



As the days get longer here in Minnesota, the urge to step outside and soak up the sunshine grows stronger. After months of snow, ice, and gray skies, I finally get to feel the sun's warmth on my skin again. But just as I'm about to grab my sunglasses and sprint outside...

"Air me out! Make me clean!"

That's right – my house is yelling at me. Winter has left behind a lovely mix of dust, salt, and mystery stains I don't remember creating. The fresh air is calling, but so is my to-do list. What do I do? I clean smart, not hard.

Over the years, I've figured out some tricks to get the job done *fast* – because I'd rather be outside than scrubbing baseboards all day. Here are my top 10 spring cleaning tips to refresh your space without losing an entire weekend doing it.

1. **OPEN UP & LET THE FRESH AIR IN**

The first thing I do? Throw open every window. Winter air is stale and sunshine is a natural disinfectant. Plus, a fresh breeze helps air out whatever "interesting" smells have been hiding in the house all winter (looking at you, neglected gym bag).

2. **WORK FROM TOP TO BOTTOM**

I learned this the hard way – never clean the floors first. If you start from the top (ceiling fans, light fixtures, shelves), all that dust and debris falls downward, saving you from re-cleaning the floors. Trust me. Cleaning twice is *not* my idea of a good time.

3. **WAKE UP YOUR WALLS AND BASEBOARDS**

Winter grime doesn't just sit on the floor – it's clinging to walls and baseboards like a toddler who doesn't want to leave the park. A microfiber cloth and mild soapy water will do the trick. Also, if you've been aggressively using an eraser sponge on glossy finishes, STOP – it works like fine sandpaper and can make things look dull. Lesson learned.

4. **REFRESH KITCHEN APPLIANCES**

Winter means comfort food, and comfort food means my oven has been working overtime (hello, baked-on disasters). Here's my go-to routine:

- Oven – I tackle grease with a degreasing dish soap, a metal scrubbing pad, and a razor blade for the stubborn spots. It's oddly satisfying – and without the overwhelming chemical odors.
- Fridge – I remove expired items (why do I have condiments from 2021?), wipe down shelves, and pretend I'll keep it organized all year.
- Microwave – A bowl of water and lemon zapped for a minute loosens up all the food splatters – minimal effort required.

5. **SANITIZE HIGH-TOUCH AREAS**

Winter is basically one long germ-sharing session, so I go after the light switches, door handles, remotes, and cabinet knobs with disinfecting wipes or spray. Say "hello" to a healthy spring.

6. **GET A PROFESSIONAL STREAK-FREE WINDOW SHINE**

Expensive glass cleaner? No thanks. I use soapy water and a squeegee for crystal-clear windows. Pro tip: Wipe the squeegee blade with a cloth after each pass to avoid streaks. My windows have never looked better... except for the dog kisses I'll have five minutes later.

7. **REFRESH YOUR SLEEPING SPACE**

Spring means fresh sheets and even fresher air! I vacuum my mattress, rotate it like a responsible adult, and sprinkle baking soda on the surface before vacuuming again to eliminate odors. If weather allows, I open windows – because nothing beats that fresh, clean air.

8. **SHOW YOUR FLOORS SOME LOVE**

Winter boots + salt = floors that *desperately* need attention. I shake out small rugs, vacuum with baking soda for a refresh, and if I'm feeling ambitious, steam clean carpets. Hardwood? A gentle cleaner and microfiber mop make it look less like a winter battleground.

9. **FLIP, FLUFF, AND FRESHEN UP YOUR FURNITURE**

Couches and chairs have collected their fair share of dust, pet hair, and snack crumbs (whoops). I vacuum cushions, flip them for even wear, and spot-clean stains so they feel fresh again. Finding lost change is basically a spring cleaning bonus!

10. **SET A TIMER & KEEP IT SIMPLE**

I've learned that marathon cleaning sessions = regret. Nothing like getting overwhelmed and quitting before the job is done! Instead, I set a 30-minute timer and tackle one area at a time. Breaking it up makes it a lot less overwhelming and ensures I still get to enjoy my day.

SPRING CLEANING WITHOUT THE STRESS

I get it – there are only so many warm months in Minnesota and I don't want to spend them stuck inside scrubbing. These simple cleaning tricks get the job done fast so I can breathe fresher, live cleaner, and get back to enjoying the sunshine.

This spring, resolve to clean smarter, let the fresh air in, and spend more time doing what you love! *DW*

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