

ENTRANCE

IMPORTANT REMINDER FOR EACH ROOM/AREA YOU DECLUTTER/CLEAN... If you haven't needed it, worn it, looked at it, or used it in a year (6 months if you really want to be ruthless) than GET RID OF IT! Quit keeping them *INCASE*... Jesus may come back before you use them, so bless someone else and give them away!

Before beginning, make sure you have a:

- "KEEP" box (to go through after you're done with the room)
- "THROW" bag
- "BLESS" bag (for garage sale or to give away)

Keep those words in mind while you're cleaning/de-cluttering/organizing each room! "Keep, Throw, Bless"... MEMORIZE THEM... TAKE THEM TO HEART... THEY ARE YOUR FRIEND! (Tee hee...)

To make sure you have as little interruption as possible, the following ideas are helpful as well:

- have your phone in your cleaning kit (so it doesn't get lost) or let the answering machine get it (which is what I would suggest so you don't get stuck talking on the phone!)
- have water to drink (you could have little water bottles for the kids too if they're helping)
- music to get ya movin'
- your organizer with the "To Do" List filled out so you can be checking things off as you go

Okay... after you've done that, it's time to get cleaning! The following is a list of ideas that might help in cleaning your entrance: (Now some of you may be thinking... "I don't have a "foyer" or anything special, but I'm here to tell you, where ever you walk into when you come into your home... that's the entrance and that's what we're cleaning! If you also use a door from your garage... guess what? You have TWO entrances!)

- Begin by taking a picture of the area before you get going... seriously... TAKE A PICTURE! This will be evidence... um, I mean, this will be an encouragement when you're done and you see what you've accomplished!
- Start by the door. Begin the "bulldozing" process, top to bottom (or whatever method you choose... the bulldozing process is simply moving through the area like a bulldozer... starting at the top and working your way to the floor in continually moving out of the area, putting things in the designated Keep, Throw, Bless boxes/bags).
- Speaking of the door... how does it look? Does it need washing or a whole new coat of paint? If you have a window in it, don't forget to wash that as well.
- Get any cobwebs or dust bunnies off the ceiling, ceiling fan, or light fixtures. This might be the time you decide to wash the light fixtures as well. (Bugs are NOT supposed to be in there by the way... did I just reveal something?...)
- Clean out that coat closet!!! Yes, this is a crucial (and often forgotten... on purpose) task that we neglect. It's time to pay some attention to it.
 - If you have seasonal things that need to get out of there (boots, winter coats, mittens, etc) now is the time. Put them in a bag for now so you won't get side-tracked.
 - Do you have enough hangers for guests to hang their coats?

- Does your closet seem to be in a constant state of chaos? Would some cubbies help? I purchased some cheap ones from Target and put two of them side by side. I was amazed at how much that helped our “shoe pile up” in the closet. Everyone gets their own bin and ONE SET of shoes in there (my kids have two pair each). Any other shoes go into their bedroom closet).
- Do you have a top shelf in there that everything gets thrown onto? You might want to invest in a couple of little totes to put your mail in (easy to take down and go through when you get time, instead of thrown on a coffee table) or other odds and ends that you keep in your closet. Baskets and bins help things stay more organized and do wonders for appearance!
- Make sure you sweep out/ vacuum your closet. A lot of sand and dirt comes in with shoes!
- Do the walls need any touch up paint or washing? How ‘bout the switch plates?
- Do you have any wall hangings/mirrors in there? Take care of them as well. (Tip: I have a wonderful place to hang my keys right by my door. It’s really been a “life saver” since it went up. We’ve gotten into the habit of having them there and it’s one less thing for us to loose now! If you don’t want them hanging up, maybe a basket in your closet would work.)
- Do you have any furniture in there that needs to be taken care of? (I have a bench for the kids to put their shoes on while they sit. This also was a great thing for me, as well as the mirror by the door to make sure my camo hankie is on my head “just right” before I enter the world! Tee hee...)
- Wipe/wash the trim work (baseboards) off (a great job for the kids!).
- If you have a rug, then take care of that, do you need to take it out to shake, vacuum or shampoo it?
- Don’t forget any vents (if you have any in there). Depending on what kind you have, do you need to take the hose to them and vacuum them out?
- Finish by vacuuming (or washing/scrubbing your floor if you have hardwood).
- Once you’ve finished the room, take your “KEEP, THROW, BLESS” bags and boxes out. This is important! Put the garbage one in the garbage... DO NOT leave it by the door for later... DO IT NOW! If you’re going to give the “Bless” bag to charity, or something similar, then put it in the vehicle RIGHT NOW! If you plan on having a garage sale, then take it to the garage, and put the “Keep” box in a place where you will go through soon (while watching TV is a great time to do this, or in the evening while the kids are in bed... put some music in and spend time with the Lord talking about the day). Don’t forget to take the seasonal bag out as well and put where it belongs.
- Take an “after” picture! (I like to light a smelly candle after I’ve cleaned a room. Just an added touch for my husband to walk into when he gets home. Another touch could be flowers too.)
- Step back and pat yourself on the back! Great job! "X" it out on the "**Clean Heart, Clean Home Challenge" At A Glance Calendar!**