



Old School Cleaning Rules You Can Totally Break, According to the Pros



Do you still follow the same cleaning tips and rules your grandparents swore by? In many cases, the traditional cleaning rules that have been passed on from generation to generation are still as effective today as they were decades ago. But the truth is, while some rules stand the test of time, others are simply meant to be broken.

Here are a few old school cleaning tips and rules that you don't necessarily have to follow today—and some more effective alternatives to try instead.

You don't have to pre-wash the dishes

"Your parents may have taught you otherwise, but you truly can skip the prewash when doing dishes," said Brentnie Daggett, cleaning expert and writer at [Rentec Direct](#). Why? Daggett explained that modern dishwashers and soap have improved greatly over the years—most dishwasher detergent has enzymes that attach to and remove food particles, so at best you're wasting time and effort, and at worst you could be inhibiting the effectiveness of your detergent. All you really need to do is scrape off large messes before loading up your dishwasher.

Don't save all your decluttering for spring

Spring cleaning has long been a tradition, but Olivia Joyce, cleaning expert at [Move Out Mates](#), said that we shouldn't wait for spring to come each year in order to declutter. "In the end, we often face such a big cleaning task, that it takes us days, even weeks to get it sorted out," she said. "I believe that seasonal decluttering is the better option to prepare both your house and your family for the coming season, and maintain certain levels of cleanliness that do not require from you to invest big chunks of time and stress about it."

You don't have to air dry linens

Hanging linens to air dry, especially out the window, used to be the go-to method for laundry, but according to Diane Baron of cleaning service Betty Likes to Clean, that's an old school rule that's no longer necessary. Why? "[It's] because of the pollen levels and the dirt on the windowsill," she explained.



Skip cleaning your sponge in the dishwasher

If you're still disinfecting your sponge in the dishwasher, you may not actually be killing all the bacteria in it, even if it *looks* clean. "Instead of using the dishwasher, dampen your sponge a bit and place it in the microwave for 3 minutes to kill the bacteria and make it cleaner than ever before," suggested Harriet Jones, cleaning and maintenance expert at [Go Cleaners London](#).

Don't use hair spray to remove ink stains

Hair spray always used to be the go-to stain remover for ink stains, but according to Jones, in the recent years, the amount of alcohol (the ingredient that makes this stain removal method work) in hair spray has been greatly reduced because it's better for your hair. "Use rubbing alcohol, instead—take a clean towel and lay it beneath the stained cloth," Jones said. "Then blot the affected area with the alcohol. Do this until there is no stain left and rinse well."

Don't use an extendable duster for your ceiling fan

"A common cleaning rule is to use an extendable duster on ceiling fans since they're always collecting dust," said Meg Roberts, president of [Molly Maid](#). "We actually recommend dusting ceiling fans with an old pillow case to avoid showering the entire room in a dust storm." To use that method, Roberts said to turn off your fan, stand on a secure foot stool, carefully slip an old pillowcase around one of the blades, then slide the pillowcase off with enough pressure for it to take the dust with it. Repeat with the other blades, then shake out the pillowcase and run it through the wash.