

THE 4-WEEK SPRING CLEANING CHALLENGE

An Interactive Calendar by Bin There Dump That

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, the proverb goes. That's why you're way more likely to get your annual house cleaning done if it's broken down into simple steps on a time-tested schedule -- which is exactly what you'll find here.

In just four short weeks, we'll help you completely transform your home. You'll have more space, more clarity, better air quality, and who knows? Maybe you'll find a pile of money somewhere. (We've got our fingers crossed for you.)

How to Use BTDT's Deep Cleaning House Schedule

Whether you're a working mom, a twentysomething riding the Marie Kondo wave, or a stay-at-home parent, this printable spring cleaning calendar will leave you feeling renewed at the end of the month.

Before you jump in, here are three ways to use the calendar:

- 1) **On your mobile device.** Carry it around like a personal assistant as you complete each task.
- 2) **Print it, and use it like a house cleaning checklist.** Mark each task as finished, and burn it in a bonfire with your friends. Goodbye, cluttered abode of last year -- hello, increased focus and fierceness of tomorrow!
- 3) **Laminate it, and use it every year.** This is our favorite, and the most eco-friendly option.

Ready? Let's get your spring cleaning underway.



Week 1:

THE PURGE: BIG-PICTURE ORGANIZATION

Week one is all about your big-picture decluttering strategy. After all, it doesn't make sense to spend time deep-cleaning things you don't need anymore. You wouldn't break out the feather duster and furniture polish for the broken bookshelf in your garage (unless you're planning on restoring it, that is). Ready to KonMari the heck out of your castle? Let's go.



Week 2:

THE COZY PLACES: LIVING AREAS, BEDROOMS, AND CLOSETS

If you're one of the 80 million Americans plagued with sleep problems, week two has massive life-changing potential for you. According to a study by the National Sleep Foundation, the cleaner and more comfortable your bed is, the better you'll sleep. And it doesn't stop there: less office clutter makes you more productive, and a clean house overall will keep you healthier and happier. Ready to transform the rooms where you get your R&R? Let's do it!



Week 3:

THE GRITTY PLACES: KITCHEN, BATH, GARAGE, BASEMENT & ATTIC

This week, it's time to get down and dirty in the rooms most likely to have attained the most mud, gunk, and microscopic matter. The villains that threaten these rooms are those that have power to wreak serious havoc on your health: mold and mildew.

Even if you do a pretty good job of keeping your kitchen, bathroom, and garage clean, these are undoubtedly the rooms that need the most attention when it comes to deep cleaning time.

Now that you're thoroughly grossed out, here's the good news — all it takes to get a handle on the grime in these rooms is having the right tools. You don't need a hundred fancy cleaning products for each possible solution. In fact, you can get it all done with just a few things:

- Heavy-duty gloves
- Baking soda
- Distilled white vinegar
- Microfiber cloth
- Sponge
- Stiff-bristled brush or toothbrush
- Window/glass cleaner



Week 4:

THE FINISHLINE: WRAPPING IT ALL UP

Every house is a little different, and some spring cleaning endeavors are a little more involved than others. This week, we'll focus on miscellaneous rooms or tasks that didn't fit into the other sections — and we'll offer preventative maintenance tips for keeping your house cleaner all year.



Week 1

DAY 1:



THE HEAVY LIFTING.

Walk through your house and note the large items you don't need anymore. Put them into columns based on the state they're in: donate, replace, or toss. Rent a dumpster for the big throwaway stuff, and load up what's still good to donate to a thrift store. Designate a spot where you'll stash all of your unwanted belongings, so at the end of this week you won't be scrambling from room to room.

Week 1

DAY 2:

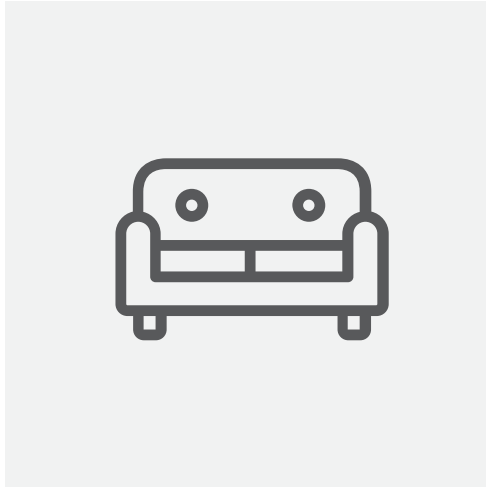


KITCHEN/MUDROOM.

Empty your cabinets and shelves and take stock. Are you hanging onto old cookware that you don't use? Do you have unnecessary multiples of infrequently-used items? Is it time to start saving for an appliance upgrade? Make a plan for optimizing your kitchen, and clear out anything you don't need.

Week 1

DAY 3:

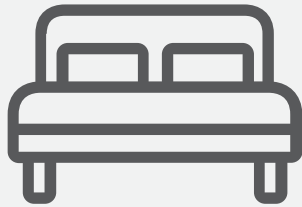


LIVING ROOM, FAMILY ROOM, AND OFFICE.

These are the spaces where you and your family move around and coexist the most, so anything you can do to cut down on clutter will make life easier for everyone. Remove decor you don't like and rearrange furniture for better feng shui (if you're into that sort of thing).

Week 1

DAY 4:



BEDROOMS.

Remove any bedroom furniture that isn't serving you anymore. Check your mattress: is it time for a replacement? Remove rugs and decor you don't need, and purge unwanted clothing and accessories from dressers or wardrobes.

Week 1

DAY 5:



BATHROOMS.

Soaps, creams, gels, and other grooming items tend to accumulate in bathrooms, so clear out the spaces under your sink and in your cabinets to see what you're working with. Be discerning: if you're not a loofah-using type of person now, you probably will never be -- so pitch it.

Week 1

DAY 6:



BONUS ROOMS AND CLOSETS.

The walk-in closet is the blessing and curse of modern life. If there's anything you keep in closets that you haven't touched in several months, consider if it's really worth hanging onto. Examine every closet -- from those in your bedrooms to the front coat closet.

Week 1

DAY 7:



LET GO.

It's time. If there's anything you haven't sorted through, wrap it up today. Then, take your unnecessary stuff and give it to the Salvation Army, Habitat ReStore, or host a garage sale. Breathe easy knowing the rest of your deep-cleaning adventure is going to be that much easier without the clutter. #SparkJoy, right?

Week 2

DAY 1:



LIVINGROOM.

Vacuum or sweep the floors. Use a vacuum extension to deep-clean your couches and other small or hard-to-reach places, like the corners of vaulted ceilings. Clean baseboards and trim, and wash windows. If you have one, give your fireplace and chimney a deep cleaning — or hire it out.

Week 2

DAY 2:



MASTER BEDROOM.

Give your floors a little deep-cleaning TLC with a vacuum, since you'll breathe better at night. Clean windows, trim, your ceiling fan, recessed ceilings and other architectural features. Wash all bedding, then scatter baking soda on your bare mattress, let it sit for a couple of hours, then vacuum it up to freshen it up. Rotate it, if needed.

Week 2

DAY 3:



OTHER BEDROOMS.

These are the spaces where you and your family move around and coexist the most, so anything you can do to cut down on clutter will make life easier for everyone. Remove decor you don't like and rearrange furniture for better feng shui (if you're into that sort of thing).

Week 2

DAY 4:



OFFICE OR BONUS ROOM.

If you have an office, craft room, or bonus room, take a day to deep-clean all furniture, flooring, windows, and details. If you don't, spend day four binge-watching Netflix.

Week 2

DAY 5:

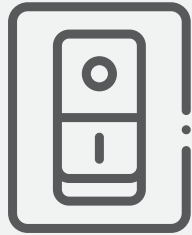


CLOSETS.

It isn't often we spend a lot of time in closets, but you might be surprised the kind of dirt and other debris that can accumulate. Empty out your closets, sweep and mop the floors, wipe down shelves, and dust in corners.

Week 2

DAY 6:



FIXTURES AND OTHER FEATURES.

Grab your rag and favorite all-purpose cleaner. Sanitize features like handles, door-knobs, shelves, towel racks, and light switches. A well-lit house is a happy house, so give your lights some love, too.

Week 2

DAY 7:



DOWN LOW, UP HIGH.

Spring cleaning is the perfect time to bring in the ladder and get a bird's eye view of the rooms in your house. Dust or vacuum up high, then go low and clean baseboards, crown moulding, and other details that are normally out of view.

Week 3

DAY 1:



KITCHEN.

Deep-clean the oven, stovetop, inside and outside of your fridge (time this task so that you're cleaning your fridge when you're low on food), microwave, and dishwasher. A simple baking soda, water, and vinegar mix is a great go-to technique for these sticky places. Don't forget about drain pans and exhaust fans, either.

Week 3

DAY 2:



KITCHEN.

Now that the big stuff is out of the way, wipe down the walls, and behind and under moveable appliances. Clean the flooring, windows, light and door fixtures, and don't forget any high-up dusting on your cabinets and other features.

Week 3

DAY 3:



BATH.

Soak your shower head in a plastic bag filled with vinegar overnight and wipe it down the next day. Soak your toilet, shower floor, and any other grimy areas with baking soda and white vinegar to break down mildew. If you have a shower curtain, run the cloth through the wash and soak the plastic portion.

Week 3

DAY 4:



BATH

Clean your cabinets, walls, flooring, windows, fixtures, and do any high-up dusting (skylights, for example). Reseal grout if necessary.

Week 3

DAY 5:



GARAGE.

Use an old broom to clear out dirt, dust, and cobwebs from walls, floors, and corners. Clean garage windows. To make the most out of your garage space, check out our article on how to clean your garage.

Week 3

DAY 6:



MUDROOM OR LAUNDRY ROOM.

Today, wrap up week three's deep-clean by getting down and dirty in your mudroom or laundry room. Move the washer and dryer away from the walls and clean the floors around them, then clean the inside of both appliances (including the dryer vent). Dust and wipe down all shelves, windows, and surfaces.

Week 3

DAY 7:



YOUR PICK!

On day seven, spend some more time on whichever of the previous rooms you couldn't quite finish. Or, if you've already achieved that "Godliness" level of cleanliness, take a page out of the good book and use your seventh day for rest.

Week 4

DAY 1:

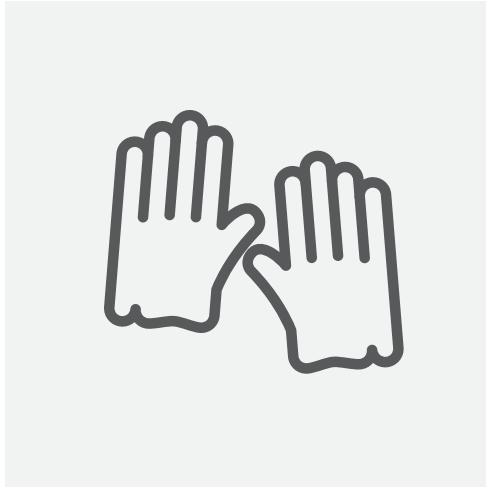


BASEMENT.

Clean flooring, light fixtures, and storage areas. Don't forget about basement window wells. Take the opportunity to optimize your storage with stackable containers and labels.

Week 4

DAY 2:



ATTIC.

Wear a mask and gloves before you clean your attic. Walk only on the joists (wooden beams) as you work. Dust, vacuum, and sweep wherever necessary. Check your attic fan for dirt buildup, and clean it thoroughly.

Week 4

DAY 3:



HALLWAYS AND OTHER ROOMS.

Have a room that didn't make the list above? Take some time today to clean it thoroughly.

Week 4

DAY 4:



CARPET CLEANING.

Carpets require their own type of maintenance: both regular vacuuming sessions and deep-cleans once or twice a year. Use a carpet shampooer or hire a carpet cleaning service to rid your flooring of deep-seeded stains, dust, and debris.

Week 4

DAY 5:



SPECIAL MAINTENANCE.

Do you have marble countertops or hardwood floors that require turtle wax or other sealants to protect them from the elements? Any grout that needs re-grouting?

Week 4

DAY 6:



REMEMBER SAFETY.

This wouldn't be a proper annual house cleaning schedule if we didn't mention routine safety checks. At least twice a year, change the batteries in your smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector. Check the pressure on fire extinguishers. Take the opportunity to optimize your outlet usage (don't cram too many electrical devices in the same area) and move them around for a better overall appearance.

Week 4

DAY 7:



OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT.

Whether you're a homeowner or renter, you know how outdoor furniture and equipment can accumulate dirt and webs. Rent a dumpster to get rid of your yard waste, broken outdoor items, and that barrel your husband brought home that he swore he'd convert into a planter but has since been rotting in your shed.