

# Top spring cleaning

# mistakes—*SOLVED!*



## Not letting Mother Nature help

One of the benefits of spring cleaning is that you're able to take advantage of the warmer temperatures while you do it! "If weather permits, crack open a window to encourage air circulation. This helps usher out the dust as you clean," says Peterson. It will make your job a lot easier by cutting down on the amount of dusting you need to do. Another common mistake? Not taking cues from Mother Nature when it comes to cleaning the windows in your home. If you usually wipe down the glass on a sunny or hot day, you'll want to rethink that habit. The reason: "Cleaning solution can evaporate quickly on a warm window, causing streaks to



form faster," she explains. "If possible, clean windows when they're in the shade." Following this advice will ensure you get spotless and sparkling windows the *first* time you wipe them down.

## Shopping for containers *before* you start organizing a cluttered space

Start by grouping similar items together, then measure your space carefully and make a list of how many containers you'll need, advises Rosenthal. Her advice: Place frequently used items within

easy reach, while rarely used items can be stored higher or deeper in cabinets to keep everyday zones clutter-free. "This system saves you time, money and stress!" she says.



Experts share 6 habits that can make cleaning more of a chore—and the smart, stress-free fixes!

by SHAY TROTTER and LAUREN ANDERSON

## Skipping the decluttering step

When you're ready to get organized, always start by decluttering, advises organizing expert Rachel Rosenthal (RachelRosenthal.co). Otherwise, you'll spend time and energy simply moving items from one place to another. Clever tip: Sort belongings into three piles—keep, sell and donate—to quickly free up space and create a system that feels calm and is easier to maintain.

## Cleaning low to high

"Starting at the bottom and working your way to the top is great career advice, but when it comes to cleaning, it will have you working overtime," says Lora McLaughlin Peterson, a lifestyle expert and TV host (LORAfied.com). "Instead, start high and work your way down. Think ceiling fan first and the floors last so if any dust or dirt falls, you catch it all!"

## Using dirty tools

"If you see a cloth getting dirty as you go, swap it out for a fresh one," says Peterson. For a quicker routine, keep a small stack of clean cloths



nearby so you can rotate them as you clean. The same goes for your vacuum: Empty the bag or canister and clean the filter before you start so it picks up dirt more efficiently.

## Trying to copy an image you see online

While we love Instagram and Pinterest for organizing inspiration, trying to replicate exactly what you see can quickly lead to unnecessary spending. Instead, use those posts as a starting point and adapt the ideas to fit your space and daily routines, suggests Rosenthal. Tip: Before buying anything, take inventory of what you own and measure your space to ensure the solutions work for your budget.

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## Clever cleaning tools under \$20

### PET HAIR REMOVER BRUSH

To remove stubborn fur from your furniture simply rub the ALLISTAR Reusable Pet Fur Remover (Amazon.com) over fabric, and the dense micro bristles easily lift strands.



### ANGRY MAMA MICROWAVE CLEANER

Your appliance will be sparkling in no time with this hilarious steam cleaner (Walmart.com).



Pour water and vinegar inside, then microwave for 5-8 minutes before wiping the interior clean.

### CAR CLEANING GEL

Getting rid of dust has never been easier with PULIDIKI Car Cleaning Gel (ThePulidiki.com). Press the flexible putty into nooks and crannies to lift grime fast.



### DESKTOP MINI VACUUM

Keyboard covered in crumbs? Attach the removable nozzle to the Prowlithin Desktop Vacuum Cleaner (Amazon.com) and use it to suck up those pesky pieces. Plus, the vacuum's ergonomic design helps make it comfortable to use.

