

# Home, Sweet Home

## A Humorous Guide To Home Cleaning & Household Improvement Tips



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## Home cleaning-1

# The Making of Beastmaster

## The great battle against cockroaches

How often you must have heard the scream of your wife, or daughter—“Eeeeeek!” Running upstairs, breathless, you have discovered the cause of that blood curdling ghostly scream was nothing but a two and a half inch cockroach!

### **Dance of the diseases**

One of the most repulsive and ugly of all household creatures, a cockroach not only looks disgusting, but they act disgusting. Cockroaches can contaminate food and transmit germs, and disease carrying organisms, like staphylococci, strep, colform molds, salmonella, yeast's and clostridia. They also spread parasites that cause toxoplasmosis, an illness that can causes birth defects if the pregnant women gets infected. Whenever it is dark, they



would appear from seemingly nowhere and start spreading out everywhere, and nibble at everything (well...almost). They hide themselves in the dark alleys of the drains and drainpipes at daytime, and like party animals, would come out when it is dark—not in ones and twos, but in large numbers. Party animals—literally!

Diseases and cockroaches eat together, sing together, dance together and come hand in hand to you. Thus, there is no point making domestic pets out of cockroaches. Besides, they are disgusting in their food habits as well. They eat human feces, rotten and contaminated food, book bindings, leather, and even the glue on canned food labels. They love to eat the glue in paper bags and often come to the new neighborhood of your household in paper bags from the grocery store.

### **Cockroach: the worldwide terrorist group**

Now if you are interested to do a research on cockroaches, here is some FREE piece of information that you need not pay me for. Cockroaches come in 4 versions across the world:

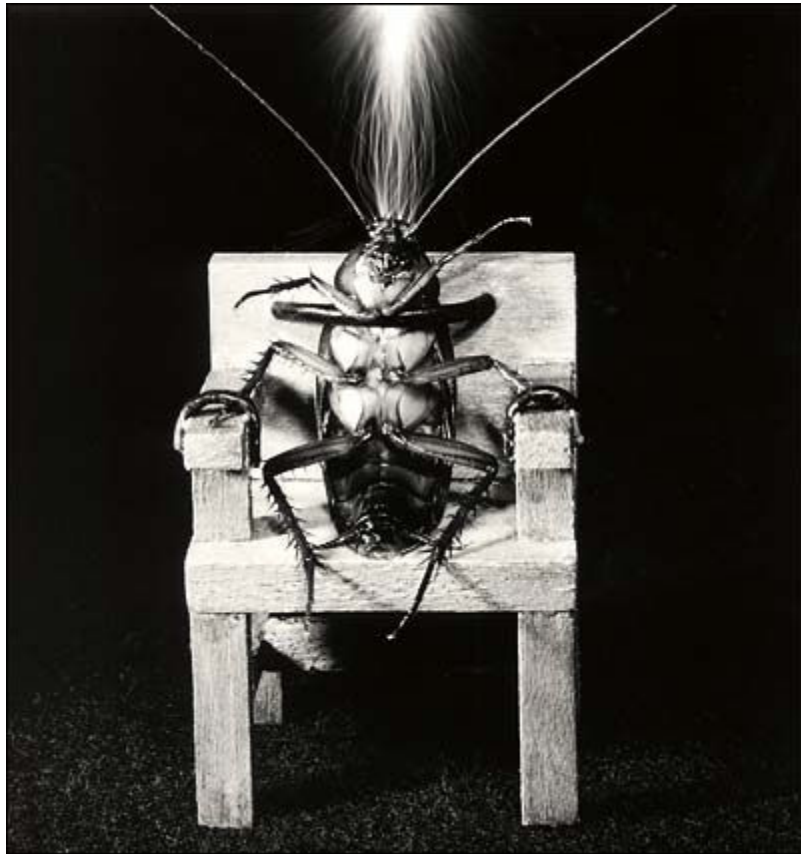


- **The German Cockroach**-- the most common and the smallest
- **American Cockroach**-- light brown with yellowish wings, doesn't really fly, it glides.
- **Indian Cockroach**-- dark reddish brown.
- **Brown Banded Cockroach**-- yellowish or

brown with brown bands on wings. Cockroaches can grow to be 2 inches long.

## **Cockroach: their hideouts**

They expand their family pretty fast! The wife cockroach can have up to 30,000 offspring in their lifetime (Wow! What a mother!). Cockroaches love dark, moist, warm places to live in. The kitchen and bathroom being their favorites but other places like laundry baskets are



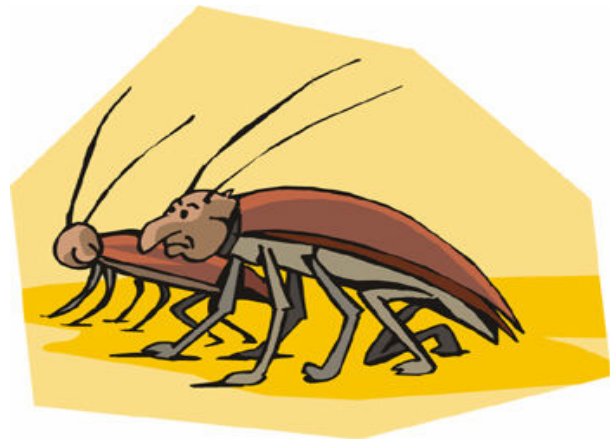
also their home (sweet home). You'll also discover them in boxes, paper bags and books. They quite easily get transported across houses, countries and continents...believe me, or not!

## **The battle against evil**

Your papa had always told you prevention is better than cure. I don't know whether he had cockroaches in his mind when he said so, because, prevention and control are most important in the battle to eradicate cockroaches. Killing only the ones you see is not effective, because like the tip of the iceberg, if you see one, then there are 300 hiding! Scary, isn't it? Try this:

Always plug drains on sinks when not in use. Cockroaches come in through drain pipes if the water has subsided. (Quite heroic, really! Hollywood can think of a 'Cockroachman' as the villain in the next Spiderman movie) Keep floors, tables, counters and cupboards free from open food and crumbs.

**Insecticide sprays** are useful for killing cockroaches. You can call out a professional (if you are too lazy, or afraid of cockroaches, or believe that they have gone beyond your control). Alternately, you can spray an buy an insecticide and spray it yourself. You have to make sure you get all the hiding places, cracks, crevices, baseboards and under sinks. You can also leave boric acid powder along the same places and then when a cockroach walks through it, it clings to their feet and antennae. When they ingest the powder it kills them. Boric acid is fairly safe to use and handle. Inhaled in large quantities can make you sick too. Motivate yourself by thinking this is a man vs beast battle that you must win; imagine that you are Russel Crowe, waging a battle against a tiger in the arena...and that will make you feel good.



You must prevent cockroaches from entering your house by sealing up any holes and cracks along baseboards, door frames and windows. Seal up the space around water and sewer pipes, and electrical and telephone lines where they come inside. Keep all dirty things like leftover food,

manure, away from the living areas of your house. Cockroaches love sharing dog food, so inspect them regularly.

## **Fat rats eating your mats!**

### **The ‘sweet’ looking killer**

Who can forget the story of ‘The Pied Piper of Hamelin’—where Hamlin town was plagued by the little devils—rats? Is your home safe from these little devils? No! At the dark of the night you have so often heard little footsteps, and muffled sounds of scratching and movement, haven’t you? Undoubtedly there are rats living in your sweet home.

From the beginning of time rats have plagued us, bringing with them terrible diseases that have in some areas nearly wiped out entire human population. These rodents came to America on ships, carrying with them fleas, another major source of disease.





The sweet looking creatures (mouse being the younger brother), that have inspired the imagination of cartoonists and animators to create funny creatures like Mickey mouse, mini mouse, Jerry (Tom & Jerry), are really not so sweet, or funny in their habitat.

The fact that rats do carry a number of diseases, among which the most serious, hantavirus and leptospirosis,



which have resulted in the deaths of many of those infected, presents a serious health hazard to our environment. And that is why you need to control the expansion of the family of this 'sweet' creature, with black beady eyes. Rats make their home just about anywhere since they can eat just about anything available to them.



### **Battling and rattling rats: *mousetrap***

Besides poisons, nothing seems to prevent these creatures, as they can even make delicious food out of animal feces. If you decide to use **rat traps**, set them near their home. Now, you don't have to be Sherlock Holmes or James Bond to locate their homes; their small black droppings will tell



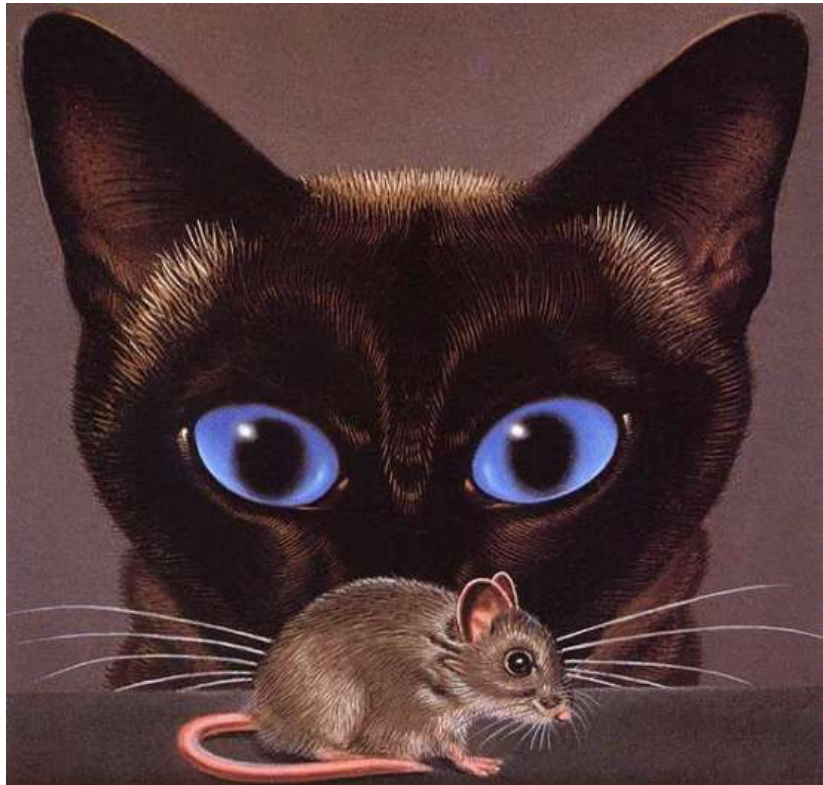
you where their nests/homes are. Pieces of bread, peanuts, peanut butter, cheese are just a few items that can be good baits to attract them towards/into the trap.

Some ideas for bait are peanut butter, peanuts, pieces of bread, and the proverbial piece of cheese. Although this list

could probably be expanded as rats do have a voracious appetite and will probably go for any foodstuff that is put inside a trap. Since the 'sweet' creatures maybe carrying some not so sweet diseases, it is always a good idea to use some form of insecticide before you hold any dead rat for dumping outside.

### **Battling and rattling rats: *cat after the rat***

A cat can be a fair solution, unless your rats are jumbo in size, which, of course becomes too much for a poor cat to handle. Mind it, that rats are carriers of germs



and that opens your cat (or dog) to the risk of catching diseases like rabies.

### **Battling and rattling rats: *poison***



Poison is good and effective, but you have to be extreme careful with it, and best avoid it as an option if you have pets like cats and dogs, besides small children or baby. Best of all...call for a professional.

Again, prevention is better than cure. So, best thing is not to allow the sweet creatures home at all;

- Use metal garbage cans with metal lids. (Rats can open plastic lids and feast on your leftovers).
- Store foodstuff in tight lid containers. They remain fresh this way, and disappoint rats.

## When ants are in your pants!



...then you are done for...and run for a hideout, because you have to pull them out of your pants. But how do ants come to your pants? How do ants come to your home at all? How do you keep them out?

Spraying of insecticides is an option but then they drive away our family members quicker than they drive away ants. In US, it has been both the Argentine Ant and the Fire Ant that have bitten off more people than others.

## Mummy...this jammy is yummy!

Favorite ant diet—sweet items and protein. Conclusion—keep these items tightly sealed, and refrigerated. Luckily, if your refrigerator is working properly, then no ant can survive the cold. If no sweet juice is rolling down the container, there is not much luck for the ants (luck for them is to lick the juice). Native Fire Ants love the lip



smacking taste of starches and fats which they find on dirty dishes and in your trash can (ummm...mummy, it's yummy!—says young ant to mother ant).

## **Invading their home**

Ants love to make their home in potted plants. One trick you can apply while buying potted plants, is flood it once with water. Choking and coughing, the ants rush out. Do the same with your house plant and shift it to a different location. The plant smiles, you smile, the ants cry.

## **Fight with powder**

One effective solution you can try out is mix 1/8 teaspoon of powdered boric acid with 1/4 cup of jelly and place small amounts around your home, out of the reach of children and pets. You can also sprinkle talcum powder along the entryways of the ants'. Just like an army waiting, unable to do anything on the other side of a firewall, the ants will not be able to cross the line. Talcum powder is harmless to children and pets (except that it makes the floor a bit slippery), plus, it deodorizes your home and can be vacuumed or mopped up later.

## **Call the doctor**

When all solutions at hand fail, you can always call a professional, to cure the problem. Make sure he knows about your indoor pets before he starts spraying insecticides.



## Bites of termites!



Termites or white ants are an annoying sight when it is in your sweet home. Living in colonies, they work and operate in a well-defined system of order. Termite colonies are formed in nests within wood or soil. They eat up wood with the ease of eating a burger. The king or queen termite can live up to 70 years! That's the age of your grandpa.

### The fight against termite

Termites are best tackled by professionals, since by the time they are discovered, they would have already grown like the scary creatures of some Stephen Spielberg movie. Home remedies normally prove to be of little effect.

- **Insecticides** can be sprayed or shot directly into the diseased wood by drilling small holes in the infected wood and pumping chemicals through the holes. Termites die within one to six months. Each hole must be sealed after the insecticide treatment, so that the awe inspiring creatures cannot run away. While insecticides will destroy termite trouble, they are extremely poisonous and often leave traces of toxic residue on carpeting, furniture, flooring, and walls for many years.
- **Fumigation** is used most successfully on dry-wood termites. Fumigation is a not so cheap, lengthy procedure that involves tenting the diseased structure, evacuating residents, and pumping

a fumigant into the spoiled wood. Fumigation is best done by a professional as a last resort effort.

### Alternative ways

- **Boric acid**

dissolved in water and painted on affected area will keep termites miles away for years to come.

- **Heat Treatment** is

a good alternative to chemical fumigation.

- **Freezing** is good, when small areas are infected by termites.

Liquid nitrogen is pushed into afflicted structures, freezing walls and termites in their tracks. Liquid nitrogen is the stuff that was shown in the last scene of Terminator-II movie, in the tanker that turned turtle, by the way



### Prevention, better than cure

- **Use termite-resistant woods** like cedar, juniper, and redwood, when building your house.

- **Seal the woods** exposed to moisture. Using an all-weather wood sealer on patios, window frames, door frames, and at wall edges will frighten termites.

- **Repair** cracks, gaps, split wood should be repaired immediately.

Home cleaning -2

## Ba ba bathroom, have you any stain?



It's Sunday morning. The only day you can be an extra hour in bed. You decide not to get up before 9. Suddenly your inner voice reminds you that you had promised to clean the bathroom today (you had been promising this for the last three weeks!). Help!!! This cannot happen to me! I want to sleep—cry the soul inside you. Relax. No need to panic. Not at all— if you have the simple sense of cleaning the bathroom regularly. The longer you leave the bathroom without cleaning, the more stubborn becomes the stains. Imagine they are little devils (the stains) and you are the one man army fighting them. Get set, load the weapons (given below) and attack!



## The weapons

- water
- a two gallon bucket
- a toilet brush
- a scrub brush
- an old toothbrush
- a sponge...nope, more than one
- bleach OR ammonia
- a mildew remover, like TILEX
- rubber gloves (that won't give way in their first use)



Get duplicates of all these, in case you have two bathrooms in two different floors, or you will end up spending more time running up and down, and panting; which is not enchanting.

## Bathtub & shower

Spray TILEX (or any other mildew remover) all along the bathtub and shower. It becomes smoky and you need to switch on that exhaust fan of yours so that you can sit and sing a song and comfortably wait for the next few minutes. Next, move to the toilet. In the bucket, mix water and bleach(or ammonia) in 2:1 ratio. Do NOT make a bleach-ammonia cocktail, because that will be a very harmful cocktail.

## The toilet

Pour a little of the mixture into the toilet, and wipe down the round rim and the toilet seat, using the sponge (make sure you are wearing the gloves; or removing one nasty stain will leave you with another on the skin of your hand). Wipe on the



outside as well. When you have done this much, go ahead and wipe the area behind the seat as well (the simple logic is, you might get constipation from hastily finishing your toilet-activities everyday, due to the extreme stink coming from behind the toilet seat). Finally when you



are satisfied, start scrubbing inside the toilet, using the toilet brush. Rinse the sponge with water, and use it to wipe clean the chemical-solution with water. Looking clean, isn't it? Flush the toilet & enjoy the sound of rumbling water, before moving to the sink. Dump that

sponge and get a new one (it's not meant for annual use; neither your son will make Spongebob out of that stinking sponge—so, get rid of it anyway).



## The Sink

Use the fresh sponge to wipe the sink and the entire counter with the cocktail you have prepared. After sometime re-wipe the place with the

same sponge, rinsed in plain water. Now it's the time for your old toothbrush to swing into action. Dip the old toothbrush (make sure it doesn't look exactly like your present toothbrush, and there is no mixup), in the cocktail solution, and scrub the areas around the faucet and sink. Remember, to keep the dirty mildew miles away, don't be mild with them. Be real nasty with that nasty stuff. Done? What next? Rinse with plain water, and wipe dry with a clean rag (not the one with which you clean your car). Repeat the process with the baseboards.



Not to forget the bathtub and shower, which is left slick and slimy with the spray. With the scrub brush, scrub gently the walls of the tub. Do the same with the bathroom door as well. Scrub the tough stains with the toothbrush using the water-bleach/ammonia cocktail. Scrub the faucet and drain areas. Rinse with water, when you are satisfied with your work. Pat dry. Congratulate yourself over the not so uphill task that you have performed. In fact you will agree with me (keep it a secret from your spouse) that the work is not as nasty or laborious as it looks. For maximum benefit (benefits health wise too-- you loose a few extra calories) repeat the process every week.

## **The shower curtain**

It is certain that the curtain gets filthy. The shower curtain I'm talking of. And when you can't bear the filth any longer, you discard it, dump it, right? And this is how the family budget soars. Ok, maybe it's inexpensive. But 2 and 2 add upto 4; and 4 and four makes 8, and that's

how it grows (ok I don't want to give a boring lecture on family budget and savings). But certainly, with proper care, the stuff can go longer. Open the thing from the rings (easier than opening other things). The fallacy is; when the shower curtain remains in touch with soap and water, you expect it to be spotlessly clean; but it is never like that. Rather soap suds,



and body oil make it greasy and filthy. And that's why it needs cleaning, just like your clothes and bedroom curtains. Whether it is made of vinyl or cloth, dump it in the washing machine; add detergent, and run the machine setting the knob somewhere between gentle and wild. If you run it too gently, the grease stains will laugh at you; and if you make that too wild, it's the torn openings that will laugh at you. After a complete run in the washing machine (you can watch *Shakira* shake her hips for the time being), take the curtain out and let it dry. If it is a cloth curtain, you can iron it; else, if it's made of vinyl, it would be a good idea to keep it away from the iron. If you still insist ironing, set the temperature of the iron at a level that you can bear on your back on a situation, when you take a hot water bag message.

### Home cleaning -3

## Ice skating on your floor



### **Floor carpet (and the floor, in general)**

Blame it on yourself, before you curse the builder, for your floor tiles which look grubby and give your house a pre-historic dinosaur-like look. Here are some quick tips to keep your floor so shiny, spic-n-span, that women in miniskirt will have to be careful about showing off their 'inner' beauty by reflection on the floor. You will almost be able to ice skate on it!

- If you have spilled something, wipe it quickly (a universal truth—apply this law in other instances too). The more you delay, the more stubborn becomes the stain. Use a white paper towel or

regular towel for this purpose. Be especially careful about its use on the carpet—do not rub. Blot. Use it like a blotting paper. If you rub, the spilled liquid moves deeper into the carpet, making your job more difficult.



- Now you've got to see this to believe it. Drop a few drops of club soda on a fresh stain on the floor or carpet. Don't fully soak it. Allow it to sizzle for a few seconds (till then you enjoy your sizzler item—if you have fresh stain on the floor, you must be in a party anyway). After finishing your sizzler, wipe it thoroughly with a sponge or towel. Gone...hasn't it?
- For stains that are older, combine 2 tablespoons of detergent, 3 tablespoons of vinegar (that's in your kitchen or inside the refrigerator), and one quart lukewarm water. Fight the stain and blot it dry.

- Use your shaving cream to shove stain off the floor. Let it foam on the carpet and then rinse with a damp cloth. Blot dry. Cover the spot with a clean towel or paper towels and place a heavy item such as a book on top of it. When the towel becomes damp, change it, and place a dry one.
- If you want your carpet to go for many years to come (of course don't be over enthusiastic that your grandson will be using it), wash and shampoo it at least once a year (you shampoo your hair once a day, don't you?). If you have pets and children (or any one of them), you should shampoo more often. Other alternatives are to use aerosol spray foam cleaner; available in the supermarket, a home carpet shampooer, a hot water cleaning machine you rent at the supermarkets, and if you are too lazy or too busy for it, hire a professional carpet cleaner.
- Before hiring a professional, do try out the tricks mentioned above. Run the vacuum thoroughly at least twice on the same spot.



If quite possible, pile up the furniture out of your room, else, move them to one side (ignoring the frustrated, disturbed looks of your pet), shampoo that section and let dry for a day. Showing results?

Good. Now shift the furniture to the other side of the room and repeat the process.

- If you are planning to sell your house and move, it's a good idea to get your carpet professionally cleaned. A clean looking and non-stinking carpet fetches a good price for a house. Try to get a few estimates so that you can compare before you choose one. Oh, yes...one more thing—don't forget to get the job of shifting the furniture included in the estimate. Else, you will end up doing a lot of physical activity which you won't enjoy.

## Floors made of tiles

Ever bothered knowing how many types of floor tiles there are?

- Ceramic
- Vinyl
- Linoleum



Ceramic is the same material as your washbasin and toilet, and hence does not require waxing (everyone can see it's tough and shiny by itself). But the other two do. Waxing no-wax or low wax floors protect the surface from abrasion. Pure vinyl floors can resist a lot of torture, but a cheaper version of vinyl (vinyl blended with another material) is too dainty to fight stain and abrasion. Linoleum is made from various materials, like linseed oil, ground cork or wood, resins, and mineral fillers. It is cheap, easy to install and maintain. But strong detergents do it harm.



## Most wanted

- detergent
- a broom or dust-mop
- floor wax
- a buffer machine with brushes or pads
- stripping chemical
- white vinegar
- a floor sealer
- a knife
- pieces of cloth for cleaning
- a wrung-out mop or wet vacuum
- a mop bucket
- a mop for wet mopping
- a dustpan
- latex gloves
- protective goggles
- a bucket
- a spray bottle
- a small brush



Wet mop tile floors at least weekly, or as frequently as required. Here are two ways you can go about.

**1** Mix the cleaner with water in the mop bucket and apply it to the floor. It becomes very slippery, so be careful unless you are an ice skating expert. Dump the dirty water down the drain and fill the mop bucket with clean water. Mop the floor with clean water, changing the water as needed. Wring the mop so that the floor does not become another waterworld.

**2** This is another way of cleaning your tiles. Mix the cleaner and water in a spray bottle. Fill the mop bucket with clean water. Spray the cleaner solution on the floor. Dip the mop in the water bucket, wring the mop and mop up the cleaning solution. Start from a corner and finish at the door, if you don't want to be cornered. Allow the floor to air dry.

### **Danger signs for the floor**

The following signs signal danger, or imminent danger about your floor.

- The floor is looking like the head of a balding man...it's worn out in places
- The floor is chipping and flaking away, even though no army battalion is practicing on it
- The floor has lost shine and has developed dark areas
- Spills have stained the floor
- There is wax built-up on the floor. Built-up wax looks yellow or grayish.



What next? Well...the floor must be stripped completely, before it is given a new wax coat.

## Being a stripper

Floor stripper we are talking about (this e-book does not aim to teach any unethical trade). Mix water and an ammonia-based floor stripper, wearing a pair of heavy duty rubber gloves (hey...get yourself photographed like that, if you enjoy watching murder mysteries and if anyone in your family has a camera-phone; coz you'll be looking murderous with those gloves!) Apply a strong coat of the ammonia sol with a mop. Let it stand for 10 minutes until a haze appears (till then you can do some online chat). Go back. Scrub the edges with the hand, using a brush. Scrape the wax loose from corners using a small knife. Pick up the residue (filthy stuff) in corners and along edges with your hand or a cloth. Using a buffer machine scrub the wax loose with a brush or nylon pads. Use a vacuum to remove the stripped wax. Use a solution of one cup white vinegar in 2.5 gallons of plain water to rinse. Air-dry the floor.



After the destruction comes the construction part. Apply 3 coats of wax and 1 coat of sealer. Make overlapping strokes as you evenly apply wax on the cleaned tile floor. Wait half an hour for the coat to dry up, before you start a new coat in right angle to the 1<sup>st</sup>. This will cover up the patches you missed you the first time. If you are going for touchup, then you can use 50-50 water-liquid-wax mix in a spray-bottle to be sprayed on the floor before running the buffer machine. Buff, till a gloss appears.

And when you have finished, you will have that heavenly feeling of having achieved something. Your family will be happy. You can boast of your triumph to others. You'll feel like a modern saint, who has given a new life to a dying floor. Rinse and dry out your mops for future use.

## Hardwood floors

Hardwood floors are like beautiful women. You need to take a lot of special care so that they can maintain their beauty. But some people prefer hardwood floors under the notion that they require less attention than carpets. Sometimes true, sometimes not.



The following table will give you some idea of the various woods that are used to make floors and some more details about them.

Tree	hardness	popularity	price	comments
Oak	hard	very popular	less expensive	attractive grain
Maple	hard	popular	expensive	----
Walnut	hard	popular	expensive	----
Teak	hard	popular	expensive	----
Pine	soft	less popular	less expensive	easily scratched / dented

Unlike tiles, wood absorbs water and gradually meets its doom. It's almost a must that you avoid alkaline substances like sudsy cleaners or ammonia which can cause dark spots on that darling floor. But relax—you can remove dark spots by using vinegar.

## Your tools for cleaning

Before you get going with the job of cleaning your wooden floor, here is the checklist for making sure you have the right tools for the right work.

- floor wax
- broom or dust mop
- a dustpan
- a cloth
- a buffer machine with pads.

## Cleaning the wooden floor



The good news: wooden floor looks elegant and can immediately melt anyone's heart (so...consider calling her to your home this weekend, if you have a well maintained floor). The bad news: it needs daily attention.

You must dust-mop a wooden floor each day, if you want to avoid dust-scratches that would make it look like the skin of an animal trainer.

Act like a superhero and remove all the furniture and other stuff. Dust-mop the floor. Water plays naughty games on wooden floors; so avoid using water to do the primary cleaning. Mop heads are available in various natural or synthetic fibers. If there is too much chemical on the mop head, soak it in water for 30 minutes before using it. That way the chemical of the mop-head does not get transferred on the floor, which makes the floor look ugly.

Waxing can not only return the lost glory, the same way a good skin treatment centre revitalizes many of the 40-up human beauties, it also strengthens the wood surface. The best way to wax a floor is by buffing or burnishing.

### **Buffing**

Buffing is spraying the floor with a polishing solution and polishing the floor with a rotary floor machine. Attach a buffer pad to the buffer machine and work small amounts of wax into the buffer machine pad with your fingers or a cloth. Buff the floor until it shines good enough for you to comb your hair, seeing your reflection.



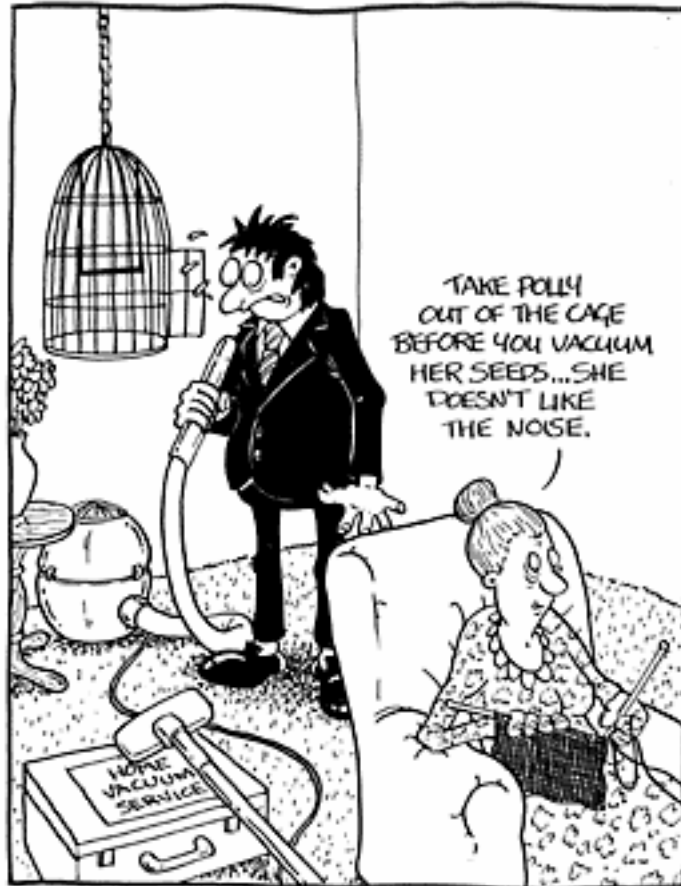
### **Burnishing**

Burnishing is a comparatively newer method. It is similar to buffing, except that it is dry. You need the rotary floor machine here too, but it uses a faster rotation.

## The art of vacuum cleaning

I am sure you are laughing out your lungs at the heading. What's the big thing about vacuum cleaning? If vacuum cleaning is an art, then moth is a bird— that's what you must be wondering.

Compare the prices and features of the various vacuum cleaners available in the market before you hastily buy one. You should insist on one with a powerful motor, having additional attachments. If you are lucky, it will serve for years to come. A vacuum is one of the best and most powerful instruments of home cleaning.



### Know her better

Each vacuum should come with cleaning attachments and these each have various uses.

- **The wand:** (or the giraffe-neck) used when you need extra length for cleaning bare floors or the 'oh so difficult to reach' places.
- **A dusting brush:** for furniture, table-tops, light fixtures, books, bookcases, and almost anything in your home that gets dusty.

- **A floor brush:** for hard-surfaced polished or waxed floor and also for the carpet.
- **A shag rake:** useful for shag rugs.
- **An upholstery nozzle:** for the upholstered furniture, sofas, chairs, curtains, etc.
- **A crevice tool:** for upholstered furniture, edges of wall to wall carpeting, those dresser drawers and lots more may be included.
- **A disposable bag:** it needs to be changed when full. Else, causes disaster.

### The run

Set the right control and the right accessory for the appropriate job, and you get the best results.

Before you vacuum, check the area to be sure there are nothing that might get into the vacuum and cause any harm to the machine, or you (small pets, set of fake teeth, cash, credit cards, etc).





Move the vacuum gently in straight strokes. This will make sure you don't run over and over the same place like someone lost in the Sahara, and running behind a mirage. As you work, make sure to keep the cord from getting tangled.



But even before you start, make it a good habit to check out the vacuum bag. Get rid of the previous waste, if there are any (maybe, you will discover that lost credit card of yours while dumping the previous waste). Try out and see which of the nozzles and fittings work best for what type of work. Try these suggestions, and you will earn a good comment from him or her, to say the least.

## Removing candle wax from the carpet

Has it ever happened to you that your eyes were glued to the bowling game on television, while you were carrying all those goodies for the candlelight dinner you had so romantically planned, and your dog stepped between your legs—leading to a nasty face-down fall? Next you discover that your carpet is in a pretty bad mess, with hot molten wax smeared all over your precious carpet. Well...maybe not exactly like that, but we all have faced the bad experience of dropping hot molten candle-wax on the carpet—haven't we? What have you done immediately after that? Tried to wipe it off hastily, only to discover how quickly it spreads out and hardens? And the solution? Not so easy! Washing, scrubbing, or scratching later yields no result either.



OK, to remove that wax, here is a simple yet effective solution. All you need is a couple of sheets of old newspaper, and an iron. Believe me, it works! All you have to do is spread out the sheets of newspaper on the

max stains, and run the iron over the carpet. This method of cleaning can sound strange, but as you do this you will start to notice that the stain will be disappearing.

As you iron the sheets of newspaper, you should start noticing that the wax is absorbing into the sheets of paper. That's a good sign. They will look like wet spots of water or grease. If you've seen these little spots of grease, you know the wax is coming out of your carpet.



So, next time you want to impress someone when she has spilled...well, wax; you know exactly what to do.

## Home cleaning -4

# Cleaner kitchen, tastier chicken

## Heaven for oven

Heaven for your oven is when it is spick and span. Admit it that your oven is not the cleanest thing at the end of the day. And merely wiping it with a wet, discolored towel will not yield the best results in the long run. Try this...hold the knobs (the oven control knobs I'm talking about. What do you have in mind?) and take them off and dry gently. You shouldn't have to soak these, maybe once a



month, take them off and clean them. Then insert them in place. Your oven doors have a porcelain enamel finish, right? It is supposed to resist accidents, (meaning, if does not get that badly stained, in case you spill gravy on the oven while looking at the hottie on TV) but what if you spill any acid food (such as lemon or other citrus fruit juices, or mixtures containing tomato or vinegar)? Wipe them up immediately. Try cleaning



using paper towels, or cloth towel dipped in detergent solution / liquid detergent. If you want to avoid love-mark-like-scratches on the oven-body, do not use steel wool pads, or coarse detergent powder.

Use a soft cloth if your oven is a man

of steel...I mean, has a steel body. If your oven has giraffe-like spots from gravy, you can confidently try powder cleaners like Samae. Steel oven change color over the years, and become darker.

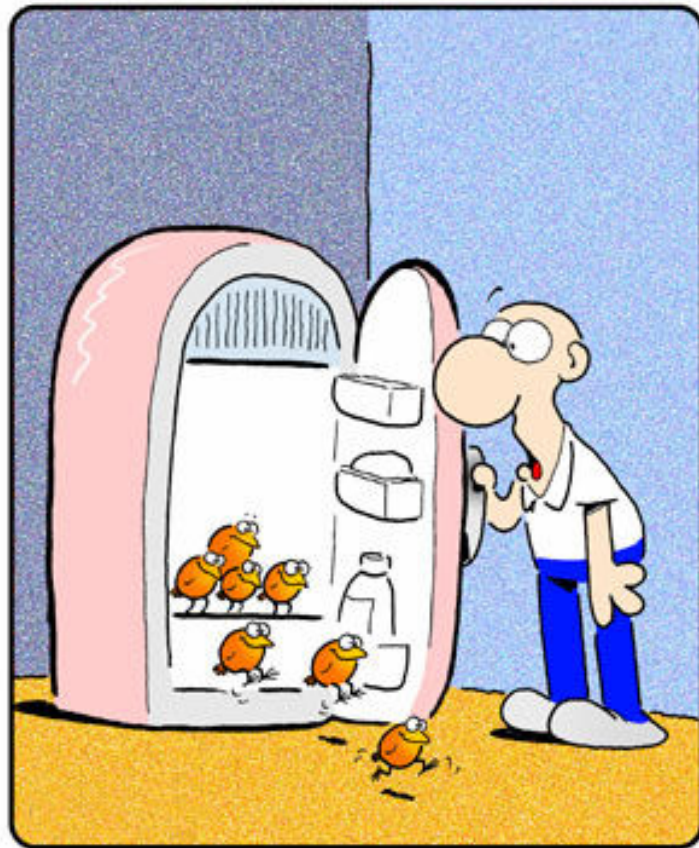
You leave the hot, dripping pans over the oven to cool down, after turning off the oven, do u not? This is one thing the oven is not happy about. First drain the oil, cool the pan and rack slightly, then add detergent to a pan of warm water, spread a cloth or paper towel over the rack. Let it stand till you finish the meal you have served to your family. Drippings should have loosened enough to wash with a sponge dipped in hot sudsy water.

Your mummy has always told you—a stitch in time saves nine. She is right. Immediate removal of greasy soil is the best thing to do. You get the toughest stains from food that is re-heated. The best solution is, clean

regularly with a towel/sponge, using detergent and water. Detergents containing ammonia will remove most of the burned-on soil and grease. To loosen baked-on soil, place a saucer filled with a small amount of undiluted ammonia in the oven for several hours or overnight. If the oven is heavily soiled, (you must have neglected it for quite some time. Make sure you don't do the same with your spouse) use a commercial oven cleaner. If you have a self cleaning oven, then you are lucky; the soil is reduced to a light ash by itself; the remaining soil can be removed with a damp cloth.

## How to make the refrigerator look 'cool'

Refrigerator is a piece of decorative furniture in your room, besides being the cold box. The 1920 machine that was introduced as a useful commodity to give relief to the daily shopping chore of housewives is now a fashion accessory for your sweet home. A good refrigerator might make you feel proud. Thus, it looks cool, if it's clean, but looks like a piece of junk, if not



*"Honey, I think it's about time to call the refrigerator repairman!"*

maintained.

You should try to wipe the exterior surface once daily. Else, you will not feel very proud about it.

Take an initiative once every weekend to move the stored food from the refrigerator. Use a mixture of 1/4 cup baking soda in a quart of warm water to clean all interior surfaces, and a sponge to clean up sticky spills that you missed during the week. This is a good excuse to wipe down all the bottles of sticky liquids and ketchup, before they're put back. On the racks



You must be not enjoying the bad gas emitted from spoiled food, unless you are some creature of the Adam's Family. If food has been spoiled, the worst part is, it leaves the refrigerator stinky. You can remove the stink by using a 50-50 mixture of white vinegar and warm water; or a solution of 1/4 cup table salt in 2 cups of water, followed by 3 T. of ammonia in a quart of water. Remove all food first and rinse, dry, and air thoroughly afterward. That will remove the stink, but not any bacteria. The bacteria will however dance all around. If spoiled food has dripped,

or been there a while, empty the refrigerator clean it completely with the bleach solution. That will say goodbye to the bacteria.

At least once a month need to remove all interior parts -- shelves, drawers, supports -- and clean thoroughly with the bleach and water solution or a disinfectant cleaner, not to forget the rubber door seal. Do not forget the drain container, as that is a source of a lot of stink.

Run the vacuum at least 3 – 4 times a year behind the refrigerator. For this you need to do a Brandon Routh job of pushing the refrigerator away from the wall. Take care so that it does not turn turtle.

## **Washing the dishwasher**

When you first bought the dishwasher, you were relieved that happy days are here again. But did you not soon discover, it is one of the kitchen equipments that gets dirty rather quickly? Keeping it spick and span is not a piece of cake.

Now, this is what will do miracle to your dishwasher: fill the soap cup of your dishwasher with Citric Acid Powder. Citric acid powder is used





for aromatherapy. It may be not as easy to find as it would be to find a packet of cigarettes, but if you can manage to get it; it will last for sometime. Empty the dishwasher on the regular cycle and when it is done your dishwasher will be fresh smelling and sparkling!

If you have lost a shoe-sole in trying to find Citric Acid Powder, try an alternative-- fill a cup with white vinegar and place it on the top rack of the dishwasher, run on regular cycle with no other dishes. This helps to remove dishwasher stink as well. You can try a packet of lemonade flavored un-sweetened Kool-Aid or even Tang in the soap cup, but don't use other flavors. Your dishwasher will be more effective when it's clean and your dishes won't smell of grease. What a relief!



Hazards at home-1

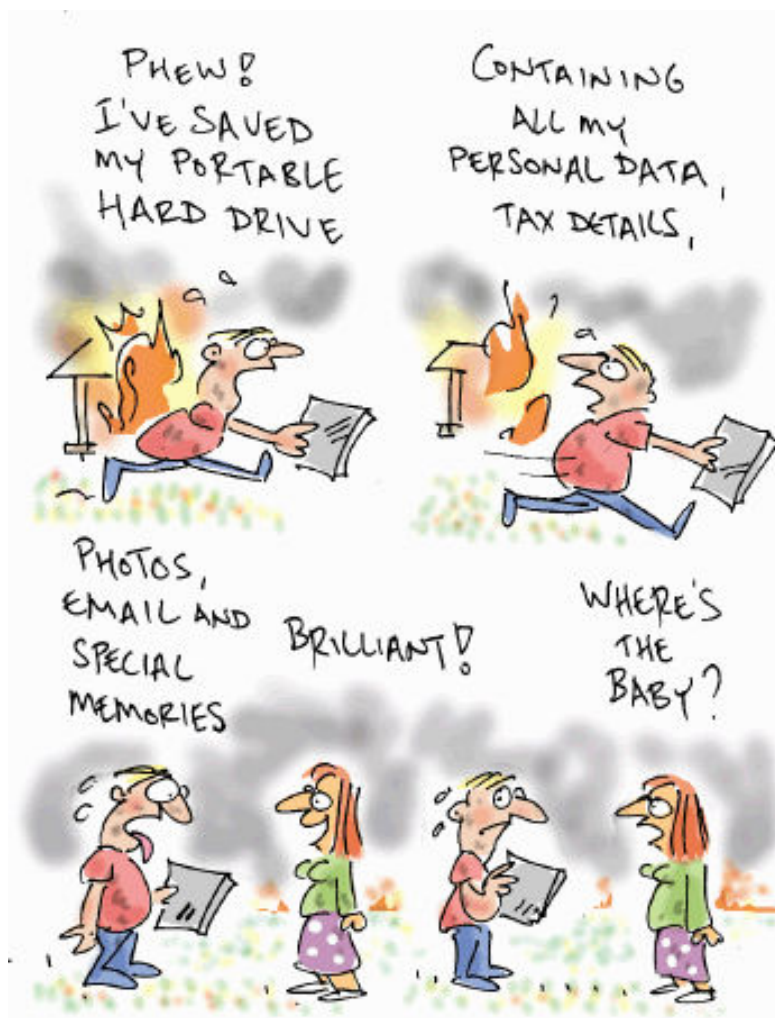
## Help Sire! We Have a Fire!!!



We use fire, benefit from her, ravage her, and then throw her away—everyday. We ignore her potential power. Sometimes she strikes back. And in front of her, we appear as defenseless as ants. But hey... we can make things better. The following checklist reduces 60% chances of a fire in your household.

- Do not operate appliances or turn on switches with wet hands. You might get the shock of a lifetime.
- Do not plug in more appliances in a socket, than it is designed to handle. The poor socket will be overburdened to handle the task.
- Check regularly for tattered or worn power cords or plugs, and replace them before they replace any of your family members (God forbid!).
- Use only safe, FM (Factory Mutual) or UL-listed (Underwriter's Laboratory) approved appliances (OK, I am not getting paid for promoting these stuff!)
- Don't store flammable items near or over the stove. You never know, when things may turn nasty.
- Keep trash and other items away from the furnace or water heater. Trash is a favorite food of fire-- trash and fire combination is like chocolate and children combination.
- A fire extinguisher should be mounted on the wall, near the stove; but not so close to the stove, that in the event of a real fire from the stove, you can't reach the extinguisher. There are several types of extinguishers. Unless you know which to use when, you might end up in another mess:
  - ✓ **Type A** in living areas, for use on ordinary combustibles such as paper, cloth, wood, rubber and many plastics.
  - ✓ **Type B** in the kitchen or garage, for flammable liquids like oils, gasoline, kitchen grease, paints and solvents.
  - ✓ **Type C** in the basement or workroom - for electrical fires like wiring, fuse boxes, motors, power tools, appliances and electronics.

- Get annual maintenance done for the heating appliances (c'mon, it won't leave you broke.).
- Keep flammables like gasoline and in tight metal containers, somewhat away from the house, and never near heating equipments.
- The National Fire Protection Association insists you to install a smoke detector outside each bedroom, and at all levels of your home (nope, they don't pay you the price). Remember to test all your smoke detectors at least once a month.



- A monitored smoke detector not only is an audible alarm, it also automatically sends a signal to a monitoring cell, which can quickly

dispatch the fire department. Monitored smoke detectors provide more complete protection, whether you're home or away.

- Have you seen fire drill in offices? The apparently kiddish stuff is really rather necessary (else no one would have bothered wasting their valuable time behind a bi-annual physical training session.), and should be practiced at home too; no joking. In the event of a large, uncontrollable fire, your best thing to do is a quick escape. You should plan an escape route beforehand, and practice it from time to time with your family. An alternate route should be planned too, and practiced, in case the main route is blocked by fire.

## Hazards at home-2

# Poisoning: a matter of reasoning



**What was the 15 years old medicine bottle doing anyway? You say, you drank the old medicine thinking it will taste like old wine?**

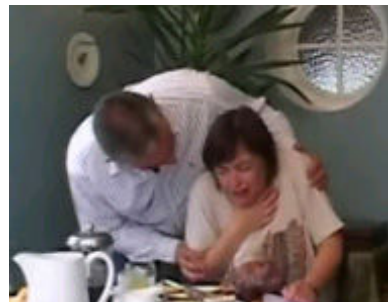
Accidental poisoning can happen in any house and it is in such a situation that you have to act like superman—to save your family. But, how? Find out:

- Don't leave children alone with medicine. If you had to walk out while giving a medicine, take it with you (making sure not to wet your car seat with the sticky fluid).

- Don't take your medicine in front of your children—they might copy you someday (you started smoking copying your dad, didn't you? Children are perfect copycats of their parents).
- Many parents refer to medicine as 'candy' before their children out of some illusion that children will be eager to take their medicine, this way. Don't be one such silly parent, as it will only confuse your children.
- Keep the phone number of the poison control center near the phone (if you don't have it, tie a knot in your hanky right now, so that you remember to collect it tomorrow. Don't keep the number in such a secure place that no-one will ever find it in your absence!).
- Never give or take medicine in the dark (dark is evil).
- Use products with child-safety caps.
- Keep drugs, chemicals, cleaning products and personal care products in their original containers, and not in bottles or bowls that children know as food. For example, don't store detergent powder in milk powder container.
- Some people love storing old, expired medicine, uselessly. Please be sensible and throw away any expired medicine left and rinse the bottle clean—if it's expired, it's no good storing it.
- Keep Ipecac syrup within reach to use to induce vomiting in case of accidental consumption of harmful chemicals.

### **In case of suspected poisoning, check out for :**

- Open bottles or spilled containers nearby (oops!).
- Drowsiness, dizzzzzzzzzzzzziness.
- Odor in the breath (ugh!).
- Vomiting, nausea or abdominal pain.

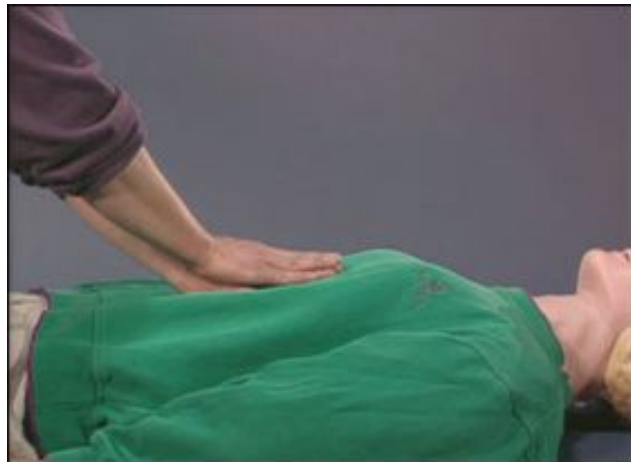


- Slow breathing or breathing with difficulty.
- Hyperactivity, irritability.

## Is the victim breathing?

Remember, you have to act like Superman. If you panic, you need someone else to revive you. So, stop panicking (Superman does not panic).

- Is she breathing? Is she not? Call an ambulance immediately. Pray.
- Perform mouth-to-mouth revival.
- Call the poison center, emergency room and/or doctor.
- Cover her with a blanket and loosen tight clothing.
- Don't give her any food, drink, alcohol or drugs. You'll always get time to give it later.
- In case you haven't thrown away the label of the poisonous substance, give



the doc the container and label. Of course he doesn't need it for his little son to play with; he needs it to identify the substance and treat accordingly.



### Hazards at home-3

## Bedroom: avoiding nightmares



- Make your baby sleep on his / her back in a crib with no pillows or soft bedding below.
- Use a crib that meets national safety standards having a snug-fitting mattress.
- Don't...don't use an electric blanket in the bed or crib of a small child or infant.
- Keep small toys, balloons, and small balls away from young children, when they are out of your sight (or better still, don't buy.).
- Check age labels for appropriate toys—which age is it suitable for. Some toys are inappropriate for very young children

(choosing the right toys for your child is not a child's play, let me tell you). Make sure toy storage chests have safety lid supports.

- To prevent strangulation of your child, use safety tassels for mini-blinds. Avoid strings on children's toys and pacifiers (shoestrings are harmless, by the way...unless your child decides to swallow it).
- Install smoke alarms outside bedrooms and on every level of the home. Test them once a month and change batteries once a year.
- Practice fire escape routes and decide upon an outside meeting place (how about the last Sunday of every month?).
- Install carbon monoxide alarms outside bedrooms to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

## Hazards at home-4

# Bathroom blues

**1986**



**2006**



- Do not leave your young child, below 5 years alone in the bathroom, especially in a bath. Never allow him or her to lock the bathroom door from inside (unless you have enough practice of climbing rainwater pipes).
- To prevent poisonings, lock all medicines which are kept in the bathroom, even those with child-resistant packaging. Don't leave the key on the washbasin.

- Have syrup of ipecac (to incite forced vomiting) at hand, but use it only if the poison control center or physician tells to do so.
- Before bathing a child, check out the bath water with your fingers to make sure it's not too hot. If you shout out "Oooops!!!" then it's probably not fit for bathing your child.
- Do not insist on very slippery tiles for the bathroom floor—you don't need shiny tiles on the floor for seeing your face; you have a mirror for that purpose, on the wall. Make sure the bathtubs and showers have non-slip surfaces and grab bars to save you in the events of not volunteered levitation attempts.
- Electrical appliances, like hair dryers and curling irons, should be kept out of reach of children and away from water.



## Hazards at home-5

# Key to kitchen safety

## (kick start it)



- Knives, plastics bags, lighters and matches must be locked away from children. Apparently harmless plastic bags may cause the hazard of asphyxiation in children, while playing spiderman, making spiderman mask out of the stuff.

- Avoid fires and burns by never leaving unattended food which is cooking, turning pot handles towards the back of the stove, and keeping hot liquids and food away from the edges of tables and counters.
- Make sure you and your children know the STOP, DROP, and ROLL procedure in case their clothes catch on fire (hopefully you know?).
- Keep appliances cords unplugged and tied up (they don't look good anyway, like dangling tails of domestic pet animals). Replace any cords and wires, which are tattered.
- Strap securely young children in high chairs, swings, and other juvenile products.
- If an appliance repeatedly blows fuse, trips the circuit breaker, or if it has given you a shock, unplug it and get it repaired (if it's too expensive to repair, why buy a new one and kick this one goodbye).
- All electrical appliances and tools should have a label of the testing agency.
- Do not give young children hard, round stuff to eat, that can get stuck in their throats - like nuts, hard candies, grapes, popcorn, carrots, and raisins. It should melt in their mouth.
- Avoid scald burns by keeping children away from the hot water taps on drinking water coolers.



- Don't overload the plug points (Give them some air to breathe!).
- Try this perfect combination for a memorable electric shock : water + electricity. And, in case you don't want the not so heavenly experience right now; have dry hands; don't stand in water. If an appliance gets wet, have it serviced.
- Don't store things over the oven. People get burned reaching. Even the steam can burn your skin. Wear tight sleeves when you cook. Loose-fitting garments can catch fire more easily. Synthetic material is more vulnerable to fire than cotton.

## Hazards at home-6

# Anywhere in your house: just about anywhere



- If you are a smoker, stop smoking inside your house, and around your children. Besides discovering from one fine morning that your cigarettes are disappearing, you are also running into the risk of turning them into passive smokers.
- Install window guards on windows that are not fire emergency exits (not to prevent your teenager daughter from slipping out with her rowdy boyfriend; but for the safety of your child).
- To prevent asthma attacks, eliminate sources of mold, dust, and insects, such as cockroaches. If you have a pet, keep it off from the furniture and keep its bedding clean. Pet hair is often a cause of asthma.
- Ovens, fireplaces, wood-burning stoves, space heaters, and gas appliances must be vented properly and inspected annually. Most of the inspection you can do yourself, unless you are a seasoned couch potato.
- Use gates to block stairways (and other potentially dangerous areas), safety plugs to cover electrical outlets, and safety latches for drawers and cabinets.



- Keep children - and the furniture they climb on – miles away from windows.
- To avoid free falls, bungee diving jumps in your home, keep hallways and stairways well lit and use non-slip backing for area rugs.



- Keep cleaning solutions, pesticides, and other potentially dangerous substances in their original, labeled containers, and out of the reach of children.
- Houses built before 1978 should be tested for lead paint. Ask your doctor or health department if your child should be tested for lead.
- If you have firearms in your home, store the firearms and ammunition in separate containers and lock them out of the

reach of children, before your children start thinking them to be toys.

- Learn first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

- Keep an updated list of emergency telephone numbers, including your local poison control center, physician and hospital emergency room, next to every phone in your home (I know you'll do it tomorrow and the tomorrow never comes; so do it today!)

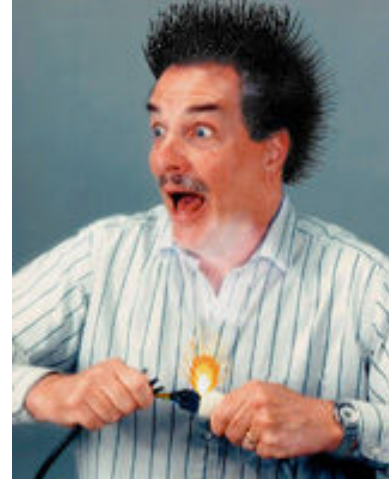


- Make sure your family, especially kids, know what to do during a natural disaster. In an earthquake, drop to the floor and get under something strong, for cover. During a tornado, take shelter in a basement or an interior room without windows. During a hurricane stay away from windows. Have handy supplies of food, flashlights, and water.
- If your home has a fireplace, use a metal fireplace screen. Get the chimney checked and cleaned regularly.
- Put lighters and matches where small children won't find them (making sure to remember where YOU kept).
- Allow air space around the TV and stereo to prevent overheating. The way your own good head radiates heat, when overworked, your good old TV and stereo does it likewise. If the

TV doesn't work right, it can be a fire threat. Have it checked out.

- Check for outlets that have loose fitting plugs, which can overheat and lead to fire. Replace any missing or broken wall plates. Make sure there are safety covers on all unused outlets that are accessible to children.

- Make sure electrical cords are in good conditions - not frayed or cracked. Make sure they are placed out of the areas of human movement. Cords should never be nailed or stapled to the wall, baseboard or to another object. Do not place cords under carpets or rugs or rest any furniture on them. The agitated cord will strike back one day!



- Check to see that extension cords are not overloaded. Moreover, they should only be used on a temporary basis (if your definition of 'temporary' does not mean a year or two); they are not intended to be permanent household wiring. Make sure extension cords have safety closures to help prevent young children from shock hazards and burns.
- Sometimes we have to learn to live with the sorrow of parting with our loved ones. If it happens that your good old radio plugged to the board slips into your bathtub, don't dip your hand into the bathtub to save it. Accept the fact—she's gone. Don't place plugged in appliances where they might fall in contact with water. If a plugged-in appliance falls into water, Never reach out to pull it up. First turn off the main power source at the

switchboard and then unplug the appliance. If you have an appliance that has become wet, don't use it until it has been checked by a qualified repair person. Keep space heaters at least 3 ft. away from any flammable materials such as bedding, clothing, draperies, furniture, and rugs. Don't use in rooms where children are unsupervised and remember to turn off and unplug when not in use.

- Do not meddle with or remove the third pin of a three pin plug, just to force-fit it into a 2 pin socket— (unless you enjoy an electrical shock, because this could lead to one). Make sure your plugs ('your plug' is not intended to have any double meaning here; neither have I used the phrase like 'your plug fitting sockets' to create any double meaning. So no reader should try to find any double meaning out of such terms) fit your sockets—never force fit a plug in a socket. Plugs should fit securely into outlets. Avoid overloading outlets with too many appliances.



- Check the wattage of all light bulbs in light fixtures to make sure they are the correct wattage for the size of the fixture. Replace bulbs that have higher wattage than recommended, if you don't know the correct



wattage, check with the manufacturer of the fixture. Make sure bulbs are screwed in securely; loose bulbs may overheat (besides short circuit and fire hazard, these also call for hard hitting electricity bills).

- Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) can help prevent electrocution. They should be used in any area where water and electricity may come into contact. When a GFCI senses current leakage in an electrical circuit, it assumes a ground fault has occurred. It then interrupts power fast enough to help prevent serious injury from electrical shock. Test GFCIs regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions to make



working properly.

- During an electrical storm, with lots of thunder and lightning; do not use appliances (TV, computer, radios, hairdryers, toasters etc.) or telephones with cable. Do not take a bath or shower-- if you want to avoid a hair raising experience (that might cost your

life); keep batteries nearby, for flashlights and radios in case of a power cut.

- Halogen floor lamps generate much more heat than a standard light bulb. So do not place a halogen floor lamp where it could come in contact with clothing or other



combustible materials. Be sure to turn off the lamp whenever you leave the room for an extended period of time and never use torchiere lamps in children's bedrooms or playrooms.

- Circuit Breakers and fuses should be the correct size for their circuit. If you do not know the correct size, have an electrician identify and label the size to be used. Always replace a fuse with the same size fuse.

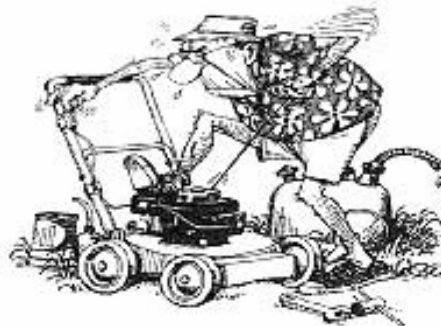
## Hazards at home-7

# Garage, basement and outdoor: three harmless looking devils.

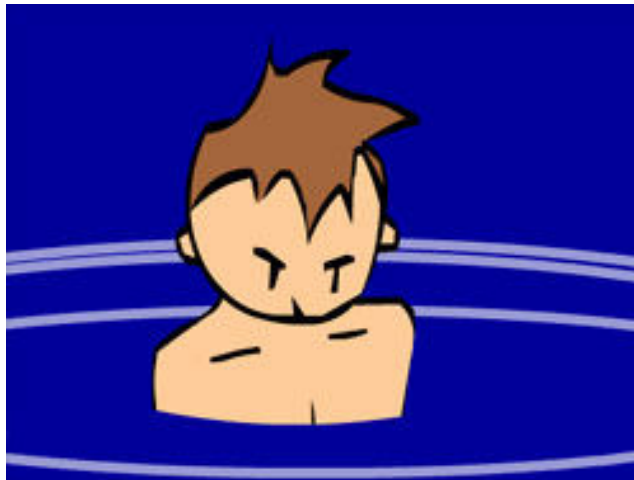
- Store flammable substance like gasoline in tight metal jars. Never store flammable liquids near heat. Neither smoke where they are stored. Many



- people blew up their garage roof, just because they carelessly threw a cigarette butt here and there.
- Heating equipments must be examined annually.
  - Keep flammables away from places where there can be electrical sparks. Spark and gasoline are best of friends.
  - Throw away your garbage regularly. Don't store things near the furnace or heater. Garbage is flammable (anyway it emits enough foul smell for you to be eager to get it dumped).
  - Do not use electric-powered mowers in the rain or on wet grass. (that gives you an excuse to avoid mowing work when your wife wants it done).



- Use only an extension cord marked for outdoor use and rated for the power needs of your tools for outdoor work. Remember to unplug all portable power tools when not in use. Metal ladders conduct electricity, so watch out for overhead wires and power lines.
- Don't place chairs or tables close to the swimming pool. Children can use these to climb over, and topple over. Result is that you have to get your clothes wet just when you were ready to leave for office.
- Don't allow children to play near the pool. Remove all toys, especially tricycles from near the pool.



- Don't allow young children to swim alone in the pool (they can do that in the bathtub).
- Don't dive into a pool with shallow water (you'll get an ugly swelling on your head, if not more).



## Hazards at home-8

# Chemical weapons at home



Did you know you are sitting on a bomb at your home? Well...almost. Nearly every household has products containing hazardous materials. However with the knowledge of these hazardous chemicals, and knowing how to handle them, how to react during an emergency, you can reduce the risk of injury.

## Prepare for the chemical war

- ❖ **Knock, Knock! Get in touch with agencies that expertise** on hazardous household materials, such as your local public health department or the Environmental Protection Agency. **Ask them about** maintaining **antidotes** in your home for-- cleaners and germicides, deodorizers, detergents, drain and bowl cleaners, gases, home medications, laundry bleaches, liquid fuels, paint removers and thinners.



- **Follow instructions on the product label for proper disposal of chemicals.** Proper disposal will ensure environmental as well as household fitness.

1. *Small amounts of the following products can be safely poured down the drain with plenty of water: bathroom cleaner, glass cleaner, bleach, drain cleaner, household disinfectant, laundry and dishwashing detergent, rubbing alcohol, rug and upholstery cleaner, and toilet bowl cleaner.*



2. *The following products should be disposed by wrapping the container in newspaper and plastic and placing it in the trash: brake fluid, car wax or polish, dish and laundry soap, fertilizer, furniture and floor polish, insect repellent, nail polish, oven cleaner, paint thinners and strippers, pesticides, powder cleansers, water-based paint, wood preservatives.*
3. *Dispose of the following products at a recycling center or a collection site: kerosene, motor or fuel oil, car battery or battery acid, diesel fuel, transmission fluid, large amounts of*

*paint, thinner or stripper, power steering fluid, turpentine, gun cleaning solvents, and tires.*

4. Empty **spray cans** completely before placing in the trash. Do not place spray cans into a burning barrel, incinerator, or trash compactor because they may explode.

5. Flush **outdated and unused medicines** down the toilet and place the empty container in the trash (do not donate them to show your benevolence).

*Out-dated medicines can cause ill effects. Flushing these will eliminate the risk of people or animals picking them out of the trash.*



• **Read directions** before using a new chemical product and be sure to store household chemicals according to the instructions on the label. So, take some time to read the label, even if there isn't any picture of a hot female.

• **Store chemicals in a safe, secure location**, preferably up high and always out of the reach of children. Make sure you can yourself reach it when required.

• **Avoid mixing household chemical products.** Some people try to invent new double-strong chemicals by experimenting and

mixing what they think will be very strong cleaner. Avoid such experiments, if you want to live to see your grandchildren. **Deadly toxic fumes can result from the mixture of chemicals such as chlorine bleach**



and ammonia.

- **If you spill a chemical, clean it up immediately with rags.** Be careful with your eyes and skin (wear gloves and eye protection). Allow the fumes in the rags to evaporate outdoors, then dispose of the rags by wrapping them in a newspaper and placing them in a sealed plastic bag in your trash can.
- **Never smoke while using household chemicals.** Avoid using hair spray, cleaning solutions, paint products, or pesticides near an open flame, pilot light, lighted candle, fireplace, wood burning stove, etc. Vapor particles in the air could catch fire or explode.
- **Buy only as much of a chemical as you will need.** If you have product left over, donate it to charity...seriously. Storing hazardous chemicals increases risk of chemical emergencies.
- **Keep an A-B-C-rated fire extinguisher in the home and car,** and get training from your local fire department on how to use it.



- **Keep the number of the nearest poison control center** beside all telephones (Let your daughter laugh at you; she will only thank you the day it will be necessary). This way, in an emergency situation you will not look clueless about whom to call up.
- **Learn to detect hazardous materials.** Many hazardous materials do not have a taste or an odor, but some can be

detected because they cause physical reactions such as watering eyes or nausea.

Learn to recognize the symptoms of toxic poisoning:

- Difficulty in breathing (as if just landed on planet Mars, and forgot to put on the helmet)
- Irritation of the eyes, skin, throat or respiratory tract (eyes resembling those of some Caribbean pirate)
- Changes in skin color
- Headache or blurred vision
- Dizziness
- Clumsiness or lack of coordination
- Cramps or diarrhea

## Your duty on chemical emergency

- If your kid has consumed some poisonous chemical (maybe he/she liked the color), do not panic. Act like a superdad and get the container to the phone and **inform the name of the chemical to the medical professional.**



- **Call the poison control center**, emergency medical services (EMS), **911**, hospital emergency room, county health department, fire department or your local pharmacy. Get these numbers, as I have stated before.

- **Follow the telephonic guidelines given by the medical professional, carefully.** The first aid advice found on containers may not be appropriate. Do not give anything by mouth until medical professionals have advised you.
- **Take immediate action if the chemical gets into the eyes.** **Flush the eye with clear, water for a minimum of 15 minutes**, unless authorities instruct you not to use water on the particular chemical involved. Delaying first aid can greatly increase the likelihood of danger. Continue the cleansing process even if the victim indicates he or she is no longer f



y pain, and then seek medical attention.

- **Get out of your house immediately if there is danger of a fire or explosion.** Then, walk the way Hollywood action-heroes walk away from an explosion, if you are being photographed by press reporters. Do not waste time collecting items or calling the fire department when you are in this type of a danger.
- **Stay away from the residence to avoid breathing toxic fumes.** If there is a fire or explosion, call the fire department

from outside (a cellular phone or a neighbor's phone) once you are safely away from danger.

- **Wash hands, arms, or other exposed body parts that may have been exposed to the chemical.** Chemicals may continue to irritate the skin until they are washed off.
- **Say goodbye to the clothing that may have been contaminated.** Some chemicals may not wash out completely. Discarding clothes will prevent potential future exposure.
- **Administer first aid treatment to victims of chemical burns.**



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