

Productivity & Organization for Women

Lesson Eleven

This week we will be tackling the organization of your home including cleaning, organizing, and purging. We are beginning with your daily chores. What I've found online is that most organization websites give enormous lists of things you *should* be doing every day. I feel guilty just looking at this list. You are extremely busy. If you don't feel like making your bed is essential to a clean and comfortable home, then forget it.

The key steps to your daily cleaning should be:

1. Avoid piles on any surface
2. Put everything back in its place by the end of the day

Certain parts of your home must be dealt with daily or the piles grow larger and larger. In my home these include: mail, laundry, dishes. If you have young children, you should also add "toys" to the formula.

In addition, most people feel the need to do a few additional cleaning items. These may include:

Kitchen: clean the counters, wipe the stove, wipe the sink

Bathroom: wipe the toilet, wipe the counters, spray/squeegee the shower

Bedroom: make the bed

Floor: sweep, vacuum, mop

To make sure that your cleaning essentials occur each day, it is crucial that these get added to your schedule. If possible, include these into your morning and evening routine (week 1). If not, then schedule them into other times of your day.

Your assignment today is:

1. Rank the importance of the daily cleaning tasks on the workbook page. Add in your own if needed.
2. Schedule the 5-10 most essential cleaning tasks into specific time periods of your day.

Additional Resources:

[Daily Cleaning Routine Printable](#) (blog post)

[Daily Cleaning 101](#) (blog post)

[Developing a Daily Cleaning Routine](#) (blog post)

[My Daily Cleaning Routine](#) (blog post)

[How to Clean](#) (blog post)

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Daily Cleaning

Number rank the importance of these daily cleaning jobs for your home
(add in items that were not already included):

Kitchen

- _____ Wipe counters
- _____ Dishes
- _____ Sweep/vacuum floor
- _____ Pile-free surfaces
- _____
- _____
- _____

Bathroom

- _____ Wipe counters
- _____ Clean off toilet seat
- _____ Sweep/vacuum floor
- _____ Pile-free surfaces
- _____
- _____
- _____

Bedroom

- _____ Make the bed
- _____ Clothes in the hamper
- _____ Sweep/vacuum floor
- _____ Pile-free surfaces
- _____
- _____
- _____

Living Areas/Others

- _____ Laundry
- _____ Put away toys, papers, etc.
- _____ Sweep/vacuum floor
- _____ Pile-free surfaces
- _____
- _____
- _____

Schedule the most essential cleaning items into your day:

Morning

- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____

Evening

- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____
- _____ ; _____

If you can include these essential daily cleaning items in your morning or evening routine, go back to week 1 and write them in.

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Lesson Twelve

There are two main ways to deal with weekly cleaning:

Option #1:

Do a different job each day of the week and therefore avoid any big cleaning day. This method works when you tackle something new each day. I would recommend this plan for anyone who has some extra time during the week to tackle chores and wants to enjoy their weekends more.

A cleaning plan that rotates bigger jobs throughout the week may look like:

Monday: bathrooms

Tuesday: dusting (all rooms)

Wednesday: floors (all rooms)

Thursday: sheets and towels

Friday: kitchen

Saturday: miscellaneous tidying and organizing

Option #2:

Do small daily cleaning during the week and have a big cleaning day on the weekend. This is the method that I use because by the end of the day and caring for my family, I can't bear to do extra cleaning. I have scheduled my weekly cleaning time to be first thing on Sunday morning.

A cleaning plan that focuses on most cleaning on the weekend may look like:

Monday - Friday: daily cleaning jobs

Saturday/Sunday: all other cleaning

Your assignment today is:

1. Rank the importance of the weekly cleaning tasks on the workbook page. Add in your own if needed.
2. Schedule the most essential cleaning tasks into either specific days or lump them together on the weekend.

Additional Resources:

[Clean Mama's Cleaning Routine](#) (blog post)

[How to Create a Cleaning Schedule that Works for You](#) (love the printables here!)

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Weekly Cleaning

Number rank the importance of these weekly cleaning jobs for your home
(add in items that were not already included):

Kitchen

- _____ Wipe flat surfaces
- _____ Vacuum/sweep
- _____ Mop
- _____ Dust
- _____ Clean sink
- _____ Wipe vertical surfaces
- _____ Clean microwave
- _____ Throw out old food
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____

Bathroom

- _____ Sweep
- _____ Mop
- _____ Dust
- _____ Clean sink
- _____ Wipe flat surfaces
- _____ Wipe vertical surfaces
- _____ Clean toilet
- _____ Clean shower
- _____ Change towels
- _____ Wash towels
- _____ _____

Bedrooms

- _____ Change sheets
- _____ Vacuum/sweep
- _____ Clean flat surfaces
- _____ Wash sheets
- _____ _____
- _____ _____

Living Areas/Other

- _____ Vacuum
- _____ Dust
- _____ Clean flat surfaces
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____

Schedule the most essential cleaning items into your week:

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Weekend

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Lesson Thirteen

Monthly, quarterly, and annual cleaning items are all those things that you know you ought to do, but never seem to have time to do them. Because they are often forgotten, I highly recommend that you actually put them onto your calendar. The beginning of each month/quarter/year works well for many people both because it is easy to remember, and also so that these jobs don't get forgotten.

There are many websites that propose having a rotating monthly cleaning focus area. I have linked to some in the additional resources. Although I love this method for decluttering and purging, I am less enthusiastic about it for keeping my home clean. I would recommend that you focus your monthly and quarterly cleaning on the same items each time. It is important to get yourself into a routine and stick with it.

That said, these are the least important part of my cleaning routine. If I skip a month (or three), I do not sweat it. The guidelines for these tasks are simply guidelines and reminders to clean these areas...eventually.

Your assignment today is:

1. Rank the importance of the monthly, quarterly, and annual cleaning tasks on the workbook page. Add in your own if needed.
2. On the following workbook page (Cleaning Schedule), write down the highlights of all of your daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual cleaning jobs. Print it out and display it on your wall/bulletin board.
3. Write down your monthly, quarterly, and annual cleaning days onto your calendar. The earlier in the month/quarter/year, the better!

Additional Resources:

[12 Month Cleaning Schedule](#) (blog post and printable)

[Cleaning Calendar](#) (blog post and printable)

[Annual Cleaning Checklist](#) (printable)

[Monthly/Quarterly/Annual Cleaning Checklist](#) (printable)

[House Cleaning Schedule](#) (printable)

[12 Month Cleaning Challenge](#) (printable)

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Monthly, Quarterly, and Annual Cleaning

Number rank the importance of these cleaning jobs for your home
(add in items that were not already included):

Monthly

- _____ Vacuum on and under furniture
- _____ Clean baseboards
- _____ Clean ceiling fans/vents
- _____ Clean out the refrigerator
- _____ Wash bathmats
- _____ Wash shower curtain
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____

Quarterly

- _____ Flip mattress
- _____ Clean air filters and vents
- _____ Smoke detector batteries
- _____ Replace toothbrushes
- _____ Clean inside of refrigerator
- _____ Wash bedding
- _____ Clean inside of dishwasher
- _____ Clean inside of washer/dryer
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____

Annually

- _____ Clean behind furniture
- _____ Clean oven
- _____ Clean behind appliances
- _____ Wash sheets
- _____ Clean gutters
- _____ Wash bedding
- _____ Wash windows
- _____ Toss expired medications
- _____ Organize the pantry
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____

As Needed

- _____ Sanitizing knobs and switches
- _____ Removing cobwebs
- _____ Cleaning walls
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____
- _____ _____

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Lesson Fourteen

Today we will discuss purging. This is a relatively simple concept that is easy to teach and very difficult to do. Purging (aka decluttering) is key to an organized home because more stuff = more clutter, more to clean, and more to put away.

We will begin with the simple process of tossing. For today only, do not worry about giving away anything. I want you to go through your home and find 50 (yes, fifty) items to throw in the trash or recycling. Do not think hard about anything. If it is broken, out of date, or otherwise useless, then it goes into the trash or recycling immediately.

Here are some suggestions:

- Old coupons
- Pens that are out of ink
- Magazines & newspapers
- Holey underwear and socks
- Paperwork you don't need
- Boxes
- Pantry or refrigerator items that are essentially empty
- Old makeup
- Broken hair bands
- Broken anything
- Knick knacks

Your assignment today is:

1. Toss at least 50 items from your home. Set a timer and rush to get through this within 15 minutes.

Additional Resources:

[60 Things to Toss Out in the Next 60 Days](#) (blog post)

[22 Things to Get Rid of Right Now](#) (info graphic)

[250 Things to Throw Away](#) (blog post)

[25 Things To Throw Out Today](#) (blog post)

[Throw Out 100 Things Challenge](#) (blog post)

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Lesson Fifteen

Today we are going to make a plan. We are going to commit to a household decluttering mission. There are three options:

1. Commit to spending 30 days decluttering your home, one category per day.
2. Commit to spending 30+ minutes each week decluttering one category.
3. Commit to one intense weekend of cleaning covering all of the categories.

I recommend that you go with either the intense one weekend option, or the weekly option. I love the intense method because there are no distractions; this is your only mission. Kids are (ideally) out of the house and your partner is either helping you or staying out of your way. Put on your headphones and get working.

There are 3 piles you will be making: keep, toss, give away. I do NOT recommend making a "sell" pile because most of us never get around to actually selling and that pile then clutters up our garage/basement. You want these things OUT of your home by the end of the weekend.

To thoroughly declutter, you need to pile category items together: clothes, books, sheets, etc. Touch each item and ask yourself: Do I love it? Do I use it?

If the answer is yes to both, then add it to the keep pile. If not, then throw it into the toss or give away bags. Once that category of items has been completed, carefully put it away where it belongs and begin on the next category. At the end, put the trash outside and bring the giveaways to your Goodwill.

Your assignment today is:

1. Choose to do the 30 day challenge or the intense weekend declutter. Write your start date on the calendar. Arrange babysitting for the kids if needed.
2. Follow the category guide on the following page. I have separated these into 28 categories, for the month or weekend options.

Additional Resources (Amazon affiliate links):

[To Declutter Any Room, Ask These 2 Questions](#) (blog post)

[Declutter Your Home in One Weekend](#) (blog post)

[The Ridiculously Thorough Guide to Decluttering Your Home](#) (blog post)

[Decluttering the Home](#) (info graphic)

[The Life Changing Magic of Cleaning Up](#) (book)

[Unstuffed](#) (Christian book)

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Decluttering Guide

Declutter one category per day for a month or do it all in one weekend!

Refrigerator & freezer: old, expired, or almost empty items	Pantry: old, expired, or almost empty items	Kitchen cabinets: dishes, bowls, pots, pans	Kitchen drawers: duplicates, worn, useless items	Appliances and other large kitchen items that are not used or broken
All of your clothes including shoes, coats, hats, and closet items	All of child #1's clothes	All of child #2's clothes	Linens and sheets	Jewelry, nightstand, etc.
Books	Paperwork	Desk	Toys	Movies , games, electronics
Cleaning supplies	Front entrance/hall	Medicine cabinets and bathroom drawers	Craft areas	Laundry room