Cleaning Hacks You Wish You Knew Sooner

Small shortcuts with items you already own - lemon, baking soda, vinegar and a few clever tools - that make everyday cleaning faster and easier.

PRINTABLE CHECKLIST | 22 HACKS | KITCHEN TO LAUNDRY

Work through one section at a time and tick each hack off as you try it. Most take under five minutes, need no special products, and work best when you repeat them little and often.

Kitchen

Odours, stuck-on food and sticky labels - solved with pantry basics.

- [ ] Wipe a lemon half over a cutting board, then rinse, to remove odours
- [ ] Sprinkle baking soda on a damp sponge to lift stuck-on food from the stove
- [ ] Place a bowl of vinegar water in the microwave for 3 minutes, then wipe it clean
- [ ] Rub cooking oil on a paper towel to remove sticky labels from jars
- [ ] Line the bottom of the bin with newspaper to absorb leaks
- [ ] Freeze vinegar in ice-cube trays to clean and freshen the garbage disposal

Bathroom

Fog, limescale and soap scum - prevented before they build up.

- [ ] Apply shaving cream to a mirror, then buff it off, to stop fogging
- [ ] Wrap a vinegar-soaked cloth around a showerhead overnight to remove limescale
- [ ] Sprinkle baking soda on grout, spray with vinegar, scrub, then rinse
- [ ] Hang a dryer sheet on the shower rod to repel soap scum between cleans

Living Areas

Pet hair and dust - lifted with things already in your cupboards.

- [ ] Roll a damp rubber glove over upholstery to lift pet hair
- [ ] Use a pillowcase to dust ceiling fan blades and trap the dust inside
- [ ] Press a lint roller over lampshades to remove dust quickly
- [ ] Place a dryer sheet in a drawer or on a shelf to keep it smelling fresh

Laundry and Stains

Act fast on stains, and let vinegar do the softening work.

- [ ] Add half a cup of white vinegar to the rinse cycle to soften towels
- [ ] Blot a fresh stain immediately, never rub it, to stop it spreading
- [ ] Apply dish soap to a grease stain, leave for 10 minutes, then wash
- [ ] Put white vinegar on a cloth to lift water rings from wood

Whole Home Time-Savers

The order you clean in matters as much as what you clean.

- [ ] Clean top to bottom so dust falls onto floors you clean last
- [ ] Carry all supplies in one caddy to avoid trips back and forth
- [ ] Set a 15-minute timer and clean one room at a time
- [ ] Keep a small basket in each room for quick daily decluttering

> **Start here:** If you try only three hacks this week, start with the microwave vinegar bowl, the pillowcase fan trick, and the 15-minute timer. Together they give the biggest result for the least effort.

Use with care: Test any hack on a small, hidden spot first. Never mix vinegar or baking soda cleaners with bleach, and do not use vinegar on granite, marble or other natural stone.

My favourite hacks & notes