

The Professional Cleaner's Checklist

What I actually use, the order I actually work in, and the two things that will hurt you. — Lia, bossmomblog.com

THE CART

Ninety percent of cleaning a house is four boring products. You do not need a cabinet full of specialty sprays.

- ☐ **Natural multi-surface cleaner** — for almost everything. Most surfaces aren't dirty, they're dusty.
- ☐ **Foam glass cleaner** — aerosol foam clings instead of running down onto the sill.
- ☐ **Stainless polish** — appliances, fridge doors, every fingerprint magnet.
- ☐ **Cling gel toilet cleaner** — a liquid runs into the water and misses the ring you're looking at.
- ☐ **Auto detailing microfiber** — automotive aisle, not the cleaning aisle. See below.
- ☐ **Cloth-like paper towels** — for what a rag shouldn't touch. No lint on glass.

THE ONE NOBODY BELIEVES

Buy your microfiber in the **automotive aisle**. Auto detailing towels are thicker, hold more, and are built to go over car paint without scratching it — so they won't scratch anything in your house either. They also survive being washed over and over, which the cleaning-aisle ones don't.

THE ORDER (per room)

Working out of order means cleaning the same surface twice. This is the part that makes a professional faster, not the products.

- ☐ **1. Pick up first.** You cannot clean around clutter. Clear surfaces, then start.
- ☐ **2. Dust high to low.** Everything falls. Fans, sills, shelves, then furniture.
- ☐ **3. Wet work next.** Counters, sinks, glass, appliances.
- ☐ **4. Toilets after counters.** Never the cloth from the toilet onto anything else. Ever.
- ☐ **5. Floors last.** Everything you knocked down is now on the floor. That's the point.
- ☐ **6. Take the trash out on your way.** One trip, not four.

THE OTHER TEN PERCENT

For buildup nothing mild will touch. These work — and every one of them can hurt you or permanently ruin a surface.

- ☐ **Razor scraper** — hard water on glass, paint specks, fossilized stovetop gunk.
- ☐ **Pumice stone on a handle** — toilet rings that have been building for years.
- ☐ **Acidic toilet bowl cleaner** — the worst buildup, and only that.

READ THIS BEFORE YOU USE ANY OF THE THREE

- **Never mix an acidic bowl cleaner with bleach.** Not in the bowl, and not one after the other without flushing thoroughly in between. Acid plus bleach makes chlorine gas, in a small room, usually with the door shut. This is the one that sends people to the hospital. One product per session.
- **Gloves and eye protection** for the acidic cleaner. It burns skin and can permanently damage your eyes. Splashback out of a bowl is real. Fan on, door open.
- **Razor scraper:** glass and hard non-porous surfaces only. Never acrylic, plastic, painted anything, or fiberglass tub surrounds. **Never on tinted or coated glass** — you'll take the coating off and it does not come back. Keep it wet, keep the angle low, push one direction, use fresh blades.
- **Pumice stone:** white porcelain toilet bowls only. Not the tank, seat, colored fixtures, sinks, tubs, enamel, fiberglass or acrylic — it scratches all of them permanently. Both the stone and the surface must stay soaking wet. Light pressure.
- **Test a small hidden corner first.** Every time, even when you're sure.

STOP DOING THIS

Vinegar and baking soda mixed together do almost nothing. The fizzing everyone loves is an acid and a base neutralizing each other into carbon dioxide and salty water. You had two decent cleaners and you turned them into neither. Vinegar alone is good on mineral deposits. Baking soda alone is a fine gentle abrasive. Use them separately, or one after the other — just don't premix them in a bowl and expect a miracle.