

All The Little Things



>> Cleaning your fridge regularly will help make it function well

Taking proper care of your appliances will help them last longer and save you a lot of time in the bargain. Rhea Dhanbhora tells you how to keep them in perfect shape

So your house is filled with appliances that make your life easier. Microwave ovens, refrigerators, ice makers, dishwashers, air conditioners... you've got the whole lot. But what happens when one of them starts acting up and you have to spend time (not to mention extra money) getting it fixed? Technology means there are several things to make our lives simpler, but they don't take care of themselves. Sometimes the littlest things, such as cleaning them out after each use, can make them last longer. Taking proper care of your appliances is extremely important. Read on for a few important tips...

JUST CHILL

If you don't want your refrigerator to conk off, make sure you defrost it regularly. Empty out your fridge and freezer and then unplug it for a day. Let the ice slowly melt and then reset the thermostat and use it normally again. It's a lot better than trying to scrape off any accumulated frost because it's easy to puncture the evaporator, which will ruin your fridge. If your fridge has self-defrosted, clean the drain pan underneath the fridge that collects the water (if it's accessible). Also, clean the cooling fan and condenser coils, or get someone to clean them for you (preferably a professional, even if your husband insists he can do it himself).

SPINNING AROUND

Washing machines may be used to clean our clothes, but they need cleaning too. Clean the hot and cold water inlets regularly and occasionally run it empty just with hot water (you do get machine cleaning solutions which you can add in as well). This will clean it out and remove any odour causing agents left behind. Treat your washing machine gently, no matter how tough the salesperson said it was it. Never overload it and don't put in too much detergent when you're washing your clothes to prevent causing clogs. Also, it's important to use the right detergent.

FREEZE FRAME

Get your air conditioner serviced every few months. If you want to clean it out yourself,

remove the cover of the air conditioner to allow access to the condenser coils inside. Brush the dirt off with a soft bristle brush or use a hair dryer. Also clean any dirt or lint that could have built up at the bottom. Clean or replace the filter. It's best to call a professional though, as they can also check whether it's working fine and whether you need to replace any parts.

WARM IT UP

The inside of your microwave needs to be cleaned frequently. Food particles and splatters may cause burns and damage. Invest in microwave oven cleaners and clean the interior every two weeks. Since they are extremely sensitive to damage from voltage spikes or malfunction, unplug the microwave when it's not in use. This will help you save some energy as well.

HOT STUFF

Clean the range knobs with a non abrasive cleaner. It's best to clean them everyday or every two days. Replace old bulbs that don't work because they could ruin your oven. Clean the stovetop and the oven control panel as well as the inside of the oven. Keeping it clean is essential for it to continue working smoothly.

SMOOTH TALKING

If you have a clothes iron which needs water, make sure you are running only clean water through it. Drain out excess water after every use. Be careful not to scratch the iron plate, it will damage your clothes and cause tears. You can sand down the plate with sandpaper if you like, but use extra fine grade. If the scratches are bad, it's best to get a new iron.

KEEP THESE TIPS IN MIND

1. If the wires or plugs are frayed check with an electrician if they can be replaced. If not, replace them immediately. Never use appliances with frayed wires and plugs.
2. Unplug any appliances that you are not using at the time as this saves energy.
3. Use only non-abrasive cloths to clean them.



>> Moving doesn't have to tire you out completely

5 WAYS TO: MOVE HOUSE EASILY

1. DON'T JUNK UP

Anything that'll add any unnecessary weight to the process of moving isn't worth all the trouble. Have an 'out with the old, in with the new' attitude.

2. START SLOW

Don't go into a sudden frenzy and start bouncing around from room to room. You'll end up out of time as well as energy. Start slow and make sure you've got everything in place before moving on to the next.

3. MATERIAL READY

Before you begin packing, make a list of the material you'll need. Bubble wrap, cardboard

boxes, duct tape. Whatever you need, get it all into your house before you start cleaning out.

4. LIST IT OUT

You're going to forget what you need if you don't write it down. A checklist will help you figure out how to plan a smooth move.

5. SET A TIMEFRAME

If you start with one room, don't leave it unfinished. Aiming to finish a job in one day will help the rest become less daunting. Finishing one room a day isn't a Herculean task so it shouldn't be that much of a challenge, especially not if you ask for help!