

(NC) Get a jump on your spring-cleaning with some tips that'll leave every corner in your home spotless in no time.

Make it part of your routine. If you wait to clean and tidy up once a week, a month or even a season, you're setting yourself up for a long, heavy chore that you'll only dread and procrastinate. Instead, try incorporating easy tasks like wiping the kitchen counters, straightening out the living room and freshening up your bed with linen spray into your daily schedule and you'll have a much easier and quicker time of it when you deep clean.

Choose appliances that tackle the dirty work. You may already have a self-cleaning oven or laundry machine, but that self-cleaning magic is more valuable than ever when you can have it in the bathroom. The new VorMax Plus self-cleaning toilet from American Standard is a huge time-saver that cleans and freshens your toilet every time you flush. Available at Home Depot, it features an innovative design that uses a Lysol fresh infuser that reduces dirt buildup and an antimicrobial surface that inhibits the growth of stain- and odour-causing bacteria.

Set tidying up on autopilot.

5 Smart Tricks To Make Cleaning Faster And Easier



It's a lot easier to clean when you have a system that keeps your house clean. Keep your mud room area in top shape by encouraging everyone to sort their coats, shoes and mitts as soon as they set foot in the door with designated hangers and pretty storage boxes. Eliminate unattractive packaging and clutter in the bathroom and kitchen with mason jars and decorative canisters for your toiletries and dried goods.

Have items work double duty. Get creative and think outside the box to find things that can do some of the cleaning for you. For example, your dishwasher can do much more than just clean your plates, pots and pans. Load it up with plastic toys, light fixtures and toothbrush holders and have it run while you work on everything else. Using dryer sheets to prevent

musty odours in clothing storage boxes, linen closets and shoes means you won't have to do extra cleaning or laundry just to get rid of unwanted smells.

Add some inspiration. Sometimes tasks feel like they take forever simply because they're dull and repetitive. Time flies by when you're entertained, so listen to a podcast or stream re-runs of your favourite show

in the background for cleaning that seems speedier. You can also use the time more efficiently by multitasking and squeezing in a workout while you clean. Make every step count with a fitness tracker and throw in a few exercises like pushups or squats every time you switch rooms and easily meet your daily physical activity goals.

Should You Buy Or Sell First?

(NC) In Canada's evolving real estate markets, both buying and selling a home are very personal decisions. Add buying and selling at the same time, and the process becomes even trickier. The path up the property ladder is different for everyone and which to do first depends on your unique circumstances.

"Buying and selling a home at the same time is no small endeavour and involves extensive research and a clear understanding of all the steps involved," explains Nicole Wells, vice-president of home equity finance at RBC.

Here are some things to consider before making a move:

Should I sell first? The upside of selling first is that you will know how much money you have to work with, and it's also easier to get new financing when you need it. However, if there are delays or challenges finding the right new home for you, you may incur additional rent and storage costs in the interim.

Should I buy first? In this case, you will have time to plan your move and get your current home ready to sell. However, closing dates on both the purchase and sale may not line up and if your home doesn't sell for a while, you'll be stuck with two mortgages at once and a higher debt-to-income ratio.

Add a contract contingency. Whether you're buying or selling, try to add a contingency to your contract that lines up the closing dates to bridge the in-between period. This isn't always possible, as it depends on the market and whether the buyer/seller is willing to agree to an extended or reduced period of time.

Know the markets. Research prices in the areas where you're buying and selling. Does the market favour buyers or sellers? This is the best way to decide which move to make first. As a rule of thumb, you want to sell first in a buyers' market and do the contrary in one that favours sellers.

Consider rental revenue. Research the rental market in your area and calculate the cost versus profit ratio of renting out your home to tenants, rather than selling it. It could be financially advantageous, and real estate could be a great way to diversify your investment portfolio.

Find more information online at rbc.com/home.

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