

New House Cleaning Checklist

Printable move-in checklist for cleaning an empty home before unpacking

Before You Start

- Photograph the condition of every room before cleaning.
- Check for leaks, water stains, visible mold, pest evidence, and damaged surfaces.
- Open windows for ventilation when weather and outdoor conditions allow.
- Gather cleaners, gloves, microfiber cloths, vacuum, mop, bucket, and garbage bags.
- Read product labels before using cleaners on unfamiliar surfaces.
- Check the HVAC filter and replace it if its age or condition is unknown.

Kitchen

- Clean inside and outside of the refrigerator and freezer.
- Clean the oven, stovetop, microwave, range hood, and reusable hood filter.
- Clean the dishwasher filter and interior according to the appliance instructions.
- Vacuum crumbs, then wipe the inside of every cabinet and drawer.
- Clean cabinet fronts, handles, countertops, backsplash, sink, and faucet.
- Clean behind and beneath accessible appliances when they can be moved safely.
- Sweep or vacuum, then mop the floor with a surface-appropriate cleaner.

Bathrooms

- Clean the toilet, including the base, hinges, lid, handle, and exterior.
- Scrub the bathtub and shower; inspect grout and caulk for deterioration or mold.
- Clean sinks, faucets, countertops, mirrors, vanity interiors, and hardware.
- Remove visible hair and debris from accessible drains.
- Clean the exhaust-fan grille.
- Sweep and mop the floor.

Bedrooms & Closets

- Dust ceiling fans, light fixtures, upper trim, and other high surfaces first.
- Clean windows, sills, tracks, and blinds.
- Wipe closet shelves, hanging rods, doors, handles, switches, trim, and baseboards.
- Vacuum carpet slowly along edges and corners, or clean hard flooring appropriately.

Living Areas, Hallways & Entryways

- Dust ceiling fans, fixtures, molding, and high shelves.
- Clean windows, sills, doors, handles, switches, stair railings, trim, and baseboards.
- Vacuum accessible supply and return grilles if dusty.
- Vacuum carpets or clean hard floors last.
- Plan a quick floor touch-up after movers finish using the main traffic path.

Laundry & Utility Areas

- Clean the washer drum, detergent compartments, and front-loader gasket if present.
- Clean the dryer lint screen and vacuum accessible lint areas where permitted.
- Inspect the dryer exhaust connection for damage, crushing, or heavy lint buildup.
- Clean appliance exteriors, shelving, utility sink, baseboards, and floor.

Whole-House Safety & Air

- Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms where installed.
- Locate the main water shutoff, electrical panel, and gas shutoff if applicable.
- Inspect or replace the HVAC filter and vacuum dusty registers.
- Do not assume dusty registers mean whole-house duct cleaning is needed.
- Ventilate during and after cleaning when outdoor conditions permit.
- Never mix cleaning or disinfecting products unless the manufacturer explicitly directs it.

Before the Movers Arrive

- Allow floors and cleaned surfaces to dry completely.
- Stock one bathroom with toilet paper, soap, and hand towels.
- Keep paper towels, garbage bags, basic cleaner, broom or vacuum, and drinking water accessible.
- Protect the movers' main walking route with floor protection appropriate for the surface.
- Photograph the clean condition of rooms before furniture and boxes arrive.

Important: Follow product labels and manufacturer instructions. Never mix cleaning or disinfecting products unless the manufacturer explicitly directs it. Significant mold, sewage contamination, active pests, or unresolved water problems may require professional attention.

Printable companion to the New House Cleaning Checklist by Coastal Moving Services.