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Service

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# Cleaning on a Shoestring



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# INTRODUCTION

If home furnishings and accessories are to last and be enjoyed for many years, they need proper care and maintenance. Here are a few general rules that may simplify the care of home furnishings and accessories.

1. Read and keep the use and care labels attached to accessories and furnishings. They will state what the product is made from and point out any special care procedures that should be followed.

2. Assemble and store cleaning supplies, equipment and instructions in an easily accessible place. That way, they can be found immediately when they are needed.

3. Short intervals of continuous care are usually more effective than allowing an item to become so badly damaged or soiled that it requires a major cleaning procedure.

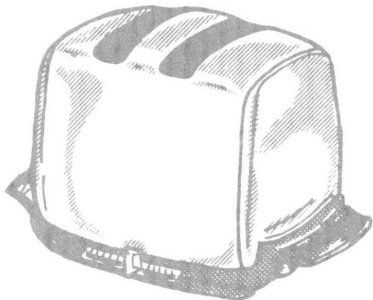
4. *Immediately* deal with spills or stains. It is helpful if the spill can be identified, thus aiding in the selection of removal procedures. *Remember* to test the recommended cleaning procedure in an inconspicuous place, if possible.

5. Scrape up residue or liquid with the dull side of a knife or blot with a paper towel. Work carefully from the edge of the spot toward the center to avoid enlarging the stain. A blotting action is preferred to rubbing.

Many homemade solutions are just as effective as purchased remedies. In most cases they are also less expensive. Following is a list of cleaning and restoring supplies and where they may be purchased:

- acetone .....drug store
- acrylic spray .....art or paint store
- ammonia .....grocery store
- art gum .....art store
- borax .....grocery store
- cream appliance wax ...grocery store
- denatured alcohol .....grocery or drug store
- dry cleaning fluid .....drug store
- fuller's earth .....drug or hardware store
- lacquer thinner .....paint store
- lacquered spray .....art or paint store
- linseed oil .....paint store
- liquid water softener ...grocery store
- oxalic acid .....drug store
- pumice powder .....paint store
- putty powder .....hardware or paint store
- rust retardant paint .....paint store
- tung oil .....paint store
- unsalted vegetable oil ..grocery store
- washing soda .....grocery store
- whiting .....art or paint store





# ALUMINUM

New aluminum utensils can be kept bright and shining for a long time if care is taken not to burn food in them. Wash, using mild soap, or a detergent and water. Rinse with scalding water and polish with a soft tea towel.

To remove burned or scorched food from the bottom of an aluminum vessel, fill pan with water. Allow water to boil, then remove the softened food with a wooden spoon or pot scraper. Finish the job with steel wool. Steel wool pads with soap are the best. Although steel wool scratches the aluminum surface to some extent, the filaments are so fine that no damage is caused. When using steel wool, rub in one direction only, not with a circular motion. Commercial cleaners for aluminum work best if the aluminum is washed first in hot water and the cleaner is applied while the metal is hot.

Detergents used in electric dishwashers may dull the sheen of polished aluminum. Colored aluminum should never be washed in the dishwasher.

Certain alkaline foods, such as spinach and potatoes, tend to darken aluminum; acid food, including apples and rhubarb, brighten it without injury to the food.

Caution: Never store foods in aluminum pans. Chemicals in the foods may pit the metal. There is no danger of food poisoning, but badly pitted, or dented, aluminum is unsanitary and should be discarded.

# BRASS & COPPER

A regular dusting and an occasional washing in lukewarm, mild detergent water is usually all the care that brass or copper requires. Never use hot water on these metals. Many brass or copper objects are lacquered to prevent tarnish, and hot



water will loosen the lacquer, causing it to peel. Once lacquer is damaged, it must be removed before tarnish problems can be tackled.

When brass or copper needs special attention, remove soft particles by scraping with a wooden spoon, plastic scraper or rubber spatula. Then wash with lukewarm, mild detergent water.

When these metals begin to darken, don't be alarmed. This is simple oxidation and will usually respond to homemade or commercial cleaners.

A homemade cleaner may be prepared by combining one part non-sudsy ammonia to two parts denatured alcohol, and two parts distilled water. Add enough whiting or fuller's earth to make a thin paste.

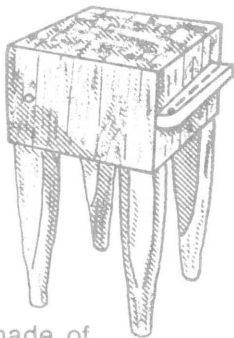
Brass or copper may also be polished with a nonabrasive cleanser applied with a dampened cloth. Be sure to rinse well.

Another homemade tarnish remover, good on these metals, is a combination of salt and vinegar or lemon juice. Just rub the mixture on the objects, rinse and dry. *Caution:* chlorides in the salt may cause pitting or actual deterioration of brass or copper. Therefore, rinse and dry thoroughly.

Once a brass or copper object is cleaned, a thin coat of tung oil may be applied to give it a soft luster.



# BUTCHER BLOCK



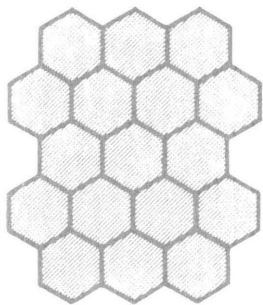
Most butcher blocks are made of solid hard maple and are, therefore, relatively easy to care for.

Clean when necessary with warm water, soap, or detergent. Wipe dry immediately; never allow water to remain on block. Scouring powder, steel wool, or sand paper can be used for stubborn stains and cutting marks.

To preserve the block and prevent cracking, occasionally apply a generous quantity of vegetable or mineral oil to the surface; let stand 5 minutes; wipe off. This treatment should be done after heavy cleaning, sanding, or whenever the block loses its golden maple color.

Excessive dryness or humidity can cause cracks or warping to develop. Cracks should be filled promptly with wood filler; then sanded smooth, and re-oiled. Warping can be corrected by securely attaching block to cabinet base. However, allowances must be made for expansion and contraction.

After six months of treating, the block will have adjusted to the climate around it and the need for special treatments will be greatly reduced. Additional treating will vary directly with the amount of usage.



# CERAMIC TILE

Ceramic tile scratches easily, but fortunately, it can be cleaned with water and a sponge. If a build up of soap scum occurs, add one teaspoon washing soda or packaged water softener to the cleaning solution. Nonabrasive cleaning powders may also be used. Be sure to remove all traces of the cleaning agent. To do this, flood a small area at a time and sponge up the water quickly. This action causes the dirt to float off instead of remaining in the grout.

Stained grout is practically impossible to restore. If scouring powder and a stiff brush won't do the job, try rubbing the joints lightly with a folded piece of sandpaper. Or treat the area with a weak solution of water and oxalic acid.

*One caution:* the acid solution is a severe treatment which causes etching of the grout and removes the top layer. No more than two applications of this solution are recommended unless re-grouting of the tile is the only other alternative.



# CHROMIUM



Plumbing fixtures, appliances, and even some furniture are chromium plated. These items need gentle care because chromium is easily scratched by abrasive household cleaners and metal polishes.

Usually the only care that chromium requires is rubbing with a damp cloth, followed by polishing with a dry, soft cloth. Sticky chromium usually responds to a washing with detergent and water. A liquid household cleaner or baking soda on a cloth should remove gummy buildup. For stubborn spots, make a paste of whitening, or fuller's earth, and household ammonia. Apply the paste with a soft cloth and rub. Never use abrasives; they will scratch chromium finishes.

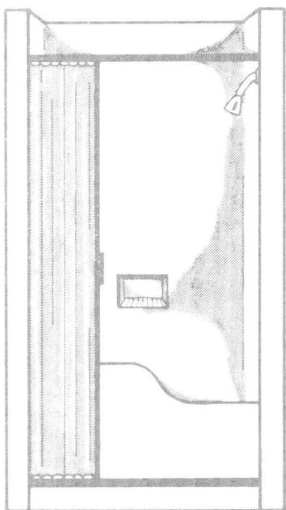


# FIBERGLAS

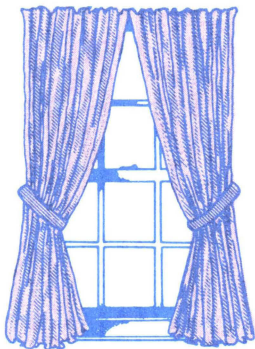
Fibreglas bathtubs and showers bring advantages and disadvantages to home care. On the plus side, fibreglas is practically unaffected by chemicals and it's resistant to mildew. However, fibreglas is softer and more porous than porcelain and therefore scratches easily.

The key to success in keeping these tubs and showers clean is frequent cleaning. Clean the tub with dishwashing liquid and water. If a stubborn ring appears, try using a paste made from automatic dishwashing detergent or liquid water softener as a cleaning agent. Not even soft scrub cleaners are recommended for fibreglas. Although, they are not as harsh as regular cleaners, they do contain abrasives.

To make cleaning easier in the future, wax the sides of the bathtub or shower with a cream appliance wax or paste wax. Remember, wax only the sides of the tub or shower; waxing the bottom will create a safety hazard.



# GLASS & MIRRORS



There are many products on the market recommended for cleaning glass and mirrors. Although many professional cleaning services prefer water only, heavily soiled windows and mirrors may require more attention. An effective and inexpensive cleaner may be prepared at home by combining:

- 2 tablespoons non-sudsing ammonia
- 1 teaspoon automatic dishwasher detergent
- 1 pint rubbing alcohol
- 4 drops blue food coloring (optional)

Mix in a one-gallon container and fill to the top with water.

Glass and mirrors scratch easily so always scrub dirty glass with a wet cloth. A dry cloth will scratch glass. Newspaper may be used for regular cleaning of glass and mirrors. Not only is this a good way to recycle old newspapers; but the ink from the newsprint gives the surface a nice polish. Use care when spraying windows with a solution that contains alcohol. These solutions could damage paints and varnished surfaces.





# IRON

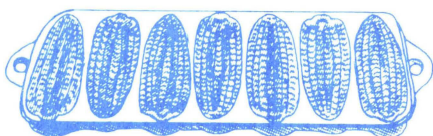
Rust is the number one enemy of iron. The first step in preventing rust is to keep iron dry. In some cases, as with outdoor furniture and cooking utensils, this is not always possible. Therefore, rust must be removed periodically.

Remove light rust by scrubbing with number one ought (0) or two ought (00) steel wool or a wire brush. Most rust buildup can be removed with persistent scrubbing.

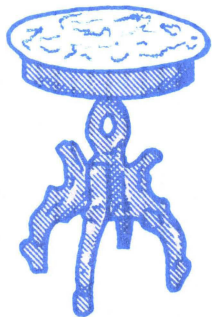
There are also several commercial rust removers available. Apply according to product directions and check the action of the cleaner on the metal. Extensive etching or pitting can occur if the solution stays on too long.

To deter rust buildup on decorative pieces, use a rust retardant paint. These paints come in a variety of colors. For best results, be sure the item is dry and rust free before painting. Clear, flat acrylic spray also can serve as a rust retardant finish. Again, apply according to product directions.

Iron utensils used in food preparation must be re-seasoned after deep cleaning. Coat the inside and lid generously with unsalted fat or oil, and heat in an oven set at 200 degrees F. for one hour. Wipe out excess fat with a paper towel.



# MARBLE



To remain beautiful, marble demands easy care. Usually polished marble only requires dusting with a damp cloth. If this is not sufficient, dampen the cloth in a solution of water and liquid soap. Rinse thoroughly and wipe dry.

Soil or stains can usually be removed with commercial cleaners or stain removers. But avoid abrasive cleaners; they will scratch the finish. Also, avoid heavy detergents; they may cause yellowing.

Since marble is porous, stains should be wiped up immediately. Stains, which contain acids, such as fruit juices and carbonated drinks may actually etch the marble, revealing the lighter color of the unpolished marble. Minor etching and scratching may be removed by rubbing with putty powder. As soon as the shine returns, wash marble in mild soap. Dry thoroughly.

Grease stains may be removed from marble by using solvents. Recommended solvents are alcohol, acetone (fingernail polish remover), lighter fluid or dry cleaning fluid. Repeat solvent as often as necessary. A sealer may be applied to the marble after it is cleaned thoroughly.



# PEWTER

Pewter may be cleaned by washing in detergent and water.

However, if soft particles of food stick to the pewter, remove them with a rounded wooden spoon, plastic scrubber or rubber spatula. Keep in mind that pewter is a soft metal and needs to be treated carefully.

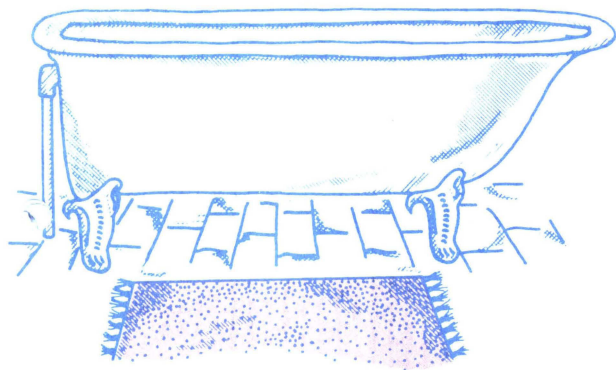
When pewter needs special attention, don't use harsh polishes or abrasive powders. Instead, clean bright-finished pewter with a thin paste made by mixing whiting or fuller's earth and denatured alcohol. Rub the paste on the pewter; allow to dry. Then wash, rinse and dry. If pewter has a dull finish, clean with a paste made of pumice powder and linseed or unsalted vegetable oil.

Heavy corrosion may be removed with a very fine steel wool (0000) that has been cushioned with oil. Again, use a light touch when cleaning. If pewter is very black, it may be necessary to purchase a commercial cleaner to restore the finish.

# PORCELAIN ENAMEL

Porcelain enamel is one of the hardest and most durable finishes found in the home. Even so, it may become scratched or chipped. Clean porcelain enamel kitchen and bathroom fixtures after each use, using a mild soap or detergent. Rinse thoroughly. Remove stubborn stains with a non-abrasive cleaner; a harsh abrasive cleaner might scratch the surface, creating areas for dirt and soil to cling. Once the fixture is scratched, these marks cannot be removed. Eventually, porcelain enamel finishes may be damaged to the point that the base metal is exposed.

Dull or discolored areas that appear around drains may be caused by mineral oxides in the water. These stains may be removed by saturating with vinegar, slightly diluted lemon juice, or a commercial stain remover. *Note:* paper towels saturated in these cleaning solutions may be placed over the stain to speed up the bleaching action.



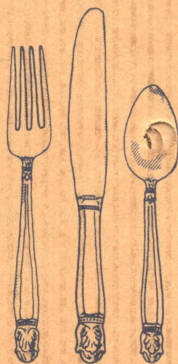


# SILVER

Silver is a treasure that should be enjoyed and used. Daily use of sterling silver results in the deep mellow tones of fine antique ware. Immediately after use, wash your silver in hot, soapy water, rinse in clear hot water, and dry immediately with a soft cloth.

Hand rubbing is probably the safest way to remove tarnish. Wash silver and apply a commercial silver polish following the manufacturer's directions. For blackened objects, use soap pads, again rubbing gently to avoid scratching. Follow by washing, rinsing and drying thoroughly.

Proper care and storage can save time and energy. Storing silver in air tight wrapping or pacific cloth may reduce the need for frequent cleaning. Never use rubber bands with silver; rubber in any form will quickly tarnish the metal. If silver should come in contact with salt, remove the salt immediately. Salt causes pitting and thus can permanently damage silver.





# WALLPAPER

Wallpaper should be dusted periodically using a vacuum cleaner attachment, a long handled brush or a broom covered with a soft cloth.

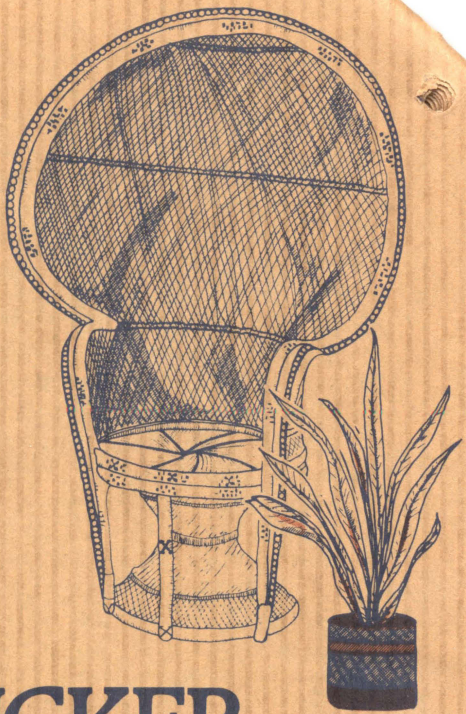
For additional cleaning, wallpaper may be divided into three categories; water sensitive, vinyl coated and vinyl.

Few papers are as washable as they may seem, so test a small inconspicuous area before attempting a whole wall. If the area does not blur or show water marks it is safe to continue. For thin water sensitive paper, dampen a sponge in lukewarm water, remove as much water as possible, and rub paper using a very light touch. Clean a small area at a time beginning at the bottom of the wall and working toward the ceiling. Overlap strokes and pat dry immediately. Nonwashable papers may be cleaned with a commercial cleaner resembling a lump of dough; art gum; the inside portion of bread; pipe clay; or a dry cloth dipped in dry borax.

Washable paper, such as vinyls, may be cleaned using a sponge, lukewarm water and a mild detergent. Squeeze the sponge out thoroughly and use a soft touch. Rinse and pat dry.

Stains such as grease, and pencil marks should be treated immediately. Again, test clean a hidden area. Grease spots may be removed by making a paste of fuller's earth or similar absorbent powder and cleaning fluid. Apply solution, permit it to dry thoroughly, then brush or vacuum. Repeat, if needed.

Remove pencil marks with a commercial art gum or pencil eraser.



# WICKER

Wicker furniture and accessories should be dusted often, using a cloth dampened with water, a soft brush or vacuum cleaner attachment. From there, raw wicker and painted wicker require different treatment.

When cleaning raw wicker, that is wicker with no applied sealer, take the furniture outside and spray with a very fine spray from the garden hose. This small amount of water helps keep the fibers from becoming brittle or splitting. Be careful, however, not to over wet the fibers.

If further cleaning is needed, apply a mild soap or detergent solution. Rinse well and dry thoroughly. A coat of shellac once a year enhance the beauty of raw wicker.

If the wicker has a painted finish, clean it the same way you would a piece of wood furniture with a painted surface. Do not wet the surface of painted wicker furniture; water may cause the paint to peel or crack.

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