



Spiffing Up

Housekeeping Made Easy

One of the first major steps sellers must take before putting their homes on the market — besides finding a real estate practitioner, of course — is to clean each room from floor to ceiling. Windows must sparkle, lighting fixtures must shine, and tabletops must be clutter free. Depending on how long your clients have lived in the home, this step could be one of the hardest tasks to tackle. To get them started, refer them to this Web site for time-saving tips on cleaning, de-cluttering, organizing, and time management. They'll find advice for virtually every area of the home, including the exterior. The site, heavy with articles and how-to guides, has a no-frills design that requires a lot of scrolling to view all of the articles for each topic — and many articles appear in more than one section. However, your clients will probably find that the tips are well worth those minor frustrations. These are some highlights:

- **Kitchens**. Potential buyers will pay special attention to the kitchen, so it has to look its best. This section of the site houses articles and checklists related to keeping the kitchen clean. Sellers with limited time will learn about [The 10-Minute 'New' Look](#), a quick way to clean the most visible areas of the kitchen and other high-traffic areas of the home. Your customers can get their granite countertops sparkling with tips from [Stone Care Made Easy](#), an article about cleaning natural stone surfaces. And to really speed up the cleaning process, sellers can [Form a Family Cleaning Team](#).
- **Tools**. When your clients need the right tool to get their home clean, they can learn about the latest and greatest products here. From [Organizing](#) tools to [Furniture & Dusting](#) products, they'll find a little bit of everything.
- **Garages, Patios & Home Exteriors**. With all of the focus on sprucing up the inside of the home, it's easy to forget about the other important areas. Encourage sellers to put these [Garage Organizing Tips](#) to use and to do some [Exterior House Cleaning](#) before prospective buyers arrive. If getting rid of the junk that's filling up the garage and patio is a problem, sellers can learn about [The Virtual Garage Sale](#) as a way to get rid of their extra stuff.
- **Windows**. Natural sunlight does wonders for the appearance of a home, so remind sellers to give their windows a good cleaning. If they don't know where to begin, they can start by learning simple strategies used by professionals for [Painless Window Cleaning](#). Make sure they don't forget to [Clean Screens](#), too. It's also important that any window coverings are free of dust and dirt, so share these [Inside Tricks to Cleaning Window Shades and Blinds](#).
- **HC-Pedia**. If sellers clearly don't have a clue about cleaning, they may need to consult this dictionary of cleaning terms. Each term includes a brief definition, but a more detailed explanation — including suggested uses for cleaning products, safety tips, and advice for cleaning various surfaces — appears when you click on a term. For example, under the entry for [Acoustical Tile Ceiling](#), you'll learn that dirt can be removed by using a dry sponge. Or clean a [Rust Stain](#) by rubbing it with a sponge dampened in lemon juice or plain white vinegar



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