Happy Thanksgiving!

Homes & Gardens

Town Tribune Weekly Guide To Fall Living

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Deep Clean These 6 Things in November for a Fresher, Cozier Home That Feels Ready for Winter



Winter is the time to nestle indoors under a cozy blanket, but before we can fully settle in, experts say a few items should be cleaned well this November, including that throw blanket you haven't cleaned in months.

Deep-cleaning things like your windows and heating system will help you keep your home fresh and clean during cooler months. We asked cleaning pros which seven items and areas they prioritize deep-cleaning in November to create that cozy winter vibe.

Carpets:

In summer, open windows let fresh air filter through your home, but as temperatures drop, we trap heat indoors, leaving dust and dander to collect in carpets.

"Carpets are probably the number one request," Liz Trotter, the CEO of American Maid Service, says. "I think that it comes up because people know they are going to be in their homes with the doors shut and the windows shut for months on end. They don't want to be breathing all of that stuff that collects in the carpet."

Door Handles and Light Switches:

Amid the hustle and bustle of summer trips and activities, it's easy to overlook certain chores. Cleaning with Meaning founder Kelly Moore says wiping down high-touch surfaces like door handles and light switches is chief among them.

"We all know we need to do them, but they aren't as obvious as other tasks," Moore says. "Suddenly, we're indoors more when the weather turns, preparing for the holidays, and we're more likely to notice the fingerprints and smudges that have built up."

Ovens:

Ovens are on both Trotter and Moore's November deep-cleaning list not because people forget them over the summer, but because they use them more in cooler months.

"Oven cleaning is hugely popular," Moore says. "Many people want an oven deep clean before they start Christmas baking or hosting festive dinners."

Even if a client doesn't request oven cleaning, Trotter says it's a must.

"People forget that they're going to want to use it over the holidays, then it becomes a huge issue because it smokes," Trotter says.

Windows:

Windows are another area both Trotter and Moore clean as the weather changes.

"When the days are getting shorter, you already have less light, and then dirty windows give you even less light," Trotter says.

Not to mention, sills and frames can build up with dust and cobwebs from being open all summer long.

"Mix in condensation, and you can have a real mess to clean up if they're skipped," Moore says.

Vents, Radiators, and Heaters:

Like ovens, heating systems are used much more often in winter than in summer, so our experts recommend deep-cleaning them in November.

"Radiators, heating vents, and baseboard heaters...collect dust, pet hair, and debris that can circulate around the home once the heating is switched on," Moore says. "Regular cleaning helps reduce dust...and keeps the heating system working efficiently."

Make sure your system is off and cool before you start, use a brush or a vacuum with a brush attachment to remove dust and buildup, and always avoid electrical components.

Upholstered Surfaces, Cushions, and Throw Blankets:

Dust, pet dander, and other debris can build up in fabric fibers, so clean upholstered surfaces like curtains and fabric furniture before closing up your home for the winter. Now is also a good time to wash throw blankets, since you'll be using them more in the coming months.

"We will launder them on the heavy-duty or bulky setting of the washer," Trotter says.

You can vacuum most curtains and upholstered surfaces like sofas and chairs. Pull out any attachments that let you reach cracks and crevices in your furniture, then spot-clean with a microfiber cloth, water, and gentle detergent.

"For a more widespread clean, use a steam tool if you can, and make sure to extract the dirty water thoroughly afterward," Moore says.

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