

# Reader's digest

HOME

## 10 Things You Should Never Do to Your Oven

 *Marissa Laliberte*

You probably hardly think about throwing a tray of frozen chicken into the oven or never cleaning the oven knobs—but we're here to tell you why you should be paying way more attention to what you do to your oven than you think.

### Leave a mess for days (or months)



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Your daily kitchen cleanup is probably more focused on the dishes than on the oven itself, but a few touchups will go a long way. Not only are months of buildup harder to clean, but they can lead to smoke, says John Cohen, vice president of [Molly Maid](#). Not cleaning spills after each oven use can quickly add up and can smoke during preheating the next time around," he says. "If you use a drip tray, don't forget to remove it and dispose of the grease and drippings after each use." Make sure you know about these other [25 cooking mistakes that ruin your food](#).

## Let food mess get to the oven floor



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To make those everyday spills even easier to wipe up, Cohen recommends catching crumbs and splatters before they hit the bottom of your oven. He recommends putting a drip tray or empty cookie sheet on the bottom to make it easier to scrub, or just adding a disposable oven liner.

## Skip cleaning the nooks and crannies



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You don't even want to think about what's hiding in the gap between your oven and cabinets. To help keep crumbs and spills from attracting pests, Cohen recommends wrapping a butter knife with a damp washcloth, then rubbing it over the wall inside the crack. Keep the knife angled up to prevent crumbs from falling to the floor, and shake debris out in the sink or trash after each pass. When it seems clean, replace the cloth with a vinegar-dampened one and go over the walls again.



## Leave the knobs grubby



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When you've been touching oven knobs after handling food, you can bet you've left some germs behind. To make sure you hit every angle of the knob, pop them off the stove before scrubbing. Cohen suggests letting them soak in a bucket of warm water mixed with 1/4 cup all-purpose cleaner to disinfect.