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How to Make Cleaning a Kitchen Easy

By Stephanie Davies

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Kitchens are the centers of our lives. We cook, converse, and even eat in our kitchens. Perhaps that is why getting motivated to clean a kitchen is 99.9% of the battle...and elbow grease is the other 0.1%.

The reason for this is mostly because of all the rooms in a house, the kitchen alone has the position of having the most traffic, use, and just plain dirt!

To start yourself off, it can be extremely helpful to have a checklist handy of all the possible things you can do so that you can mark them off as you go. It also helps to have a distraction to make the time go by faster, such as your favorite music, book on tape, or TV show playing in the background.

When cleaning, always clean from the top of the room, and work your way down (which saves a lot of time), except in the case of washing walls, where you work from the bottom up to avoid streaking.

So let's start at the highest points. Each household is different in layout, so be sure to adjust these hints to specifically fit your particular dwelling. Begin with the tops of any cabinets, that top of the refrigerator that's been needing wiped down forever, and any "higher ups" that you see (except the walls...those are next to last)

Next lets get to the hardest parts. The mid-range, and mostly the places that are hardest to clean, such as the oven, dishes, sink, countertops, ect.

It is sometimes easiest to start in one corner and work your way around in a circle. For an example, we will start with the oven. It will make things go by easier and faster if you do the hardest things first, and save the easiest things for last. Using an all-purpose cleaner, clean off the top of the range, and if you have a gas stove, take the burner grates off, and soak them in a solution of water and oven cleaner, before rinsing and replacing. If you have a self-cleaning oven, now is the time to turn it on and clean itself while you skip to the next item. If you are not so lucky, then the best cleaner to use is either a commercial oven cleaner, or a paste of baking soda, borax, comet, and water. Rub this paste into the walls, and wipe clean with a damp rag. It may take a bit of elbow grease in places, but will be worth it in

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the end. Be sure to clean the window in the oven if you have one, and wipe down the outside with an all-purpose cleaner.

Next go to the refrigerator, and wipe down the sides and door first. Then take out everything inside..yes, EVERYTHING! Using an all-purpose cleaner, or a mixture of water and baking soda, wipe the sides, shelves, and clean out those veggie drawers! If you have a real mess in the drawers, or something caked on, the easiest way to clean them is to fill them with hot water, adding a capful of bleach, and set them aside for an hour or so while you clean, then empty out and wipe clean. Then replace everything in the fridge, and be sure to add a small dish with baking soda in it to capture all odors.

Now head over to the cabinets. A lot of people avoid cleaning out cabinets because they assume it to

be difficult when in all reality, it isn't so hard. To keep your cabinets clean, it is very useful to purchase low-cost "non-slip" rolls of cabinet liners. They come in a lot of colors, and not only keep the shelves clean, but also extend the life of glasses, china, and fragile dishes. So to begin cleaning your cabinets, work on one at a time, and start by removing everything from the cabinet. Once you have everything out, wipe down the inside, and lay down your matting if you opted for that, or simply replace everything in an orderly manner.

If there are any dishes, tackle them next. Wash the smaller items first, then mid-sized and save the large and greasy items for last. If you have a double sink, fill one side with water and soap, and the other just fill with hot water as a "rinse" since, and just toss the washed dishes in there, then move them to the drainer. It saves a lot of time to do things this way instead of washing each dish separately. you may wish to look at my other articles for a more in-depth look at making cleaning dishes easier.

Clean the countertops, and everything on them separately. For kitchen countertops, an all-purpose cleaner with an added de-greaser is a plus. I personally recommend using diluted pine-sol in a spray bottle.

Clean a microwave as I have previously mentioned in an article by placing water in a microwave safe bowl, and bringing it to a boil in the microwave, and letting it sit for a 5-10 minutes, then taking it out and easily wiping the inside of the microwave clean.

After everything on mid-level is finished, then clean the walls by using a solution of 1/2 cup bleach (OR Mr. Clean) to 1 gallon of water. Using a sponge or rag, wipe the walls down by starting at the bottom, and wiping your way to the top. That way, if any water runs down, it won't leave those hard to remove streaks!

Lastly, clean the floors. If you have a wood floor, use your usual method. For vinyl flooring, I recommend using the Mop-and-Glo two step method. They sell two bottles for two steps. One cleans the floor, one waxes and shines it. If you wish to use a cheaper method, a great way to skip the first step is to mop the floor using a solution of 1 part ammonia to 2 parts water, and mopping with that to remove old wax and residue, then using a mop-n-glo type floor polisher.

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See that wasn't too hard! As always, stay motivated, know that you can do it, and REWARD YOURSELF afterwards!!

Stephanie is the webmaster of StephanieDavies.com and provides live telephone advice of all kinds to people from all over the world. She gives advice on depression, mental health, spirituality, sexuality, relationships, and many other topics. For more information please visit her website at <http://www.stephaniedavies.com> or subscribe to her newsletter by visiting <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/liveadvice>

The Importance Of Keeping Your Kitchen Clean

By Jordi Shoman

Neglecting to clean your kitchen on a regular basis can have detrimental consequences on your family. Since the kitchen is where our food preparation is performed, avoiding the cleaning of the area can result in food poisoning from cross contamination and other such harmful things. As such maintaining a hygienic kitchen environment is essential. This involves the wiping of counter tops and cleaning of any items used in the preparation or consumption of the food. Leaving food covered kitchen utensils around allows harmful bacteria to grow and spread throughout your kitchen. If you have small children, keeping your kitchen clean should become all the more vital as children can be rather curious and may be inclined to eat something that has been sitting out for quite some time gathering bacteria.

There are many products available on the market that one can use to disinfect their kitchen space. Some may be better than others but as long as they have a sterilizing agent in them, they will be sufficient for cleaning your kitchen. It is suggested that you clean your kitchen at least once a day with whatever disinfectant you choose. There are an abundance of other hygienic tips that help to prevent food poisoning that one should follow in the kitchen as well. Since your hands and food act to contaminate each other, it is important that you wash them with anti-bacterial soap previous to and following the handling of risky foods. Utilizing different utensils for raw and cooked foods is necessary as well. It is also crucial that appliances, and not just counter tops and dishes, be cleaned regularly. Refrigerators should be scoured at least once a month and ovens, microwaves and other appliances should be cleaned whenever they show signs of filth. Changing towels in your kitchen is a must as well, as they become havens for bacteria when damp.

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