

Cleaning Out Your Depression house

A compassionate guide to cleaning up after a depressive episode.



KC DAVIS struggle care

cleaning out your depression house



STEP ONE

FUNCTIONAL BEDROOM

- CHANGE SHEETS
- CLEAR A PATH FROM BED TO BATHROOM & KITCHEN
- SWEEP OR VACUUM PATH

You deserve a clean place to sleep and a safe place to walk. Even if all you get to today is clean sheets, that's progress. Clear a path by piling things up into piles or baskets. You don't need to put anything away right now. It will take some time to get through the whole house and you deserve to function while you work on it.

STEP TWO

FUNCTIONAL KITCHEN

- CLEAN OFF SMALL COUNTERTOP SPACE
- TAKE DISHES OUT OF THE SINK
- CLEAR ONE BURNER ON STOVE

Remember that the goal here is to make yourself a functioning space. You only need a small piece of counter space to safely prepare food. You deserve access to a clear sink for cleaning, preparing food, and washing dishes. You do not have to do the dishes. You can stack them up in categories on the counter or in a bucket.

STEP THREE

THROW AWAY TRASH

- STACK UP BOXES
- BAG UP ALL TRASH
- DONATE TODAY OR THROW AWAY

Get yourself some gloves and a trash bag and bag up all the trash. If you have plastic dishes that are moldy throw them away. If you are able to drop off donations TODAY do so. Otherwise, curb them with a "free sign," post them for free in a FB group, or call a charity that will pick them up. However, if you reasonably cannot expect yourself to do that in the next 48 hours, throw them away. Reusing and recycling is good but your life is more important. You deserve to function.

STEP FOUR

DISHES

- COLLECT ALL DISHES AND TAKE TO KITCHEN
- THROW AWAY SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS
- DO SOME DISHES

When tackling dishes, a good pair of dishwashing gloves and a playlist or show on Netflix can go a long way. If the smells are off-putting, light a candle or try a facemask with a little essential oil or vapo-rup under your nose. You do not need to complete all the dishes. Any progress is good progress! Plastic containers that contain mold need to be thrown away bc it can contaminate the plastic. In fact, if what's keeping you from dishes is dealing with the rotten food, just throw any container away that has rotten food. If you wish to save glass containers, put the rotten food into a ziploc, seal and throw away (this will prevent your trash from smelling).

STEP FIVE

CLOSING DUTIES

- FILL OUT CLOSING DUTIES TEMPLATE
- CREATE PLAYLIST
- DO FIRST CLOSING DUTIES

You do not have to wait for your whole house to be clean before starting some routines. Closing duties is a routine that will change your life. Closing duties is a short list of things you do every night as a kindness to morning-you. The list is the same every night and after its done you relax! Start with 1-2 duties, dishes being one of them. Whether you choose to do all of the days dishes or just 5 minutes of washing dishes is up to you. Start with what feels doable. Build on the list as it feels right.

STEP SIX

LAUNDRY

- PILE LAUNDRY INTO ONE PILE
- PRE-SORT INTO LOADS
- START LAUNDRY
- CREATE FUNCTIONAL LAUNDRY SYSTEM

Pick up all the laundry in the house and put it in one pile. Pre-sorting by type or person helps visualize the loads and make its easier if you need to take loads to the wash and fold. Start your laundry. If you can, pay a wash and fold to do this step! While laundry is running, give some thought to your laundry system. Are there any tweaks you can do to make your system easier? Creating a family closet, buying more laundry baskets, doing a no-fold system in baskets, hanging everything, and utilizing a laundry service are all options that may be a better fit for you. There are no laundry police. You are allowed to do whatever works for you and your family.

Shortcut: if it's in the budget, send out for a wash and fold.

Too overwhelmed? pick out two weeks worth of clothing and bag up the rest for later. This will let you function until you can deal with it.

STEP SEVEN

THINGS THAT HAVE A PLACE

- PUT AWAY EVERYTHING THAT HAS A PLACE
- CREATE A PILE OF THINGS THAT YOU DO AND DON'T WANT
- FROM THE DON'T PILE: DIVIDE INTO TRASH AND DONATE

Go into each room and put away everything that has a place. Place things that do not have a place into a pile. Then divide your "things that don't have a place" pile into things you want to keep and things you don't. Now is the time to purge. Less stuff means less mess. With the things you do not want you can make a decision whether to trash or donate them. If you will not or cannot donate within 24 hours, follow the previous advice on donation items or throw them away. You are more important than stuff.

STEP EIGHT

THINGS THAT DON'T HAVE A PLACE

- DONATE OR TRASH THE DON'T WANT PILES
- PLACE PAPERS INTO A BOX, FILE, OR SCAN
- GROUP LIKE ITEMS INTO A BIN AND LABEL
- INSTALL HOOKS AND SHOE HANGERS FOR LOOSE ITEMS

Finding permanent homes for things that do not have a place is a question of storage and organization. You do not need to purchase fancy organizers or labels and Pinterest aesthetic is not necessary. Things that can be grouped can get placed into boxes or bins. Labeling these bins is key to keeping organized--using post-its or masking tape for labels is easy and low cost. An accordion file or flood proof box is a great place to store important or sentimental papers (You can also scan and upload to your computer. When there isn't enough of a thing to group into a bin, hooks and plastic shoe organizers can be installed on doors and walls to provide permanent homes for random objects you need to keep.

PAPERS TO KEEP

- Bills that need to be paid
- Active insurance policies
- Family: Adoption papers, birth, marriage, and death certificates
- Tax forms (ex W-2 or 1099) from past three years
- Tax returns from all years
- Major legal documents: filings, wills, or inheritances etc.
- Sentimental documents
- Professional & business: licenses, certificates, continuing ed etc.
- This year's paycheck stubs
- Receipts or bills needed for the self-employed
- Active warranty information
- Current passport and social security card
- Vehicle titles and loan documents
- House deeds and mortgage documents
- Current rental agreements
- Retirement plan statements

PAPERS TO DITCH

- Bills that have been paid
- Inactive insurance or warranty policies
- Tax forms (ex W-2 or 1099) from more three ago
- Instruction manuals (you can find these all online now)

Shredding or using a special black out marker to de-identify information is best when throwing out anything with sensitive information

STEP NINE

CLEANING

- PUT TOGETHER A CLEANING KIT (CONSIDER MAKING ONE FOR EACH FLOOR)

BASIC CLEANING TERMS

- Cleaning: removing dust, dirt, debris, spills, or stains
- Sanitizing: reduces the amount of bacteria on a surface
- Disinfecting: kills or inactivates bacteria and viruses on a surface

BASIC CLEANING SUPPLIES

- Micro-fiber towels, scrub daddy, plastic putty knife, toothbrush & scouring brush
- Multi-surface cleaners: Dawn Power Wash & Pledge mutli-surface
- Glass cleaner (ammonia free)
- Clorox wands, Bar Keepers Friend
- Disinfectants: bleach and Lysol/Clorox wipes
- Broom, vacuum, and mop (traditional or swiffer)
- Pantry items for cleaning: white vinegar and baking soda

Note:

Safety-first! You cannot mix bleach with vinegar, Bar Keeper's Friend, or ammonia (found in Windex & many glass cleaners) because it creates a poisonous gas. Do not use them on the same surfaces and if using in the same room take some time in between an turn on your exhaust fan.

STEP TEN

DUSTING SURFACES

- SCRAPE UP GRIME
- DUST CEILING FANS
- DUST SURFACES

If you have any stuck on grime or dirt, apply power wash and let soak a few minutes. Use your putty knife and scrub daddy to scrape up the grime (use paper towels to wipe away). Use a disinfectant to wipe down the area if the grime was food. For ceiling fans, use a pillow case to cover the blade then wipe the dust off, this will catch the dust inside and prevent it from falling onto the beds or floors. Then use a micro fiber cloth and pledge spray to dust all the surfaces. A broom is a great way to dust the tops of baseboards without having to bend down. If you have sentimental knick knacks and dusting is a struggle, consider placing them into a shadow box and mounting on the wall. This will keep the items dust-free and leave your edges free for easy dusting

STEP ELEVEN

FLOORS

- SWEEP FLOORS
- VACUUM CARPET
- MOP HARD FLOORS

Traditional mops are cumbersome and messy. If you have one you can use it with Dawn Power Wash and water. If you don't--a Swiffer mop works just fine and they are very affordable. If you have the budget, a vacuum that mops and vacuums usually goes for between 200-300 dollars and is a great time saver. If there are particularly grimey spaces on the floor, using the same approach as the surfaces step with dawn power wash and a putty knife will do the trick. If you want to wash your baseboards, clorox waxes are a great trick!

HAPPY SPACES

STAGE A HAPPY SPOT IN YOUR HOME

You do not have to wait until your home is cleaned up before you start making happy spaces. Happy touches are not rewards for perfection. Take the time now to create a little pocket of peace somewhere in your home.

Ideas

- Put some decorative pillows on your bed or couch
- Add candles around your bath tub
- Hang pictures or art you've been meaning to hang
- Create a reading nook
- Arrange your bedside table with items that make you happy
- Organize your pantry in an aesthetically pleasing way
- Organize the playroom
- Organize the playroom
- Put fresh flowers on your kitchen table

**STEP
THIRTEEN**

TOILETS

- CLEAN OUTSIDE OF TOILET
- CLEAN TOILET BOWL
- CLEAN FLOOR AROUND TOILET

Literally no one will be laying on their death bed wishing they spent more time cleaning toilets. There is no need to aim for perfection here. That being said, you deserve a sanitary toilet and with minimal effort you can get there. If the toilet isnt too dirty, using a clorox wand and disposable head can clean the outside and base of the toilet easily. Use a damp micro fiber cloth to wipe down. Change the head and clean the inside of the bowl. If the bowl is very dirty or you have a stubborn ring, use a cup to scoop out some water so that the water line is below the ring. While wearing gloves, apply Bar Keepers Friend and let sit a few minutes. Using a scouring brush scrub the toilet

**STEP
FOURTEEN**

SHOWER

- WASH OR REPLACE SHOWER CURTAIN
- SCRUB OUT MOLD
- WIPE DOWN TILE, TUB, AND GLASS

Wash fabric shower curtains. If plastic liners have mold or stains its best to replace them. Remove pink or green mold with a paste of 4 parts baking soda and 1 part dish detergent. Rub into grout and scrub with scouring brush. Use a mask and gloves. If you suspect you have black mold it is better to consult a professional rather than attempt to remove it yourself. Shower walls and tubs can be cleaned with a clorox wand or dawn power wash. Glass cleaner will clean glass doors. Bar Keepers Friend can remove any tub stains.

STEP FIFTEEN

COUNTERS & FLOORS

- CLEAN SINKS & COUNTERS
- WIPE DOWN CABINETS & LEDGES
- CLEAN MIRRORS
- SWEEP & MOP FLOORS

You can clean sink and counters with a scrub daddy and some dawn power wash or pledge multi-surface cleaner. Microfiber towels and pledge are great for dusting and your putty knife can help get any stuck on bits off. Best to use a paper towel or microfiber cloth with your glass cleaner for the mirror and end with a quick sweep and mop.

STEP SIXTEEN

STOVE

- VACUUM CRUMBS
- CLEAN STOVE TOP
- WIPE DOWN OVEN

Use a handheld vacuum to vacuum up crumbs from the stove top. Glass stove tops need a special glass cleaner to be cleaned. Stainless steel stove tops can be cleaned with Bar Keepers Friend. Visit <https://www.barkeepersfriend.com/how-to-clean-a-stove-top/> to see step by step instructions. Wipe down oven front with pledge or stainless steel cleaner.

**STEP
SEVENTEEN**

MICROWAVE & FRIDGE

- STEAM CLEAN & WIPE MICROWAVE
- WIPE DOWN FRIDGE SHELVES
- WIPE DOWN FRONT OF FRIDGE

Dawn power wash can be used for the inside and outside of the microwave. Spray on dry microwave and let sit if you have lots of dried pieces. Scrub with wet scrub daddy and wipe with paper towel. If you wish to deep clean your fridge, remove the items and then take the shelves to the sink to wash with dawn power wash and a scrub daddy. However, if you want to save some time you can skip this step or simply spot clean any spills with the scrub daddy and some soapy water. Wipe down the front of the fridge with either Pledge or Stainless steel cleaner.

**STEP
EIGHTEEN**

**KITCHEN COUNTERS, CABINETS,
& FLOORS**

- WIPE DOWN COUNTERS
- WIPE FRONT OF CABINETS
- SWEEP & MOP FLOOR

Wipe crumbs off counters onto the floor. Using dawn power wash and a wet scrub daddy, clean counter tops. Use putty knife to scrape hard bits. Wipe down with a damp micro-fiber towel and sanitize with lysol or clorox wipes if desired. Clean cabinets with Pledge, using scrub daddy and putty knife to remove hard bits and a micro fiber towel to wipe down. Finish by sweeping floors and mopping if desired.

**STEP
NINETEEN**

CLEANING YOUR SUPPLIES

- WASH TOWELS AND MOP HEAD IN LAUNDRY
- CLEAN BRUSHES, PUTTY KNIFE, AND SCRUB DADDY IN BLEACH SOLUTION

Towels and removable mop heads can be run through the washing machine. Let mop heads air dry. Brushes, putty knife, and scrub daddy can be disinfected by soaking in one gallon of hot water with 1/2 cup bleach for 5-10 minutes.