

KITCHEN

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 kitchen:

- Begin by taking a picture of the room 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!
- Before going any further, do you have a self-cleaning oven? If so, you might want to turn that on so it's getting done while you're cleaning. (*CAUTION: If your oven is REALLY bad, you may want to wait to turn on the "self-cleaning" until AFTER you're done so you can leave your house... it really stinks while it cleans if there's a lot of food getting "cleaned"... I mean, so I've heard... because my oven has never been to that point! Tee hee...*)
- Start in the furthest corner of the KITCHEN. Begin the "bulldozing" process, top to bottom (or whatever method you choose... the bulldozing process is simply moving through the room like a bulldozer... starting at the top and working your way to the floor in continually moving to the doorway putting things in the designated Keep, Throw, Bless boxes/bags).
- 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?...)
- Do your curtains need washing? Take them to the washing machine if so and get that load going while you continue to clean. (*Note: MAKE SURE THAT YOUR CURTAINS/DRAPERY IS WASHABLE! The first time I did mine, they shrunk about an inch!*) If you have blinds, what do they look like? Taking them down and washing them either outside or in the tub is an easy way to get them clean. They can just sit in there and soak. A sponge should get them clean by just wiping. Don't forget to rinse them.

- While you have your window treatments down, wash those windows and window sills (trim work).
- Do your walls need any touch up paint, or can you just wash the little handprints off? Don't forget the switch plates as well.
- Dust or clean (using cleaner) any wall hangings.
- Do you have a pantry? If so, it's time to organize that. Take things off the shelves and dust/clean them off. Put things back in an orderly fashion. Clean the outside door(s) when you're done.
- Clean your phone... wipe it down and get those buttons clean, as well as the cord (if you're using a corded phone).
- Do you have plants in there? Water them and clean them as well. Take warm water and wipe down any leaves.
- Time to look at your fridge. This is a big project so make sure you have time to start and finish it all at once. (If you don't, then save it for the next day to start with.)
 - Start at the top. When was the last time that got washed and dusted?
 - Head into the fridge. Take all the "science projects" out that have been growing in there. Get rid of any food that's bad, including jars of condiments that are outdated. Check the dates on everything and get rid of what's gone bad.
 - Head into the freezer and do the same as the fridge. Anything that has freezer burn, get rid of.
 - Throw the garbage away immediately. You don't need any sour smelling food to permeate the kitchen so get rid of it before going any further!
 - Go back into the fridge and take things off the top shelf. Clean the shelf off and place the items back on that you want there. (You may decide that you don't want everything back in that spot. If not, leave them on the counter and wait until the shelf that you want it on gets cleaned.) Continue removing, cleaning, and replacing the fridge items.
 - Do the same thing for any containers and the door shelving. Organize your fridge so it "makes sense". Make sure everything has its place. Condiments, ice cream toppings, juice, cheeses, meats, fruits, etc. If things have their own place, it's more likely that your family will know where to put everything (tell them after you do this) and that you'll know when you're out of something because it's not in its spot.
 - Do the same thing in the freezer that you did in the fridge.
 - Now move to the rest of the outside. Get the sides, and the front. If you have an ice-maker on the door of the refrigerator, be sure to clean that out as well.
 - Clean the bottom grate of the refrigerator.
 - It's up to you to decide if you'd like to move your fridge out and clean under there.
- Time to get to the cupboards and drawers. This is a big project as well, so adjust your schedule accordingly. If you want to save this, then go on to the next step and save this when you have more time. My husband HATES to come home to one of my half-finished projects, and the kitchen cupboards can really destroy the kitchen.
 - Start in the upper cupboards and begin on the top shelf (remember to work top to bottom). Take things out, wipe the shelves out (if you'd like to put new contact paper in there, now's the time), and then put the things back in an orderly fashion. If there's

- anything that you haven't used or forgot you had, then it might be time to bless someone else.
- Continue doing this until the upper cupboards are done.
 - Move onto to the drawers. **DON'T FORGET THAT SILVERWARE DRAWER!** (How do those crumbs get in there anyway?) Take items out of each drawer and clean it out. Then replace the "wanted" items back. *(NOTE: If you have too many things in the drawers (or cupboards for that matter, and they're unable to shut... then you have too many things! Time to cut back and bless someone else. You aren't living for tomorrow (when you'll be in "bigger house"... you're living for today, and today, your house may be too small to store everything that you have. Evaluate what's important and move on!)*
 - Finish with the bottom cupboards. Follow the same steps to completion.
- Get under that sink! Depending on what you keep there, organize it and wipe it out. Do you need any shelving in there to cut down on clutter?
 - If you don't have a self-cleaning oven, or if it's not dirty enough to turn on the self-cleaner, than take time to do that now.
 - Start on the inside and get it good and clean.
 - Take the knobs off the stove and wash them. Wash the back while you have the buttons removed.
 - If you have a range hood, then clean that and get any grease and dirt off. Get behind the stove as well.
 - Clean the rest of the outside of the stove. Do any bulbs need to be replaced (either in the hood or the oven)?
 - If you have a drawer in the stove, be sure to get that cleaned out as well.
 - Clean the microwave, inside and out. One easy trick to clean the inside is to put water in a coffee mug (you can scent it with a couple drops of flavored extract) and then put it in the microwave for 3 to 5 minutes. Leave it in there for a couple of minutes after it's done. Then just wipe it out! *(CAUTION: Be careful when taking the mug out... it's hot!)*
 - If you have a dishwasher, clean the inside and get any food particles out that have been accumulating. Don't forget to wipe down the outside as well.
 - Clean any of the following items that you have in your kitchen as well... **INSIDE AND OUT!**
 - Coffee Pot (When was the last time that got a good cleaning?)
 - Toaster (Get all those crumbs!)
 - Kitchen Aid Mixer or the like
 - Knives
 - Any containers
 - Garbage can
 - Anything else that sits out and collects dust or gets dirty
 - Clean/polish your table and chairs. (If you have a table that has a leaf, clean in-between there... you know, where all the food is?...)
 - Wipe/wash the trim work (baseboards) off (a great job for the kids as well!).
 - 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 your vents. Depending on what kind you have, do you need to take the hose to them and vacuum them out?
- Assuming you've been using the water from the kitchen sink to clean, now's the time to clean that sink out. Take a toothbrush if you have to and make that faucet shine! If you have mats in there or a dish holder, does it need some attention? Do you need a new plug? (Write anything down on your "To Do" List.
- Finish by cleaning your floor and whatever that takes. Do you need to scrub it, wax it, etc. Even a coat of wax makes a dull floor shine and look great.
- 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).
- 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!**