

HINTS FOR HOMEMAKERS

A Clean State of Mind Helps Manage Household Tasks

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(NAPSA)—Running a household means there is always something to do. The trick is figuring out the most efficient way to tackle the have to's—like cleaning and managing household business—so there's more time for the want to's—like having fun as a family or reading a book.

One thing I do is look for easy-to-use cleaning products that reduce the steps to achieve the result. For example, research shows that on everyone's worst chore list, mopping is more dreaded than cleaning the bathroom. A mop with built-in cleaner, such as Clorox ReadyMop™ can help. No need for a bucket or for rinsing, and floors are clean and dry in half the time. You can handle other tasks more efficiently if you put yourself in a "clean state of mind." Here are three simple strategies to help you get started.

Work Smarter, Not Harder

- Think gravity. Clean from top to bottom; ceilings first, then walls and countertops, floors last.

- Keep an all-in-one mop like ReadyMop™ on hand to clean up spills when they happen—it's easiest when the spills are fresh.

- Next time you take out the garbage, store a few extra trash bags under the bag in use. When it's full, another is standing by.

- Develop a repertoire of easy meals and keep the ingredients on hand. Whenever possible, cook a double portion of dinner for the freezer.

- Fill your sink with warm water and dish soap while cooking. Soak pots, pans, and utensils while you're eating for easier clean-up later.

Create Family SOPs (standard operating procedures)

- Have a specific place where jackets, hats, backpacks, and briefcases should be put.

- Keep a lost-and-found basket in the front closet. Family members can stash things they find



lying around the house. Everyone knows this is the first place to look when something is lost.

- Create one place—such as a hook by the back door or a basket on the kitchen counter—where you always keep car keys.

- Schedule routine toy pick-up times for kids—before lunch, before dinner, and a half hour before bed.

- Agree to a house rule: Everyone puts his or her dishes in the dishwasher.

Practice Double-Timing

- Never walk through the house empty-handed. Pick up something and put it away if it belongs in the direction you're going.

- Make TV time count. Assemble a basket filled with little chores—buttons to be sewn on, short notes to be written—to accomplish while watching your favorite shows. Family members can fold clothes, brush the pet, or polish shoes.

- When you're on hold on the phone, clean out your purse, dust the closest piece of furniture, or purge your coupon file of expired offers.

- Make a grocery list while cooking dinner. You're in the kitchen anyway so it's easy to check on staples.

- Use disposable disinfecting wipes to clean and kill germs on appliances, countertops, and cabinets.

You can't make housework go away, but you can make it easier.