponge with biological detergent in warm water. Finish off with carpet or upholstery shampoo.

K

Ketchup

Washables

Gently scrape off any excess then hold in the stream of cold running water. Follow up by sponging with warm water and washing up liquid. For persistent stains dab methylated spirits onto the stain. wash as normal.

Unwashables

Gently scrape off any excess then carefully sponge with cold water and blot with tissue paper. Persistent stains require dry cleaning.

Furnishings

Remove any excess, sponge with cold water before applying upholstery shampoo.

Carpets

Treat as furnishings substituting upholstery shampoo for carpet shampoo.

L

Lipstick

Washables

Scrape off as much as possible with a blunt instrument, then wash at the highest allowable temperature. Do not add detergent. For more persistent stains rub in glycerine, oil of eucalyptus or Vaseline prior to washing.

Unwashables

Sponge affected area with turpentine then pat dry with a cloth. remember to air thoroughly.

M

Mayonnaise

Washables

Work heavy duty detergent into the stain then wash on the highest temperature for the fabric. Repeat as necessary for persistent stains

Milk

Washables

For fresh stains soak and agitate in cold water then wash in the usual

way. For stale stains, carefully remove any crusting then soak in cold water and pre-wash detergent before washing in the usual way. For persistent stains repeat the soaking in cold water and pre-wash detergent. Whites may require bleaching.

Mucous

Washables

For fresh stains soak and agitate in cold water then wash in the usual way. For stale stains, carefully remove any crusting then soak in cold water and pre-wash detergent before washing in the usual way. For persistent stains repeat the soaking in cold water and pre-wash detergent. Whites may require bleaching.

Mud

Washables

Allow to dry then carefully remove any crusting with a nail brush or toothbrush. . For stale stains, carefully remove any crusting then soak in cold water and pre-wash detergent before washing in the usual way. For persistent stains repeat the soaking in cold water and pre-wash detergent. Whites may require bleaching.

N

Washables

Sponge with cold water then dab with moistened salt from the back of the stain. Wash at the highest temperature for the fabric. For persistent stains repeat this procedure.

Unwashables

Dab with moistened salt from the back of the stain. Dry clean if necessary.

O

Oil

Washables

Treat with heavy duty detergent or powdered detergent and warm water mixed to a runny paste and applied directly on to the stain. Follow this up with a wash at the highest temperature for the fabric

P

Paint

Acrylic Paint

Washables

Do not allow to dry. Dab with cold water then gently work soap into the stain, repeating until stain disappears. Wash as normal.

Unwashables

Dab with cold water until stain has disappeared then dry clean as soon as possible.

Furnishings

Dab with a solution of cold water and upholstery shampoo.

Carpets

Dab with a solution of cold water and carpet shampoo.

Emulsion

Washables

Treat immediately. Dab with cold water then wash as normal.

Unwashables

Dab with cold water until stain has disappeared then dry clean.

Furnishings

Dab with cold water until stain disappears. Treat persistent stains with upholstery shampoo.

Carpets

Dab with cold water until stain disappears. Treat persistent stains with carpet shampoo.

Oil Based

Washables

Treat immediately. Dab with white spirit then wash as normal.

Unwashables

Dab with white spirit until stain has disappeared then dry clean.

Furnishings

Dab with white spirit then clean with upholstery shampoo.

Carpets

Dab with white spirit then wash with carpet shampoo.

R

Rust

Washables

Rub salt and lemon juice into the stain then leave for approximately one hour. Wash in the usual way. Dry cleaning is necessary for persistent stains.

Unwashables

Dry clean

S

Scorch Marks

Washables

Place scorched area in the stream of cold running water, rub gently. Follow up by soaking in warm water and borax (1 teaspoon per half litre of water) for approximately 2 hours then wash as normal. Bleaching may be required to remove scorch marks from whites.

Unwashables

Dry clean only

Furnishings

Seek professional help

Carpets

Try rubbing gently with a dampened scouring pad. Remember to test first in an inconspicuous area. For persistent marks seek professional help

T

Tea

Washables

Fresh stains should be treated by washing in detergent) on the highest temperature for the fabric. Do not use soap or detergents that contain soap as this may make the stain permanent. Old stains may require bleaching.

U

Urine

Washables

Soak then agitate in cold water before washing on the normal cycle for the fabric. For persistent stains soak in detergent then repeat the washing cycle.

V

Vomit

Washables

Not pleasant but don't panic. Remove as much as possible then soak overnight in biological washing powder. Rinse in cold water then wash in the usual way.

Unwashables

Remove as much as possible then sponge with dry cleaning fluid

Furnishings

Remove as much as possible then sponge with warm water and detergent solution.

Carpets

Remove as much as possible then sponge with soda water. Repeat as necessary.

W

Wine

Washables

Cover the stain with salt then leave to absorb. For more persistent stains, rub with lemon juice or soak in a solution of hot water and borax (28 grammes to 0.5 litres). Remember to rinse well then wash in the usual way.

Unwashables

Sponge the stain with borax solution, repeating as necessary then rub

with a dry cloth.

Furnishings

Cover the stain with salt then rinse with warm water.

Carpets

Cover with talcum powder then vacuum. Repeat as necessary.

Water Marks

Hold affected area in the steam of a boiling kettle or pan. shake frequently then dry with a warm iron. Be very careful when using this method to avoid scalding.

Wax

Washables

First set the wax by placing the article in the freezer, then break off as much wax as possible. Use blotting paper to absorb the grease; place one sheet over and one sheet under the stain, then press with a warm iron, changing the paper as necessary. For silks and delicate fabrics repeat the procedure as above substituting blotting paper for tissue paper and using a cooler iron. Stubborn marks may be removed with dry cleaning fluid.

Unwashables.

Same procedure as washables

