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# Make Spring Cleaning a Cinch

## FAMILY FEATURES

Spring is a time of renewal and revitalization, but it’s hard to appreciate all the invigorating aspects of spring when your home still bears months of winter dust and dirt. Tackle your living space room-by-room for a spring clean that will leave you and your home refreshed and ready for a new season.

### Kitchen

Although the kitchen is likely the room that gets the most cleaning attention, there are probably still areas for spring improvements. Cabinets and countertops make the biggest impression in your kitchen, so give them a thorough wipe-down, adding polish to the woodwork and natural stone, and repair any chips or damaged spots. Make your appliances look new again by wiping down and scrubbing hard-to-reach and heavy-use areas like the top of the refrigerator and the stovetop. They may not be immediately visible, but don’t overlook the inside of your cupboards. Discard expired food, damaged items and wayward pieces, such as lids with no matching container and vice versa. Finish off the kitchen with sweeping and mopping for squeaky clean floors.

### Living Areas

Throughout the house, your biggest chore may be removing clutter. Finding storage solutions or new homes for accumulated items can make rooms seem instantly brighter and more welcoming. Dusting the blinds, lighting fixtures and fans can add a fresh touch, and clean baseboards make for a top-to-bottom clean. Vacuum cushions as well as under and behind all furniture, and if necessary, consider shampooing the carpets. Dust all the nooks and crannies, including any decorative items and accessories.

### Bedrooms

The closet is a good starting point in the bedroom. Sort your clothes and discard any you haven’t worn in the past year; these can be donated. Also check for any items that need repair and set them aside to mend when you take a cleaning break. This is also a good time to put away winter clothing and bring out your spring and summer attire. Additionally, you may find it helpful to add organization and storage containers to help control items like shoes, handbags and other accessories. As temperatures rise, your bedding needs will change, as well. Wash and put away blankets you won’t need until the weather turns cool again. Flip and rotate your mattress for longer wear before you add fresh, lightweight sheets. While the mattress is raised, you can take advantage of access under the bed to run the vacuum. A fresh new pillow will add the final refreshing touch to your spring-ready bed. Before you leave the bedroom, don’t forget to pull dressers and other furniture away from the walls to vacuum, dust each item thoroughly and wipe down baseboards and blinds or shutters.

Once all your cleaning is complete, take a few extra steps to make your home feel extra fresh and clean. On a warm day, throw open the windows to let the fresh breeze chase away stale winter air and add lightly scented candles throughout the house for a home that smells as inviting as it looks. Find more advice to make spring tasks simple at [elivingtoday.com](http://elivingtoday.com).



## Don’t Lose Your Natural Stone’s Luster

Durability is one reason homeowners choose natural stone for their kitchens and bathrooms, but the greatest appeal is often the sheer beauty of the material. Maintaining that luster and shine requires a bit of effort, but the ability to enjoy the unique character of natural stone makes it all worthwhile. It’s important to understand the shine on granite and other natural stone is not from applying a wax, but a natural shine that reflects a rigorous process. After being quarried from the earth’s surface, these stone blocks are taken to a factory for processing. The next step is a polishing line. It’s this factory finish that enhances the inherent characteristics of natural stone – the veins, swirls and crystals. From there the slabs are bundled and shipped to local stone manufacturers and installers to be cut to a homeowner’s specifications. Once installed, you can maintain that luxurious factory finish with these tips from the experts at Granite Gold.

**Clean often.** Even miniscule particles could have a detrimental effect on your natural stone. However, it’s important to avoid common cleaners and abrasives as they can break down the protective seal and dull the natural finish, and result in expensive repairs. Also avoid using an abrasive scrubbing pad, which may leave

unsightly scratches. Rely on scrubbing pads designed specifically for natural stone or look for “non-scratch” on the packaging. **Seal frequently.** Frequently sealing natural stone surfaces maintains maximum surface protection, penetrating stone surfaces to provide superior, long-lasting resistance to staining, etching and soil buildup. It’s easy to test when to reseal. Pour water (about 3 inches in diameter) on the surface and let it sit for 30 minutes. If the water beads, then the stone remains sealed. However, if a dark mark or ring is created by the water, it is time to reseal. Be sure to repair any etching or stains before the sealant is applied. **Polish regularly.** Polishing not only brings out the stone’s natural beauty, it reinforces the protective seal and provides ongoing protection against water spots and fingerprints. One time-saving but effective solution after sealing is Granite Gold Clean & Shine, which provides the cleaning power of the line’s Daily Cleaner and the luster from the Polish in one easy-to-use formula.

You can find the products nationwide at Walmart, Lowe’s, Home Depot, Bed Bath & Beyond and Amazon; check the store locator at [GraniteGold.com](http://GraniteGold.com).