

# Spring Clean Your House A Room At A Time

## Room-By-Room Cleaning Guide



By The Hillbilly Housewife

[www.HillbillyHousewife.com](http://www.HillbillyHousewife.com)

30 Days To An Organized Home

<http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/organizedhome>

# Introduction

We're approaching the time of year that brings the words "cabin fever" to mind. Our windows and doors are closed. Snow and ice, or rain and mud, are being tracked into the house. The whole house is taking a beating.

But, it won't be long until we can throw those windows open and start scrapping off the grime from a winter of wear-and-tear. How you approach this task is a matter of individual choice.

Do you look forward to tearing the house apart in a mad dash of spring cleaning? Or does the thought of disrupting the entire house make you feel a little crazy? Which kind of cleaner are you?

For many, living in a house during spring cleaning time is more comfortable when one room is cleaned at a time. Why? Because there's less disruption all over the house when only one room is in disarray at a time. In other words, you can escape to a room that is NOT in chaos!

If you are the room-at-a-time type cleaner, I have a method for you. By splitting your house into five sections (bedrooms, dining room, living room, bathrooms, kitchen) and covering one room each week, you can be well on your way to a shiny clean house well before the summertime fun starts. Are you ready? Then let's get started.

**Susanne – The Hillbilly Housewife**

[www.HillbillyHousewife.com](http://www.HillbillyHousewife.com)

**The Hillbilly Housewife Recommends: [30 Days To An Organized Home](#)**



Something that's made a huge difference for me is the "[30 Days To An Organized Home](#)" ebook by MommiesinABlog.com.

Work your way through organizing and decluttering every room in your house in 30 days. The daily tasks make it easy to follow along and kept me from getting overwhelmed with the task at hand.

You'll also find some helpful printable checklists that will keep you on task and allow you to track your progress.

Get your copy today at <http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/organizedhome>

© [HillbillyHousewife.com](http://HillbillyHousewife.com) – You're welcome to share this report with family and friends. For more organization and cleaning tips, check out 30 [Days To An Organized Home](#).

# Week 1 – The Bedrooms

We'll begin with the room that, when you're done, will give you a place to relax and retire from all the hard work ahead. Yes, that would be your bedrooms. This is not an easy task, what with all the heavy fabrics and furniture to consider. So, be sure to commandeer some willing helpers, especially those with muscle. Let's get started.

- Take one bedroom at a time and, starting from the top down, begin by dusting. This includes ceiling fans, walls, and trim around windows and doors, as well as the doors themselves. Don't forget closet doors. Use a microfiber dusting cloth to gather all the dust flying about. Follow with a damp cloth where necessary.
- Take down drapes and wash or air. Dust blinds and wash windows.
- Remove the bedding and launder or air as necessary.
- Dust lamp shades, then table tops and dressers, removing small items as you go, dusting those items as well. Wash any dresser scarves or clothes.
- Remove everything from underneath the bed, pick up any throw rugs, and take out of the bedroom.

If you haven't yet, bring in the muscle. It's time to move the big items and get ready to vacuum.

- Pull furniture slightly away from the walls. This is done in order to get ready for the vacuum cleaner or dust mop.
- Bring in the vacuum cleaner, dust mop, or both, and begin by cleaning around the room edges, vacuuming and/or wiping off the trim around the floor. Use an extension tool on your vacuum cleaner to reach the corners and behind the furniture.
- Some people take this opportunity to air the mattresses or, at the very least, turn them upside down and/or end to end. Again, this is a two person job.

- Slide the furniture back in place and replace the mattresses if you removed them, and run your vacuum cleaner all over the floor, making several sweeps in various directions. You're vacuuming up all the dust you knocked down earlier, so be thorough.

The furniture is back in place now, so it's time to put the room back together.

- Hang the curtains back up, replace your stored items under the bed, and bring in the fresh laundered bedding and you are done - at least with one bedroom.

One bedroom down! It's time to move onto the next. And then the next, until all the bedrooms are done. This particular job may take all week, but it will be well worth it when you have cozy, spotlessly clean bedrooms to relax in as you approach these other chores.

See you next week when we spring clean the dining room.

**The Hillbilly Housewife Recommends:** [30 Days To An Organized Home](#)



Something that's made a huge difference for me is the "[30 Days To An Organized Home](#)" ebook by Mommie in A Blog.com.

Work your way through organizing and decluttering every room in your house in 30 days. The daily tasks make it easy to follow along and kept me from getting overwhelmed with the task at hand.

You'll also find some helpful printable checklists that will keep you on task and allow you to track your progress.

Get your copy today at <http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/organizedhome>

## Week 2 – The Dining Room

Last week we got going with our spring cleaning job by cleaning the bedrooms. It was a good place to start because now we can retire to our fresh new beds when it's time to relax.

The dining room is often the easiest room to spring clean. It can also be the most rewarding as you wash and polish some of your favorite dinnerware, keepsakes, and decorations. Take your time and enjoy. Let's look at a simple room-at-a-time plan for the dining room.

- Begin by dusting from top to bottom. If you begin with the window and door frames, the doors themselves, and any trim along the ceiling, you'll get the dust knocked down where you can vacuum it up.
- Windows in your dining room would also be washed at this point, once the trim around the window is dusted and wiped down. Also, if you have any window treatments, it's time to take them down and air them out, or wash them as necessary.
- If your dining room lighting fixture is large or complicated, or requires special attention, tackle that next. Then continue your dusting (I prefer a microfiber cloth) of the buffet, side tables, main tables, and any decorations and centerpieces you may have.
- If you have a buffet filled with dishes, you may want to remove those at this time and put them in the kitchen to be washed.

Time for a bit of help again if you have heavy furniture to move. You'll be vacuuming, mopping, or polishing floors at this point, so get some help.

- If you are able, move any furniture such as the buffet away from the wall so you can vacuum next to the floor boards and wipe the floor boards as well. If you can't move the buffet, use your extension tools to vacuum under the buffet and get as close to the wall as possible.
- Continue vacuuming and mopping the floor as necessary.

© [HillbillyHousewife.com](http://HillbillyHousewife.com) – You're welcome to share this report with family and friends. For more organization and cleaning tips, check out 30 [Days To An Organized Home](#).

- Re-hang your draperies or other window treatments at this time.

The heavy work is really done at this time. The rest of the job involves more fun.

- It's a good time now to give your table and buffet any special treatment it needs, such as oiling or waxing. Take care to include the chairs in this treatment.
- Now, bring in your washed dishes and put them back where they belong and replace any other knick-knacks you may have removed while you were cleaning.
- If you find you have more time and lots of energy, now is a good time to clean out the buffet drawers or shelves and wash any linens stored. Washing or polishing any special service pieces would complete your task.

See you next week when we spring clean the living room.

**The Hillbilly Housewife Recommends: [30 Days To An Organized Home](#)**



Something that's made a huge difference for me is the "[30 Days To An Organized Home](#)" ebook by Mommie in A Blog Presents.

Work your way through organizing and decluttering every room in your house in 30 days. The daily tasks make it easy to follow along and kept me from getting overwhelmed with the task at hand.

You'll also find some helpful printable checklists that will keep you on task and allow you to track your progress.

Get your copy today at <http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/organizedhome>

## Week 3 – The Living Room

The last two weeks we tackled cleaning the bedrooms and cleaning the dining room. Those rooms are now shiny clean and comfortable, and enjoyable. Now, it's time to move onto the room that probably gets the most clutter.

Because my family uses the living room as an entertainment center, we need to spend time on all the movies, games, and other electronic paraphernalia that piles up. Many families have the same situation, so let's begin there.

- ✧ Start by sitting down with a couple empty boxes. Mark one "keep" and one "give away." Gather all the dvds, cds, what-have-you for movies and games. Pull them into a pile in the center of the room and spend time sorting them into these two boxes. Pull the movies and games off the shelves, too, and include those in the sorting. Take the "give away" box out to the car, and set the "keep" box aside.
- ✧ One suggestion is to take any loose game components and put them in decorative boxes. That way they're out of site, but still handy.
- ✧ Do the same sorting for any magazines, books, or newspapers laying around. Add another box for this task labeled "sort" for those magazines you know you want to keep, but you'll be tearing apart and keeping just the relevant pages. Take your "give away" box out to the car and set the other boxes aside.

The sorting is done for the most part, so now it's time to move on to the bookcases and heavy duty dusting.

- ✧ Clear any other knick-knacks off the bookcases, setting them in bins and moving the bins out of the room. You can start the actual dusting now, beginning from the top to the bottom. Start with your ceiling fan, wood trim around the ceiling, doors, and windows. I like using a micro-fiber cloth for these areas to trap the dust instead of sending it flying.

It's drapery and window time next.

- ✧ Remove and air out or wash draperies if necessary. Then, you'll want to wash the windows and wipe off any dirt, scuffs, or smudges around the door frame and window frame or window sills. Use a cloth dampened in a cleaner that is safe for wood.

More dusting; this time it's all those electronics.

- ✧ Once this task is done, dust the entertainment unit and components. You may want to use a special "canned dusting" blower to really get that dust out of the grills and from underneath the television and all the players you have attached. Use your micro-fiber cloth again to gather all the dust bunnies you've unearthed.
- ✧ Your bigger furniture, like the entertainment center, needs dusting now, then move on to your lamps, coffee tables, credenzas, curios, and end tables.

Time to bring in the vacuum with the attachments, and maybe a little help.

- ✧ Get out your vacuum and, using the proper tool, vacuum out under the cushions of the sofas and chairs. (Put any money you find in a special fund for a treat for yourself!)
- ✧ If you have area rugs, remove them now and hang them outside if you can, or just roll them up and put them aside. If you have large rugs and space available, put your rugs upside down and vacuum, then flip and vacuum. They'll be ready now to bring back into the living room once you've finished with the cleaning. Just roll them up and set them aside.
- ✧ Hook up the crevice tool and extensions and vacuum around the edges of the room. Then, put your vacuum back together and give the entire carpet or floor a good vacuuming, using a back and forth motion, then changing directions, and go over the carpet or floor again.

The time has come to put your living room back together.

- ✧ You're ready to bring in the draperies and area rugs. Put your room back together and bring in the bins with your knick-knacks. Keeping a clean micro-



fiber cloth in your hand, remove your knick-knacks, wipe them off, and return them to their places.

That's it! There are all sorts of special considerations for cleaning a living room. If you have leather furniture, you'll want to take time to clean and treat it properly according to manufacturer's directions. If you have a fireplace, that's a whole separate cleaning task which is very specific to each home. If you have slip covers on your furniture, it may be time to have it professionally dry-cleaned or laundered.

Everyone's living room is different. But, one thing is common among them all - when spring rolls around, we want to get the living room freshened up and straightened out so we can relax and enjoy it.

See you next week when we tackle the bathrooms.

### **The Hillbilly Housewife Recommends: [30 Days To An Organized Home](#)**



Something that's made a huge difference for me is the "[30 Days To An Organized Home](#)" ebook by MommieinaBlog.com.

Work your way through organizing and decluttering every room in your house in 30 days. The daily tasks make it easy to follow along and kept me from getting overwhelmed with the task at hand.

You'll also find some helpful printable checklists that will keep you on task and allow you to track your progress.

Get your copy today at <http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/organizedhome>

## Week 4 – The Bathrooms

The last three weeks we tackled cleaning the bedrooms, cleaning the dining room, and cleaning the living room. This week we have a chore that many folks shy away from – the bathrooms. Depending on how many bathrooms you have, this project could take all day or even several days. It also may require some help.

For this project, I'm turning to the pros for advice. Cleaning bathrooms can be back-breaking work, so I appreciate all the help I can get in time saving and effort saving tips. Just for our discussion here, we'll assume we're cleaning one full bath; that is a bathroom that has a tub with shower. Then just reapply all the cleaning strategies to any other, smaller bathrooms and powder rooms. Let's begin:

**Trick of the pros:** choose only two cleaning solutions for entire bathroom. It makes the job go faster and easier.

Choose one cleaner for scrubbing and one for shining. In other words, you'll want one cleaner to scrub the tub, tile and countertops. You'll want another cleaner for the mirror and faucets. (Note: NEVER mix bleach, even products that contain bleach, with ammonia or products that contain ammonia. The fumes are toxic, even deadly.)

Following a professional's guidelines, we start with the toilet. Use a good cleanser. That doesn't mean you have to use a "toilet bowl cleaner." You can use any good disinfectant scrubbing cleanser. Fill the toilet bowl, close the lid and let it stand while you continue. Some folks prefer just using plain bleach for this job. You may want to start your exhaust fan if you choose to use bleach as the fumes can get a bit obnoxious. Close the lid and move on for now. You'll come back to finish the toilet later.

**(Note: Again... NEVER mix bleach, even products that contain bleach, with ammonia or products that contain ammonia. The fumes are toxic, even deadly.)**

Remove your shower curtain, liner, and any rugs, etc. Launder or replace as necessary. If you have a window, remove those curtains, shades, or blinds (if possible) and wash accordingly. Using a mixture of vinegar and water, wash the inside of the bathroom window and the surrounding woodwork with soft rags.

Grab your scrubbing cleanser and sprinkle (wet shower surround and tub first) or spray on the bathtub-shower walls continuing down into the tub. Start scrubbing with a good stiff brush or scrubbing pad, top to bottom, all the way into the tub.

**Trick of the pros:** it's much easier on the back to climb into the tub to scrub it. Put rags in the bottom of the tub to prevent slipping and climb in barefoot.

You'll want to have a large bucket and large sponge on hand for rinsing if you don't have a detachable shower head. Once you've scrubbed the entire surface, begin rinsing until you hear the surfaces squeak when you rub it.

**Trick of the pros:** install a detachable shower head and use it like the spray attachment on your kitchen sink to rinse your shower. For around \$20 you will solve the back-breaking chore of rinsing your shower, bending and dipping a sponge in a bucket of water over and over again.

### **Time to switch gears and do a little de-cluttering.**

This is a good time to get yourself a cold drink and do a slightly different chore. Grab a couple boxes or bins and empty your medicine cabinet and under the sink area into them. Take the boxes out to a comfortable area where you can sit and sort.

You'll want to start with your medicines. Check expiration dates and put any medicines (prescription or over-the-counter) that have expired into one box. Add to that box any medicines that you simply no longer use. Anything you haven't taken in over a year is suspect. That box of medicines should go to a medicine disposal place - call your doctor's office for information about these safe disposal sites. Most clinics and hospitals allow people to bring their drugs and medicines there for collection and proper disposal.

Continue sorting out all the items from your medicine cabinet and under the sink area. If you have items like broken or unused curling irons, brushes, combs, clips, etc. dispose of those items or put in a separate box for donation. Spring cleaning time is a great time to dig out from under the stuff that keeps accumulating in our bathroom cabinets. Be brutal with your clutter! Still have soup can size hair rollers you haven't used in more than a decade? Wash them up and give them away!

Okay, now that you've handled the clutter, it's time to wipe out the shelves. Use a mild cleaner and a sponge or rag and get the interior of your cabinet and cupboards wiped out. I like vinegar and water for this chore as it freshens as it cleans. Leave the cabinet doors open and let the interior dry completely. Then neatly restock with your bathroom items.

### **Time to shine!**

Now you're ready to clean the mirror, countertop, and sink. Using your tub cleanser, sprinkle or spray your sink, faucet, and countertop. Take your scrubber pad, brush, or sponge and scrub up your surfaces. Rinse well.

Next, spray the mirror, countertop, and sink with a glass cleaner. My preference is a vinegar and water mixture because it's safe to use and it removes soap residue. That is the reason you spray down the countertop and sink after you scrub it. Plus, you'll get extra shine on the faucet. Wipe the mirror, countertop, and sink with clean rags until

they are dry and shining. Take your glass cleaner over to your tub faucet as well and give that the same shiny treatment.

**Trick of the pros:** always follow up your sink and tub scrubbing with a spray and wipe with glass cleaner on the faucets and handles. That's where the shine comes from.

Eventually, you knew this would come...

### **The toilet.**

Use a good solid brush, scrub up and around the rim, and flush. Spray the entire toilet down with your glass cleaner (vinegar and water works well) and wipe down with clean rags.

### **Your floor is the final step.**

Using a mixture of vinegar and water, start with a bucket and mop or a sprayer and rags, and work your way out the door.

Speaking of the door, now is the time to wipe down the door, door frame, and door knob. Using a mixture of vinegar and water (which makes a good, safe disinfecting spray) spray down the entire door and wipe dry. Pay close attention to the handle.

Once the floor is dry you can go back in and hang the shower curtains, window curtains, and any rugs.

Now your bathroom is shiny and clean, just like if you had the pros come in!

See you next week when we tackle the kitchen – but NOT all at once.

### **The Hillbilly Housewife Recommends: [30 Days To An Organized Home](#)**



Something that's made a huge difference for me is the "[30 Days To An Organized Home](#)" ebook by MomsinaBlog.com.

Work your way through organizing and decluttering every room in your house in 30 days. The daily tasks make it easy to follow along and kept me from getting overwhelmed with the task at hand.

You'll also find some helpful printable checklists that will keep you on task and allow you to track your progress.

Get your copy today at <http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/organizedhome>

# Week 5 – The Kitchen: Refrigerator Exterior

The last three weeks we tackled cleaning the bedrooms, cleaning the dining room, cleaning the living room, and cleaning the bathrooms. It's time to move into the kitchen. This task may seem overwhelming, but I have a solution.

When I think of cleaning the kitchen, I see how many components there really are. That is why I decided to split the job up into separate chores to do during the week - around the refrigerator, inside the refrigerator, and the oven. And that is enough for one week!

For today's task, we're cleaning around the outside of the refrigerator. This can be a pretty heavy task, so grab a cup of coffee or tea and relax for a few moments before you get started. When you're ready to begin, go ahead and read on.

I'll admit, this is a chore I don't get to very often. Partly because I struggle pulling the refrigerator out from the wall, and partly because "out of sight, out of mind." So, this is a reminder to myself as well as to all of you that this job really does need to be done a few times each year.

## Why clean the outside of the refrigerator at all?

Dust accumulating on the workings of your refrigerator can really gum up the works and cost you money in extra energy needed to run a dirty refrigerator. Might as well do it now and get it over with.

- ✧ Get some help and pull the refrigerator out from the wall. Yes, you can unplug it for the short amount of time you'll be back there. Once you can get behind your refrigerator, you're ready to go.
- ✧ Start by vacuuming off the grid or coils you see if your refrigerator does not have a closed back. Do this with a hand vacuum like a Dustbuster or a wand on your regular vacuum with a brush attachment. Be careful not to bend any of the metal that's exposed. Just a light vacuuming usually removes any "dust bunnies" lurking there. If you still see a lot of dust or pet hair, take a soft brush or cloth and gently remove what you can.
- ✧ Now, wipe up the floor that's been exposed by moving the refrigerator. You may need a little extra cleaning power if you have some years of accumulated grease and dirt. Also, the tray under your refrigerator may have overflowed on occasion, so be ready for a mess.

- ✧ Take a dampened cloth (I use a mixture of vinegar and water) and wipe down the sides and the top of the refrigerator, then shove it back in place. Don't forget to plug it back in when you get close enough for the plug to reach the outlet.

Now that the refrigerator is back where it belongs, you will want to clean out the all important drip tray on the bottom.

- ✧ Pop off the grill on the bottom of your refrigerator and put that in the sink for a good washing. Air moves around underneath your refrigerator, so this area tends to grab all sorts of nasty dirt and dust. Take a look under your refrigerator with a flashlight if you have to, and determine if you have a removable moisture-collection tray. This is where the automatic defrosting of your freezer ends up as well as your humidity control.
- ✧ If you have a tray and it's full of water, gently remove it, dump the water, and scrub it up. Take your vacuum hose and suck out any dust you can see underneath. If you have a soft, long handled brush, run that along the floor underneath your refrigerator to gently dislodge any dust that is hanging on there.
- ✧ If your refrigerator does not have a removable tray, you'll need to take a warm wet rag and carefully wipe off the tray that is there. This type of refrigerator relies on evaporation to get rid of the water from the defrosting cycle, so you want to be sure it's clean and doing its job. You'll also want to take a long handled brush and slide it under the refrigerator along the floor to gather up any "dust bunnies" that have been riding around in the mechanics underneath.
- ✧ Wash the grill you removed from the front and replace it.

Give yourself a pat on the back. This is not an easy task nor is it a very rewarding task. You can't really see the results of your labor, but just look in your trash can, count those "dust bunnies," and smile!

# Week 5 – The Kitchen: Refrigerator Interior

The last few weeks we tackled cleaning the bedrooms, cleaning the dining room, cleaning the living room, and cleaning the bathrooms. We then moved into cleaning the kitchen.

Cleaning the kitchen is a big job. That's why I decided to split the job up into separate chores - around the refrigerator, inside the refrigerator, and the oven.

This step-by-step guide for cleaning the interior of the refrigerator is how I cleaned my refrigerator. Your refrigerator set up may be different, but here I list the steps I took just to give you some ideas of how to proceed:

- ✧ I took laundry baskets and coolers and filled them with the food, then covered them with blankets and towels and slid them out of the way.
- ✧ Once my food was safely covered, I went to work. (Note: turn your refrigerator temperature dial off or warmer so the refrigerator quits running just long enough for you to clean it without catching a chill - and wasting energy.)
- ✧ My favorite way to clean the refrigerator is with vinegar and water in a bucket and a couple soft rags. I removed the drawers and filled them with warm water and dish soap and set them aside. Then I removed all the shelves.
- ✧ I always try to take out as much of the interior pieces (railings, shelves, etc.) as I can so I can get at the sides. I also lay a few clean rags on the bottom so the water that puddles there doesn't overflow onto the floor.
- ✧ Starting at the top, I took a rag, dunked it in the vinegar and water mixture, and just started wiping the whole interior down.
- ✧ I like to use quite a bit of water because, when it dribbles down the sides, the water gathers in the bottom and sits there to loosen up any of the gook that tends to form under the bottom drawers.
- ✧ Once the sides are washed it's time to pick up the rags on the bottom of the fridge and mop up the water. Wash, rinse, and dry the drawers and shelves in the kitchen sink and put back in place. It's as simple as that.



Now you can replace the food and you are done!

**Don't forget to turn your refrigerator temperature dial back on and to the desired temperature setting.**

The outside of your refrigerator and the area around it was polished up last week, and now the inside is all spic-and-span. You are well on your way to completing your kitchen spring cleaning! Next week we'll tackle the oven.

**The Hillbilly Housewife Recommends: [30 Days To An Organized Home](#)**



Something that's made a huge difference for me is the "[30 Days To An Organized Home](#)" ebook by MomsinaBlog.com.

Work your way through organizing and decluttering every room in your house in 30 days. The daily tasks make it easy to follow along and kept me from getting overwhelmed with the task at hand.

You'll also find some helpful printable checklists that will keep you on task and allow you to track your progress.

Get your copy today at <http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/organizedhome>



# Week 5 – The Oven

The last few weeks we tackled cleaning the bedrooms, cleaning the dining room, cleaning the living room, and cleaning the bathrooms. We then moved into cleaning the kitchen and divided it into several components; around the refrigerator, inside the refrigerator, and the oven.

It's time to tackle the oven. I must admit, this is not one of my favorite jobs, nor is it one that I do often. As I did with the refrigerator, I'm giving you a first hand experience in how I cleaned my oven. There are many ways to do this job. I offer you this guide as a way to give you ideas of how you might approach this task.

But first, a suggestion: Never attempt cleaning the oven if you don't have enough time to finish the job. Walking away from an oven with cleaner dripping all over or drying up is not a good thing. You want to be sure you get this job done in the same day.

I began by planning my approach. The owner's manual was the most likely place to look for instructions and tips on how to clean my oven thoroughly, with the best results and the least amount of effort. But, before we get into the details, you should know that there are three types of ovens, each requiring different care. Let's take a look at the brief description of each.

## **Regular Oven**

These are the smooth, shiny-surface ovens. Whenever you get a spill, wait until the oven has cooled down, then wipe up the spills with a nice hot, wet cloth. Do this each time you cook, and spills and splatters will not get away from you.

The surface of a regular oven is pretty sturdy, so you can usually use any non-scratch scrubber to remove stubborn grime. Just about any of your favorite cleaners will work for this surface. Whatever you use, be sure to wipe the surface down afterward with a fresh batch of vinegar and water or baking soda and water to make sure no residue is left behind.

## **Continuous-Cleaning Oven**

These are the ovens with the textured surface that claim to always be cleaning your oven for you. The surface is a rough porcelain layer that is supposed to be burning off food continually as you cook with your oven.

I have one of these ovens and the claims are a bit misleading. Your oven does not magically clean itself. You are still required to use some kind of mild degreaser and routinely wipe down the insides of the oven each time it cools after cooking. One thing

to be sure, do not use any abrasive cleaners or scouring pads. And, never use an actual “oven cleaner” product. This oven will not tolerate the chemicals at all. Again, be sure to thoroughly wipe the oven down with vinegar and water or baking soda and water to get rid of any residue if you use a soapy cleaner.

### **Self-Cleaning Oven**

This type of oven does clean itself, sort of. After the cleaning cycle is through, you'll see a little pile of powdery ash on the floor of the oven. You can easily wipe this away and follow up with a damp cloth once the oven has cooled. Be sure to follow the instructions when you use the self-cleaning cycle.

A self-cleaning oven uses a “cleaning cycle” which is monstrously high heat. Consider running a fan to reduce the heat build-up in the kitchen and open a window as you will probably get some smoking. I had a self-cleaning oven and used the cleaning cycle only a few times. It gets very, very hot, produced a lot of smoke, and, frankly, scared me a little - the surrounding counters got warm. Needless to say, I didn't use the cleaning cycle too often. However, I did appreciate the super-insulation that self-cleaning ovens have. The extra insulation really did cut down on heat loss around the oven surface during use.

The inside of the oven can be cleaned with a gentle solution of dish soap and water, scrubbed with a non-scratch scrubber, then followed up with a vinegar and water rinse. There is a special seal on the door of self-cleaning ovens that should be carefully avoided when scrubbing the oven door. Again, no abrasive cleaners or scrubbers, and definitely no “oven cleaner” products.

### **General Tips To Keep Any Oven Cleaner**

Prevention is the key to most cleaning jobs. Some folks suggest putting aluminum foil or an aluminum pan on the bottom of the oven, the oven floor, so to speak. Check with your owner's manual because this may not be a good practice for your particular oven.

If your oven is gas and the burner is below the floor of the oven, you're actually blocking the heat if you line your oven with tin foil. Some people have reported “buckling” of the plate that forms the floor of the oven because they used foil. There are sometimes air vents on the bottom which definitely need to be clear. Personally, I don't find this the best practice for keeping your oven clean.

If I'm going to be cooking something particularly troublesome, like pizza for instance, I put one oven rack on the lowest position, place some aluminum foil on top of the rack, then position the other rack above and do the cooking on that rack. Now I have a “drip rack” so to speak. Just make sure you don't cover the entire rack with the aluminum foil. The air has to flow up and around in order for the oven to work properly.

## **My Oven Cleaning Adventure**

Now, how did I choose to clean my continuous-cleaning oven? I tried doing the thing that sounded like the easiest method. I emphasize TRIED.

### **Ammonia – Not!**

Several people suggested the ammonia method. You fill a little glass bowl with about 1/2 cup ammonia, place it in your oven before you go to bed, and close the oven door. This is supposed to magically make all the greasy goop disappear. I never found out because the smell of ammonia wafted through the house so quickly that we all started feeling a bit woozie.

If you're going to attempt this method, I'm quite sure that the “canary in a coal mine” may be in order here. Seriously, ammonia fumes can be harmful to small lungs and folks with respiratory problems, so even if this process works to degrease your oven, do heed this warning. This method is simple, that is a fact, and it may even work, but I never found out.

### **Vinegar and Baking Soda**

So, I resorted to my trusted vinegar and baking soda. In a plastic bowl, I dumped in some baking soda, then added some white vinegar. Remember your grade school science experiment and do this mixing in the sink. I kept adding vinegar to the baking soda until the consistency was about like yogurt so it would be spreadable, but wouldn't run and drip all over the floor.

Starting with the oven door, I applied the paste and let it sit for a couple hours. Then I took a soft brush and gave everything a gentle scrubbing. Be sure to put old towels on the floor because this is going to splatter. Then I took clean rags and wiped down the door with clean, hot water. I wore gloves and used really hot water to help disinfect and degrease the door.

After the door was clean, I removed it and set it safely aside so I could more easily reach the inside of the oven. I removed the racks and set those to soaking in my bathtub with a mixture of dish soap, vinegar, and baking soda.

Back to the interior of the oven, I mixed a solution of vinegar and baking soda that was more liquid-like, and using a clean rag, wiped down the insides, ending with the floor of the oven. I did this several times, then added a little more baking soda to my solution to make a paste and dabbed the paste on the bottom where there were a few stubborn spots. Then I walked away for a few hours.

When I came back, I put on my gloves and took very hot water and rinsed the interior of the oven by wiping it down with clean rags rung out in the hot water until the oven wiped clean. This took some time until I could see the rags coming away clean, but it worked quite well. Again, make your rinse water as hot as possible so you get a good de-greasing and disinfecting action going.

I repositioned the racks and put the door back on and stepped back to observe my handy-work.

### **How did the vinegar and baking soda work?**

The oven was cleaner, but you can tell that it has seen better days. It's not as clean as they show on commercials to sell those caustic commercial cleaners. But, that's okay. I'm ready now to cook up a storm in a nice clean oven; one without piles of ash or puddles of grease.

No matter how old or new your oven is, having a clean oven just feels good... and smells even better. Whatever method you use to clean your oven, I hope your task goes well and is rewarding!

### **The Hillbilly Housewife Recommends: [30 Days To An Organized Home](#)**



Something that's made a huge difference for me is the "[30 Days To An Organized Home](#)" ebook by Momi in A Blog.com.

Work your way through organizing and decluttering every room in your house in 30 days. The daily tasks make it easy to follow along and kept me from getting overwhelmed with the task at hand.

You'll also find some helpful printable checklists that will keep you on task and allow you to track your progress.

Get your copy today at <http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/organizedhome>

# Keeping It Clean – A Day By Day Guide

You know what it's like when the weather starts to get nice. You just want to play outside! It's hard to keep up with housework, laundry, cooking, and all those little interruptions when the sun is shining and the birds are chirping.

One of the most successful tactics I've used for getting and keeping the house clean during the warm weather days is to do a little bit every day.

**Yes, keeping up with the cleaning DOES make cleaning jobs go faster. It's something we all know, but sometimes resist.**

Sure, heavy cleaning will need to be done from time to time. But, just a quick scrub or polish each day can help get you outside faster all week long, and even make those heavy cleaning jobs go faster, too.

This little "tidy up" schedule is a simple guide to get you thinking about how easy it is to stay on task with your house cleaning so you can get out the door faster. Go ahead and print this out, post it on the refrigerator door for all the family to see. Then, assign these simple tasks so when the sun comes out, you can be out the door in minutes!

## Monday

- ✧ put away games, videos, movies, etc.
- ✧ sweep and damp mop kitchen floor
- ✧ spray and wipe down bathroom counters and sinks

## Tuesday

- ✧ restock bathroom paper supplies
- ✧ clean toilets
- ✧ take dirty clothes to laundry area

## Wednesday

- ✧ vacuum living area
- ✧ dust living area
- ✧ wash mirrors in bathroom

## Thursday

- ✧ pick up clutter in living area
- ✧ sweep and damp mop entry way
- ✧ dust and polish dining room table

## Friday

- ✧ take dirty clothes to laundry area
- ✧ wipe up bathroom floor
- ✧ take dirty bath towels to laundry

## Saturday

- ✧ throw towels in washer/dryer
- ✧ strip beds and take sheets to laundry
- ✧ wipe up kitchen floors

## Sunday

- ✧ put laundry away
- ✧ pick up clutter in entry way
- ✧ vacuum living area

Every household has different chores, but this is just a simple example of how you could divide little chores up all week long. Of course, you will want to divide these chores up amongst your family members, delegating perhaps one chore for each person (depending on their age.)

When the birds start chirping and the sun is shining, it's no time to be inside dusting and scrubbing. Take a few minutes to get these chores out of the way so you can enjoy more time together with your family having fun!

**The Hillbilly Housewife Recommends: [30 Days To An Organized Home](#)**



Something that's made a huge difference for me is the "[30 Days To An Organized Home](#)" ebook by Momi in A Blog.com.

Work your way through organizing and decluttering every room in your house in 30 days. The daily tasks make it easy to follow along and kept me from getting overwhelmed with the task at hand.

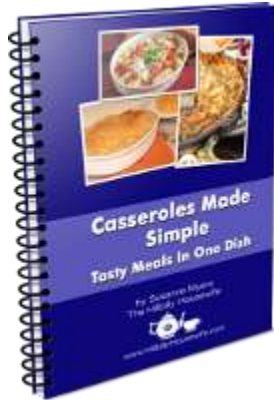
You'll also find some helpful printable checklists that will keep you on task and allow you to track your progress.

Get your copy today at <http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/organizedhome>



# Recommended Resources

## Casseroles Made Simple



For more delicious casserole recipes and helpful cooking tips, grab a copy of my ebook [Casseroles Made Simple – Tasty Meals In One Dish](#).

You will go from the oven to the table with a mouth watering meal for you family in no time! Hearty homemade meals, easy clean up, saving time, saving money... what's not to love about casseroles!

Just click on [Casseroles Made Simple](#) to order your copy today!

## Crockpot Cooking Made Simple



Tired of spending all day stirring pots in the kitchen, or just don't have the time to make a big homemade meal for dinner each night? I don't either. Instead I put my crockpot to work.

Let me show you how simple and easy it is to put inexpensive and healthy meals on the table without all the work and fuss.

[Get your copy of Crockpot Cooking Made Simple here.](#)

## Freezer Cooking Made Simple



If you like the convenience of those frozen TV dinners, but aren't too fond of the lack of nutrition, abundance of salt and aren't a big fan of the taste, take a look at my freezer cooking guide. I'd love to show you just how easy it is to make your own frozen meals that you can thaw and heat for quick and easy dinners on busy nights.

[Get your copy of Freezer Cooking Made Simple here.](#)

© [HillbillyHousewife.com](#) – You're welcome to share this report with family and friends. For more organization and cleaning tips, check out 30 [Days To An Organized Home](#).



## 30 Days To An Organized Home



Something that's made a huge difference for me is the "[30 Days To An Organized Home](http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/organizedhome)" ebook by MomsinaBlog.com.

Work your way through organizing and decluttering every room in your house in 30 days. The daily tasks make it easy to follow along and kept me from getting overwhelmed with the task at hand.

You'll also find some helpful printable checklists that will keep you on task and allow you to track your progress.

Get your copy today at <http://www.hillbillyhousewife.com/organizedhome>