

How I Clean the House in Only 15 Minutes

Attention: this is not a myth! It can be done! You can clean your house in fifteen minutes, leaving plenty of time for the next ensuing mess. I always treat house cleaning like cooking. It's all about the prep. There is a very easy way to conquer the kid clean-up that engulfs every parent. In a few simple steps, your home will sparkle.

Step #1: Remember prep. Clean as you go. Throughout the day, you and your children will create plenty of mess ranging from scattered Legos to dirty dishes. Make clean up part of each activity. It's just a given. When we're done, we never just walk away. *Time saver tip:* Only have one plate and one bowl for each person in your family. This way, you won't dirty fifteen dishes in one setting, which is extremely easy to do. You can, of course, have more dinnerware, but tuck it away for when you need it. Don't use it every day.

Step #2: Keep all your cleaning supplies in one place. I pretend I'm a maid. Haha. I said pretend. I am slightly obsessed with those little plastic drawer sets. I keep all my cleaning supplies in one, locked in my pantry to keep little hands out. And, bonus, it has wheels. I'm kind of crafty so I fastened a short rope handle to it so that I can drag it around easily. Having everything you need at your fingertips makes your whirlwind clean-up much easier.

Step #3: Take advantage of nap time. I know it's hard to use your "me" time to clean, but remember, it's only 15 minutes! You can get twice as much done when the kiddos are asleep. I hit bathrooms first. If you make it part of your daily routine, a quick wipe down of sink and toilet and speedy Swiffer across the floor is all you need. The shower is just as easy. Keep a sponge and squeegee in your shower and wipe and/or squeegee every other time you use it. Take turns with your hubs. It takes a minute or two at most and will save you in the long run. After bathrooms, I give the kitchen counters a wipe and sweep the floor. I'd Swiffer, but we are crumbly people. Crumbs are our kitchen nemesis, but sweeping daily does the trick.

Step #4: Keep the toys at a minimum. This is probably the hardest part of all because people love giving your kids toys! I have a one toy-box rule. We only have one toy-box in our house and the only toy rule is: all toys must be able to fit into the toy-box. If they don't fit, it's time to donate. My kids love to donate their toys to children who don't have toys. They feel like they're really helping other kids. And their combined 8-second attention span easily allows for donating. I always find it harder to get rid of toys because I attach sentimental value to them. They do not, thankfully. So, with the one toy-box rule, clearing toys is a cinch. They all get thrown into one place. It takes two minutes to pick up toys.

So, keep these four important steps in mind and you will always be successful at the 15-minute clean-up!