

THE RAKE AND BROOM



***Insider Secrets For
A Clean And Beautiful
Home That Shines***

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THE RAKE AND BROOM

Leave The Dirt To Us

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Introduction...Where do you start?

Does this sound familiar?

After working all week you've finally put aside some time and mustered up the energy to clean your house.

Maybe the dirt has been piling up for weeks, things are just getting too cluttered and you can't ignore the mess any longer.

Or maybe you've got company coming over and you're frantically trying to make things look decent in time for dinner.

Either way, you've decided to roll up your sleeves and get cleaning.



But where do you start?

The approach most people take (and the one I used to take before I ran my own home cleaning business), was to just pick a random room and start some kind of cleaning task.

Maybe you would start by collecting items that need to be thrown out, or vacuuming the carpet or maybe wiping down counter tops.

While all of these tasks are important, this method usually leads to distraction and "multi-tasking paralysis" as you continually discover new things that pull you away from the task at hand.

Cleaning and editing, or organizing, are two different tasks and it's helpful to keep them separate.

Sometimes just thinking about cleaning a few rooms in your house, let alone the whole house, can seem like major undertaking.

But it doesn't have to be.

Yes cleaning your home will take some effort.

But if you're organized about it and have a few simple strategies in place, you can drastically reduce the time and effort required to make your house look truly remarkable.

Having a clean home is one of the easiest ways to immediately improve your day-to-day quality of life.

Not only does everything look great and smell great, but you also become more organized, productive and stress free.



Your home, condo, or chalet is probably the biggest financial investment you'll ever make so why not maximize the enjoyment you get out of it?

But most importantly, a clean home is a cozier and healthier environment for your family members and pets.

So how do you achieve this level of enjoyment?

Read on.

How To Clean Your House Like A Pro

My crew and I have been house-cleaning professionals for over 10 years and in that time have completed over 15,000 cleaning jobs.

I've learned what makes a house look great and the difference is in the details.

I use this system and these techniques every time we clean a client's house.

And these aren't you're "standard maid service" tasks.

If you follow every step in this guide, I guarantee you'll have your house looking so good your guests will compliment you every time they come over.

I put this guide together for those times when you're feeling motivated to clean your home and want to capitalize on your will power but aren't sure where to start.

Not only will I show you how do clean your house properly, I'll also show you some important things to avoid so you don't ruin any of your furniture or appliances.

When I originally designed this guide, it was created as a training manual for my crew. As I was putting it together I had the goal in mind that "if we clean a house on a regular basis, the client should never have to clean anything."

So here's how to take professional techniques and implement them yourself.

Dusting

Let's face it. Most of us don't enjoy dusting. While my company does comprehensive dusting as a basic service every visit, if you dust just once a month, it's one of the easiest ways to get your place looking better than the average home.

Dusting is a good place to start when cleaning your house because it gives you the opportunity to pick things up off the floor, fluff pillows and cushions, fold throw blankets, and perform basic tidying.

When dusting your place, if you miss an area, it'll be quite visible within a couple of days as compared to everywhere else, so be thorough.

Important: I recommend you use Pledge. I've tried a bunch of different products and it always gives me the best results. But make sure you spray Pledge on your cloth, not on the furniture. Micro fiber cleaning cloths also work very well for dusting as well as for mirrors and glass.



Move Items

It's important to take the time to move items prior to dusting. This is actually more efficient than picking up each item and dusting under it. If you're worried about how things looked before you moved them and want to make sure everything goes back exactly the same, you can always take a picture on your cell phone or camera before you start.

Window Ledges

When dusting window ledges, raise all blinds or curtains to access all ledges.

Ceiling Fans

Once you get your ceiling fan clean, it's a cinch to do it every time. I've seen many ceiling fans that can be easily reached by a footstool or chair that are literally dripping with dust.

Baseboards

We always do baseboards. Most services never touch them but they are one of the key elements to making your house look clean. Even if you clean everything else, dirty baseboards will stick out. If you haven't got to your baseboards in a while and they are really dirty, then clean them with a damp mop and/or vacuum them.

Door Jams & Light Switch Plates

A damp cloth with a little cleaning product on it will look after these easy to miss areas.

Patio Doors

Patio doors, and entry doors are a must. Watch for nose prints where animals live.

Basics

These other areas are all part of what I consider to be basic dusting that you can do if your time is limited and you're just trying to tidy up a bit and get your place looking fresh quickly.

Basics that should not be missed include: bed frames including the side rail, the side of cabinets and armoires, door panels, banisters and spindles, chair legs and bases, curtain rods, pictures and their frames, stairwell ledges, dining room table legs and bases.

If your house has a lot of vacuuming, you should lift the cushions on your couches and dust crumbs and debris onto the rug or floor. This saves time when vacuuming and avoids having to pull out the vacuum again later when you notice this.

Bathrooms

Bathrooms are one of the most important areas to focus your energy when cleaning your place. Not only do you use them regularly, but so will every guest you have over.

A lot of us get used to how our bathrooms look over time. If you're planning on entertaining, try and look at you bathroom as someone who has never seen it before would. Maybe there are some little things that you have gotten used to but others may find unsightly. The busier counters and bathtub ledges are with personal items and nic nacs, the more time consuming they will be to clean.

Mirrors

Mirrors should be streak-free from all angles. If they're not, they will not look clean and you'll just be forced to do them again. The mirror will also stay cleaner longer if it's really clean.

I recommend a foam glass cleaner like **Invisible Glass** or **Bon Ami**.

If you still can't get your mirror clean, try vinegar and water, as this will remove any build up that you may have from other products.

Toilets

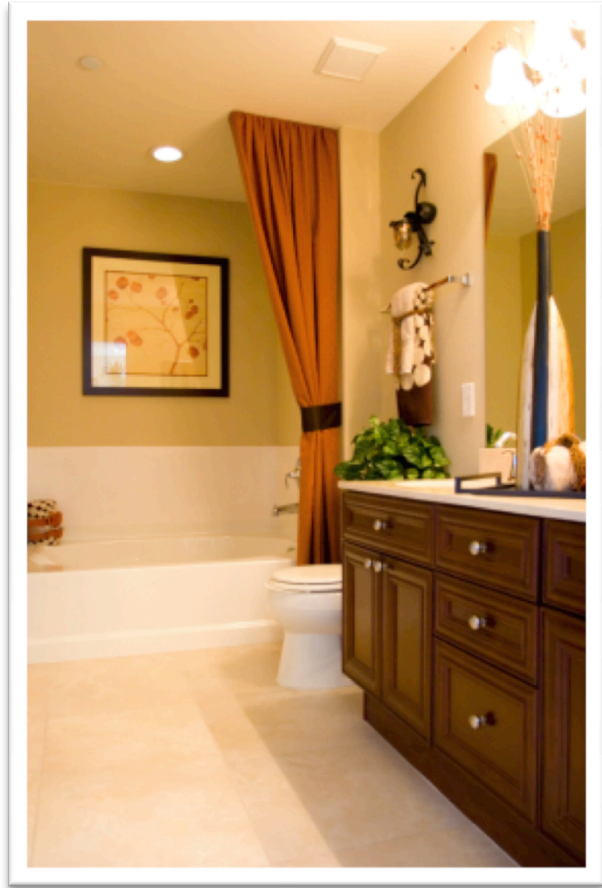
Make sure to clean the bowl, lids, fronts, bases, tops, and especially in and around the seat fasteners where dirt tends to collect. **We recommend Spray Vim for the entire bathroom.**

Wipe the base of the toilet and in behind the toilet by hand including the baseboard as a mop just can't do this job.

Fixtures

Clean all lights (including the bulbs once they have cooled), toilet paper and towel racks, and the tops of the shower curtain rod. Also take care to clean the underside of taps especially where taps meet sinks and tubs. Hot water and a simple scrubbie will take away all gunk.

If you have a shower door with metal trim, take the time to clean the track. If you have halogen lights over your mirror, try to clean the mirror before you turn on the lights, as the lights heat up the mirror and therefore make it impossible to get a streak free finish.



Towels

Try and fold all towels hotel style (in three). This is a simple technique that will really give you that professional look. See the welcome video at <http://www.therakeandbroom.com/> for how to do this.

Walls

Many people have splash marks on the wall where the hand towel is kept. Check your walls all around the bathroom especially near the toilet.

Vacuuming

Depending on the size of your place, this can be a big job, but it's possible to be fast and also be thorough. It's important to vacuum well as I recommend moping afterwards and this can only be as good as the vacuum that precedes it.

Furniture

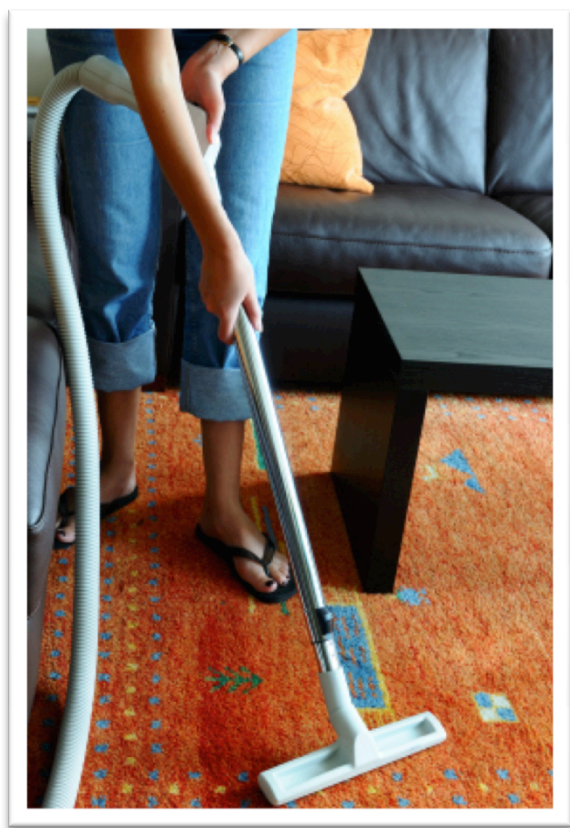
If you are able to, try and move couches, chairs, and other items like bedside tables. You should also try and move your beds every two to three months and vacuum underneath.

Area Rugs

For large area rugs (8 x 10 and up) vacuum under the edges or fold it back. Vacuum and then pick up smaller rugs to prepare for moping afterward.

Fireplaces and Wood Stoves

If you have occasional fires or a wood stove, vacuum hearths to remove ashes as they can blow around to other parts of your house easily.



Closets

Open closet doors and vacuum into them, and even empty them out, especially the front hall closet where a lot of dirt can be tracked in on shoes from out outside.

Kitchens

As you vacuum through your kitchen, open the bread drawer or where you store the toaster and vacuum up the crumbs. Do the same with the cutlery drawer.

Lamp Shades

They too need to be vacuumed, but hold the seams with one hand while vacuuming, and if possible, reduce the suction on the vacuum as some shades can be delicate.

Garages

If you have an entrance from the garage into your house, vacuum towards or into the garage which will keep grit from making its way into your house.

Patio Doors

Open patio doors and vacuum the tracks.

When my crew goes into a house to clean, we vacuum all floor surfaces, as vacuuming is better than sweeping. This includes bathrooms, kitchens, & stone floors. If your baseboards are very dusty vacuum them before moping.

Kitchens

When cleaning your kitchen you should start with your fridge and stove.

Fridges

Be sure to wipe the door panel, handle and the top of the fridge.

Ovens

If you spray an oven ahead of time, you make sure you remove of the lower drawer because the oven cleaner drips into it and the cleaner will remove the enamel on the drawer. Place about 4 or 5 sheets of newspaper on the floor to

catch any drips. Removal of the drawer also makes it easier to clean under the stove.

As an added precaution, fold a couple of sheets of paper towel and place them in the door crack and then close the door. This will absorb any drips that may occur.

Self-Clean Ovens

Remove the racks prior to setting the self clean including the side racks.

Small Appliances

Coffee makers, toasters, microwaves — clean and polish.

Dishwasher

Wipe clean the outside of your dishwasher.

Sinks

Clean under kitchen sinks, tidy, wipe and do the same for the garbage area. This area gets a lot of use and becomes dirty quickly.



Mopping

If you have hardwood floors, **I recommend you use Murphy's Oil Soap.** There are some other hardwood floor products on the market designed for hardwood, and two that come to mind: **Pledge Hardwood Floor Cleaner, and Bona.**

Once again, if you find that you might have a build up of product on your floors then use vinegar and water a couple of times and that should bring back your shine. For tile, and everything else, we use **Pine Sol.**

We also use two types of mops, both of which are made by **Vileda**. The first mop is a rag style head, in which the actual mop head is made up of blue and white strips of cloth, and we use this on baseboards and all tile floors. We typically use Pine Sol and you don't need very much product. The second mop, is a flat micro fiber, which is what we use on hardwood floors.

Baseboards

Always do the baseboards first, (with the rag mop) and make sure that the mop is wet enough (but not soaking) to actually clean the baseboards. Do the entire house at once. It won't matter how clean your house is at the end, if your baseboards are still dirty, then your house will look dirty.



Tile Floors

Use the same mop to wash all of your tile floors. You can do these all at once, or if you prefer you can do a floor at a time.

Whether it's tile or hardwood, be sure to mop around table and chair legs, and under furniture.

Hardwood Floors

When moping hardwood floors, use about a cap full of Murphy's Oil Soap in about 6 liters of warm to hot water. You must get the mop head wet and ring it out by hand, again you want it wet but not soaking wet.

General Moping Tips

Mop your way out of a room, and it helps to keep the mop head going in the same direction of the grain of the hardwood floor – this reduces the chance of streaks forming.

When it's all dry, put back your mats, chairs, and anything else you picked up off the floor.

Remove the mop heads and place in the washing machine.

Bonus Tips And Insider Secrets

- Stainless steel appliances: There are two ways to clean a stainless fridge door. The easiest is to take a micro fiber cloth and wet half of it. Clean the door and then take the dry part of the cloth and dry it. **If you want to use Stainless Cleaner, Home Depot (Zep) and 3M make the only two products that I recommend. Always wipe in the direction of the grain of the stainless.**
- If you have a stainless steel cook top you may find that you have brown stains that you cannot remove. Take a can of oven cleaner, and spot spray where the stains are. Wait about 10 minutes and either use a sponge or soft cloth to wipe it clean. **Never ever use anything more than a soft cloth or sponge on stainless steel.**
- If you have black shiny tile anywhere in your home – use Vim Oxy Gel when moping to keep the shine.
- If you want to get your refrigerator looking really clean you're going to want to pull it out. There are two things to remember. Do you have an icemaker? If so there's a direct water feed and you don't want to pull this line away from the wall. A refrigerator is heavy and may scratch your floors, so have help and keep an eye on the floor.
- Sit on the toilet, what do you see? Be sure that the sight line is clean.

Now that you know how to get your house looking like a professional cleaned it, make sure you download and print the simple checklist I put together to make the process even easier.

You can get it at <http://www.therakeandbroom.com/free-home-cleaning-guide>

If you are able to complete this list, your house should look cleaner than it ever has before. At this point you should grab a magazine and your favourite beverage and make up an excuse to call some friends over.

Your house looks beautiful!

Need some help? Don't Worry, That's Normal!

If you've let things 'get away' from you and the thought of cleaning your home is just too overwhelming, it's certainly understandable and very normal. But it might be time to call in a professional. Most cleaning companies will consider a one time clean and I provide this service to any client that's interested.

Everything that I outlined above is all part of our "basic" cleaning service.

One of the things I hear over and over from my clients is the feeling of happiness and elation that washes over them when they come home and open their front door to an absolutely pristine house.

It simply allows them to enjoy their place more and makes them want to invite people over.

We also do seasonal cleaning if you're having a family event or a party during the holidays.

I have a very loyal customer base in the greater Collingwood area and the reason people love our services is because we are able to tailor them to each customer.

I have been lucky to build up high-trust relationships with my clients so if they go out of town for a while they know I will always look out to make sure everything looks as it should when I come to clean their place.

A lot of seasonal visitors and chalet owners particularly enjoy a nice level of comfort knowing that I come by their place when they're away. And even if you haven't been up since my crew and I last came by, we will pick a new pet project

each time beyond our "basic" cleaning to make sure you get high value out of our services.

If you want to get your place looking better than it ever has before, simply grab the phone and give me a call at 705-445-6019 or email me at therakeandbroom@rogers.com.

I hope that you found this guide useful and that it gets you motivated to clean your home so you can enjoy it fully.

If you think someone else you know would also find this guide valuable, please email it to them even if they don't live anywhere near Collingwood.

Thanks for reading, and if you see me around town, please come up and say hi! I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Mitch Collins

P.S. – Want to bring your garden back to life? Or how about give it a “facelift” so it’s no so boring?

I also have years experience working in a nursery and I know how to make your garden unique and beautiful without resorting to the same old boring plants and flowers. Simply go to <http://www.therakeandbroom.com/services> to see what services we have available.

