

*Help Mother  
With  
Housecleaning*



# Help Mother With Housecleaning



## What It Does For You

A clean attractive room always gives you a feeling of pride and pleasure. It also means that you won't have to feel embarrassed when your friends come to visit you.

Just as your personal appearance expresses your personality, so does the way you keep your room. People judge what kind of girl you are by the way you keep your room as well as by the way you behave in everyday living. This is also true of your home and your family.

Do you help your mother with housecleaning in addition to keeping your own room clean? Have you ever stopped to think how much time and work it takes to keep the whole house clean—especially a 7 or 8 room house?!!

You can save your mother a lot of time and work by helping with *the planning* and with *the doing* of the total housecleaning regularly. In addition to keeping your own bedroom clean, there are many cleaning jobs in other rooms that you can do—or at least help do.

You can encourage all members of your family to “pick up” after themselves (clothes, books, magazines, newspapers, toys, etc.) This helps to make the total job of housecleaning much easier. You can be sure that your mother and father will appreciate such cooperation and help! At the same time you will be gaining valuable experience.

## Housecleaning Isn't Hard If You . . .

Have a happy attitude and a desire to learn.

Plan with your mother and family

*what* is to be done

*who* will do it

*when* it will be done, and

*how* it will be done.

Use the right tools, equipment and supplies to suit each job.

Keep small cleaning equipment and supplies in a container (basket or box with handle) that can be carried easily from room to room.

Have a convenient cleaning closet in which all cleaning equipment and supplies are kept.

Practice and develop skill in ways of doing modern housecleaning—such as correct use of the vacuum cleaner—to save time and unnecessary work.

There are many cleaning jobs to be done—some every day, some every week, and some once in a while or when necessary. You can't learn them all in one 4-H home management unit.

Directions for doing several specific cleaning jobs are included in this leaflet.

Are you forming good habits of cleanliness and orderliness? It's just as easy to form good habits as bad ones, but much harder to break a bad habit once it is formed. We do things largely by habit and custom. Learn good habits from the start while



you are young; it will "come natural" then to be neat and clean not only in house cleaning but also in everything you do for the rest of your life.

## Cleaning Your Own Room

You may be sharing your room with your sister; then you both share the bed, the dresser, the chest of drawers and closet, and the job of keeping your room clean and orderly. Work together on it and it can be fun.

Here are the things to be done:

### Everyday . . .

1. Turn bed covers back to foot of bed as soon as you get up to let it "air out" for at least half an hour or while you dress and help with breakfast.
2. Hang up and put away clothes. Avoid throwing them down when undressing. Hang dresses to air before putting them in closet.
3. Put dirty clothes in laundry bag or clothes hamper.
4. Put shoes on shoe rack, in shoe pockets, or on shoe shelf in closet—whichever you have—not on closet floor.
5. Put away odds and ends and straighten things on dresser top.
6. Make the bed.
7. Adjust windows and shades and straighten furniture.

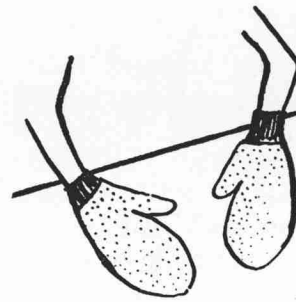
**NOTE:** It saves time in the morning rush to do some straightening up in your room before you go to bed the night before. The time to hang your coats and dresses on hangers is when you take them off; get the habit. It not only prevents "clutter" in your room, but also saves time in the end.

### Once a Week . . .

1. Turn mattress; get some one to help you.
2. Air bed and put on clean sheets and pillow cases.
3. Clean and roll up rugs.
4. Clean the floor. If you have no vacuum cleaner, use broom and treated floor mop.
5. Empty waste basket; empty it more often if it needs it.
6. Dust thoroughly and rearrange furniture and accessories.

### Once in Awhile or When Necessary . . .

1. Wash windows.
2. Wash curtains and other washable fabrics such as dressing table skirts and shoe pockets.
3. Dust and clean walls, ceiling and woodwork.
4. Clean and rearrange (back into convenient order) closets and drawers.
5. Clean furniture.
6. Clean floors.

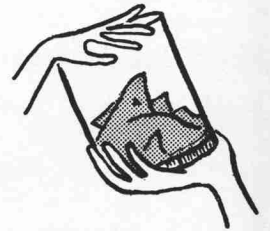


## Suggestions and Directions for Cleaning Jobs

If you have no vacuum cleaner, (and if you do, there are times when you need a dust cloth) use *treated* dust cloths or dust mittens. Just a dry or untreated cloth mostly only stirs up the dust which settles down again over everything—walls, curtains, pictures, furniture, etc.

### How to Treat Dust Cloths or Mitts . . .

1. Get a metal can or wide-mouth glass jar (1 or 2 quart size) with a good fitting lid.
2. Put into the can (or jar) about 1 tablespoon furniture polish or kerosene and turn over and around until all inside surface is well covered with a thin coating. Pour out what is left except a few drops.
3. Put clean dry dust cloths or mitts into the can (or jar) and close tightly. Let stand overnight before using.



A good size for dust cloths is 15 to 18 inches square. Use soft cotton cloth, cheese cloth, or pieces of old rayon (not too nearly worn out). Whatever you use, it should not be too worn and "linty".

Along with this leaflet you can get a pattern for a glove with fingers. It can be used for making a dust cloth with a glove cut single and stitched on the center (as shown below), or for making dusting gloves. Scraps of cotton are fine for glove pieces on dust cloths and backs of dusting gloves.

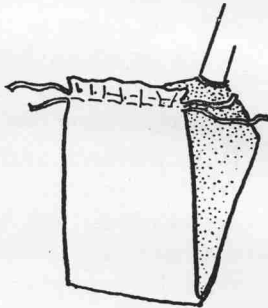
Wool is better for inside pieces of dusting gloves.

Treated floor mops can be washed, dried well and re-treated the same way. For this you will need a large can or lard bucket (with tight fitting lid) large enough for mop.



### Tips on Dusting:

1. Dust with both hands at the same time with a dust mitt on each hand; thus you dust much more surface in a lot less time.
2. Start at one place and work around room.
3. Dust corners and grooves; if you don't they will brand you as a careless person and they'll be much harder to clean later.
4. Take everything off dresser and table tops, dust, then arrange everything carefully back into place. Avoid having so many things.
5. Dust window sills (and mantel if you have one) as you work around the room in assembly line fashion.
6. Clean the floor after you have dusted.
7. Keep dust cloths in container together with other cleaning things.
8. Wash dust cloths and floor mops before they get so dirty, dry well and re-treat them at least one day before needed again.



### Cleaning walls and ceiling

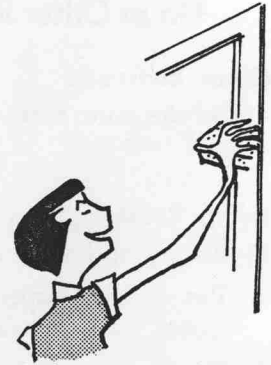
1. Use vacuum cleaner wall brush attachment (if you have one). If not,
2. Use a long-handled, soft-bristle wall brush, or broom fitted with a soft cloth cover. (See sketch above.) Get your club leader or home agent to show you how to make one if you don't see it demonstrated in a club meeting.
3. Sponge off slightly dirty painted walls with soap and water, or easier still, use "syndet" (synthetic detergent) which needs little or no rinsing. Wash from bottom up to avoid streaking. Use even, overlapping strokes. Wash one small area at a time and wipe dry with clean cloths as you wash and rinse.
4. Clean wall paper (slightly soiled spots such as finger marks) by rubbing carefully with art gum. Cleaning more soiled wall paper is a special problem. Don't try it except with advice and help of your home agent, club leader, or your mother.

### Cleaning Woodwork

1. Remove dust with dry cloth (or vacuum

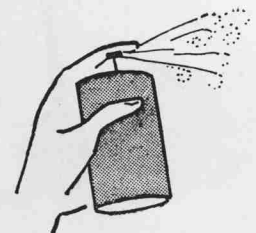
cleaner if you have one) before washing; this helps prevent streaking and smearing.

2. Wash painted or enameled woodwork with a solution of washing soda (Sal Soda): 1 tablespoon per quart of water and mild soap. Or, use one of the new no-rinse cleaners. Read the label before you buy it; *be sure* it is recommended for washing woodwork. Follow directions on the container.
3. Avoid using strong, abrasive powders to wash painted surfaces; if not used carefully, they may take off too much paint along with the dirt.
4. Rinse (except when using a new no-rinse cleaner) and wipe dry with clean dry cloths doing a small area at a time. Here, as on painted walls, work from bottom up to prevent streaks.
5. Sponges (instead of cloths) are good to use because they take up (absorb) excess water. Rubber or cellulose sponges can be bought at dime stores and they are not expensive.



### Cleaning Windows and Other Glass Surfaces

1. Remove loose dirt with slightly dampened sponge or chamois; then, wash sponge or chamois.
2. Apply cleaning liquid. There are excellent glass cleaners on the market. Some of them have convenient spraying attachments. Vinegar or kerosene are also excellent for cleaning glass (1 or 2 tablespoons per quart of warm water).
3. Wash only 1 pane or small area at a time so that you can polish it before it dries in streaks. Use sponge or chamois; a cloth is usually too "linty" and lint is hard to remove from glass.
4. Dry and polish with crumpled newspaper (it works fine!), or a clean damp chamois, or a squeegee (outside).



- Clean windows when sun is not shining on them. Sunshine on a wet glass causes it to dry in streaks before you can get it polished; such streaks are hard to rub off.
- When cleaning mirrors be careful to prevent getting water under back edges; water will damage the mirror.

## Cleaning Jobs You Can Do in Other Rooms

### Other Bedrooms

Use the same methods as in your own bedroom.

### Living Room

- Empty and wash ashtrays.
- Put books, papers, magazines, toys and games back in place.
- Dust walls (when needed) usually about every 2 months at least.
- Wash woodwork, windows and other glass surfaces when needed.
- Dust all furniture. To dust upholstered furniture (if you have no vacuum cleaner); get a large, strong, clean cloth (large feed sack ripped open is fine!); wring out of warm water as dry as possible; shake out and lay it over back of sofa (or seat or cushion—one section or one part at a time); then, using a flat paddle (such as a



yoyo or ping pong type paddle), or your hands, slap good the section that is covered with the cloth. The damp cloth will catch the dust and prevent it flying all over the room as it does when you use a brush or whisk broom. Repeat from one area to another until entire surface is dusted, rinsing out cloth as it gets dirty.

- Dust pictures and accessories. Take all articles (you will be smart to have as few as possible!) off tables, mantel, etc., so that you can dust them properly, then put them back in place.
- Sweep floor lightly (if necessary to remove coarse things), then dust with treated floor mop if floor has smooth waxed surface.

### Tips on Sweeping

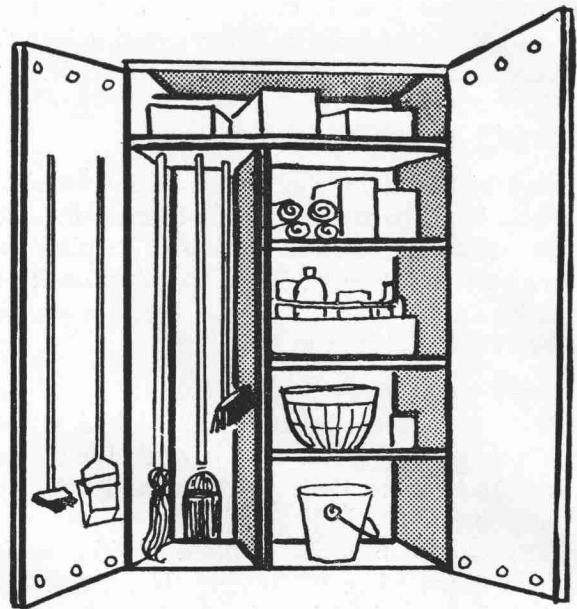
The way you sweep makes a difference with dust problems.

- Sweep evenly in one direction keeping broom on floor. Avoid raising too much dust.
- Move furniture, sweep *under it*, not around it.
- Sweep out corners well too.
- Use dust pan to pick up dirt in each room; a long-handled one saves much stooping.
- As you sweep watch for buttons or other small articles lost on the floor.
- Put dirt and trash into waste basket and empty waste basket.
- Have a definite place to store broom when not in use.
- To keep broom sweep in good shape, hang by handle or stand handle end on floor with sweep up.



## Plan Your Closet Space

A well-planned, conveniently arranged cleaning closet will make the total job of housecleaning much easier for you and your family. If there is not one in your home, you might start your family thinking on it and create enough active interest to find a suitable space in the back hall or near kitchen or back porch to plan and build one. The sketch on the right will give you some ideas with which to start. It has no space planned for a vacuum cleaner. If you have a vacuum cleaner with attachments, plan a convenient space in your cleaning closet for storing your cleaner. Attachments are convenient when hung on inside of closet door. Where this is done, shelves would have to be narrow enough to allow door to close. Get additional ideas from your home agent, club leader, and housekeeping magazines.



## PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

### Junior Club Members

1. Make at least 2 treated dust cloths or mitts.
2. Hang up and put away your clothes and shoes, and make (or help make) your bed every day for at least 6 weeks.
3. Help with dusting in your room and living room for 3 months.
4. Learn to use vacuum cleaner correctly if you have one.
5. Keep a record of the different cleaning jobs you do, and how many times you do each one.
6. Write a story of your housecleaning experiences, the problems you had, how you solved them, and how your housecleaning work has helped you and your family.

### Senior Club Members

1. Treat and keep ready for use all needed dust cloths, mitts, and floor mops for one year. Wash and re-treat them when they need it.
2. Do the daily and weekly cleaning in your room, working with your sister if she shares room, and living room for at least 6 months.
3. Keep a record of housecleaning jobs you do.
4. Learn to use vacuum cleaner correctly if you have one.
5. Write a story of your experiences in housecleaning work, the problems you had, how you solved them, and how your housecleaning work has helped you and your family.



Prepared By  
Mamie Whisnant

Extension Specialist in Home Management



N. C. State College of Agriculture and Engineering of the University of North Carolina  
and U. S. Department of Agriculture, Co-operating

**N. C. AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE**

D. S. WEAVER, Director  
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