

News Column

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Make the Most of Spring Cleaning

Spring has officially sprung! Warmer weather means it's time to open up the windows, shake out the rugs, and spring clean your home. However, before you get started, here are some of the most common mistakes made and tips on how you can avoid them.

1. **Cleaning around Clutter.** Much of what makes a home look messy is the accumulation of stuff you no longer use or need. Maybe it's a jacket you haven't worn in years, extra knick-knacks that are in the way, or books you've already read. Why waste time dusting around those things that just take up space? Spring is the perfect time to purge all those unnecessary items.
2. **Sparse Supplies.** Once you've cleaned out the clutter and are ready to go, be sure to have all the cleaning supplies you might need to get the job done. Items you might need could include trash bags, chlorine bleach, and different variations of cleaners for different surface types. You can purchase them or even make your own by following recommended recipes. Here's just one example:

Window/Mirror Cleaner:

¼ c. cornstarch

½ c. ammonia

1 c. vinegar

Mix ingredients together in a jar. Wear gloves, because vinegar is an acid. Although it is great for removing rust or lime deposits on the outsides of windows, it can be harmful to unprotected skin. Try swapping paper towels for newspapers as they leave a streak free shine.

3. **Plan? What Plan?**

Do you do your weekly grocery shopping without a list or take out on a road trip without directions? Of course not! The same goes for cleaning. Make a list of your cleaning tasks and create a schedule. This will make the job run smoother and go faster. Whether it is tackling one room at a time or working on multiple at once, figure out your cleaning style. Starting with big items such as bed linens, area rugs and curtains that might need laundered. After removing those items, it will be much easier to clean the rest of the space.

4. **Going at it Alone.** Throw on some great tunes, create built-in rewards for tasks completed or make a game out of the day. These are just some ways to involve the whole family. This will help you finish faster while teaching your family to take responsibility for their mess as well.

Keep in mind the end reward; a clean house! Just think how much better you will feel and how great it will look once you are finished.

For more information about Family and Community Wellness, 4-H Youth Development, and K-State Research and Extension, contact the office at 620-583-7455, or email me at celutz@ksu.edu, or stop by the office. Visit the K-State Research and Extension - Greenwood County Facebook page and <http://www.greenwood.k-state.edu/> for more information.