



ATCO
BLUE FLAME
KITCHEN

Five Essential Steps to
LIVING ON YOUR OWN

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1 Easy, Fast Recipes

Nobody should have to begin or end a day with sugar-blasted toaster tarts.

FACT: You can make a simple, satisfying meal in almost any kitchen, no matter how tiny or poorly equipped. Just because you have no time, almost no money and only a cooktop and a mini fridge, doesn't mean you can't make a healthy, delicious meal with leftovers for later.



FRIDGE



COOKTOP



OVEN

	FRIDGE	COOKTOP	OVEN
Breakfast			
Chia and Coconut Overnight Oats	•		
Pancake and Waffle Mix		•	
Lunch			
Turkey Caesar Wraps	•		
Southwest Tossed Salad	•		
Quick Chickpea Salad	•		
Dinner			
Curried Pasta and Cheese		•	•
Bangkok Bean Curry		•	
Asian Pork Tenderloin			•
Herb and Garlic Baked Pork Tenderloin			•
Easy Salsa Chicken			•
Spicy Oven Barbecued Chicken			•
Southwestern Vegetarian Lasagna			•
Simple Tomato Pasta		•	
Spice Roasted Chicken			•
Snacks			
Kale Smoothie	•		



You're on your own, you're in a new place and your cupboards are completely empty. Where do you even begin to stock a kitchen from scratch?

We've come up with a list you can take with you on your shopping trip to pick up the basic gear you're going to need to be able to both
a) cook for yourself, and
b) eat the stuff you've cooked.

Great places for deals include second-hand shops, discount kitchen and home shops, dollar stores and other big box retailers. But why spend money if you don't have to? Parents, family or friends may have old dishes collecting in a box in the basement that they're dying for an excuse to clear out. Who cares if all the cups don't match?

BASIC TOOLS FOR COOKING AND EATING

Dishes:

- 4 dinner plates
- 4 small plates
- 4 bowls
- 4 glasses
- 4 mugs

Utensils:

- 4 table knives
- 4 small spoons
- 4 large spoons
- 4 forks
- Chef's knife (or chopping knife)
- Paring knife
- Serrated knife (for breads)
- Vegetable peeler
- Tongs
- Ladle
- Can opener
- Bottle opener with corkscrew
- Cheese grater
- Metal, plastic or silicone spatula
- Wooden spoon or plastic mixing spoon
- 2 plastic cutting boards

Cookware: non-stick, stainless steel, cast iron or aluminum

- Small or medium saucepan with lid
- Large saucepan with lid
- Medium frypan
- Small baking dish
- Rimmed baking sheet

Small Appliances:

- Microwave
- Toaster and/or toaster oven

Miscellaneous:

- 1 - 2 microwave-safe bowls
- Liquid measuring cup
- Set of dry measuring cups
- Set of measuring spoons
- 2 - 3 different sized mixing bowls
- Colander
- Oven mitts

Storage:

- Plastic or glass food-safe containers for leftovers
- Plastic bags
- Freezer bags
- Plastic food wrap
- Aluminum foil

Kitchen Cleaning Supplies:

- Dishwashing liquid
- All-purpose cleaner
- Baking soda
- Vinegar
- Soft, light-coloured cloths or rags
- Kitchen brushes
- Rubber gloves
- Scouring pads
- Paper towels
- Microfibre cloth
- Dishcloths
- Dishtowels
- Dish rack or drying mat
- Disinfectant bleach

OPTIONAL:

- Pitcher or jug for juice/water
- Trivet
- Serving dishes or platters
- Kettle
- Kitchen timer
- Coffee maker
- Teapot
- Kitchen shears
- Steak knives
- Slow cooker
- Blender
- Pasta pot

You know that pantry cupboard back at your parents' place that seemed to have just about everything you needed? It's still back at mom and dad's place, which means you're going to need a pantry of your own.

This list is pretty huge, but we know you're not going to need or want everything on it. If you've never heard of something or don't think you're ever going to need it, don't worry about buying it right away. Stocking a pantry all at once isn't cheap, so start with the stuff you know you'll use right away, then add more things as you need them (and as spare cash will allow). Buying herbs and spices at the bulk store (i.e. Bulk Barn) can save you money and you only need to purchase what you think you'll use



PANTRY BASICS

- Applesauce, canned or individual servings
- Baking powder
- Baking soda
- Barbecue sauce
- Beans, canned – black, chickpeas (garbanzo), kidney and pork and beans
- Bouillon, beef, chicken and vegetable
- Cereal, cold
- Chocolate chips
- Cocoa powder and hot chocolate mix
- Coffee
- Condiments – ketchup, mustard, relish and steak sauce
- Cooking spray
- Crackers
- Fish, canned – salmon and tuna
- Flour, all-purpose
- Fruit, canned or individual servings
- Fruit, dried
- Herbs, dried – basil, dill, oregano and other herbs as needed
- Honey
- Hot sauce – Tabasco, Frank's RedHot or Sriracha
- Jam
- Jelly
- Maple syrup
- Marshmallows
- Mayonnaise
- Oatmeal
- Oil – vegetable (canola for cooking, olive for salad dressings)
- Pasta – short (macaroni) and long (spaghetti)
- Peanut butter
- Rice – white or brown
- Salad dressing
- Seasonings – salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, chili powder and red pepper flakes
- Soy sauce
- Sugar – brown and white
- Tea
- Tomatoes, canned diced
- Tomato paste
- Tomato sauce
- Vanilla
- Vinegar
- Worcestershire sauce



Cooking at home is easy, but things can turn ugly if you're not careful about food safety. Unless you want to come down with a nasty case of food poisoning, follow these straightforward guidelines.

HOW TO HANDLE FOOD SO YOU DON'T MAKE YOURSELF SICK

- Wash your hands thoroughly before preparing food and after handling raw eggs, fish, meat and poultry.
- The safest way to thaw food is in the refrigerator. Leave food in its original wrapping and place it on a plate before refrigerating to prevent any juices from dripping onto other foods.
- Thawing food in cold water is also safe. Leave food in its original wrapping and place in a leak-proof plastic bag. Keep the food submerged in cold water, changing the water frequently to make sure it remains cold.
- You can also thaw food in a microwave, but anything you thaw must be cooked immediately.
- Leftover food should be refrigerated or frozen within 2 hours of preparation. Leftovers can't be repeatedly heated and cooled. Instead, only reheat the amount you plan to eat, leaving the rest in the fridge. Reheat until piping hot and serve immediately.
- Perishable foods should also be refrigerated or frozen within 2 hours of purchase.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Bacteria multiply in the danger zone between 4°C and 60°C.
- When shopping, get perishables such as dairy, meat and poultry just before going to the checkout. If you're walking or taking transit, make the grocery store the last stop before heading home.
- If mould forms on a firm cheese, trim off a generous inch of the cheese and wrap the remainder in new plastic wrap. Don't eat soft cheese, jelly, jam, pickles or bread where mould has grown because it will have spread through the food.
- Fruits and vegetables should be washed before cutting, peeling or eating even if the outer layers won't be eaten. Washing is necessary as any bacteria on the outside can be transferred to the inside when an item is cut or peeled. Use lots of clear water, and don't use soap, bleach or vinegar as they can leave residues. Don't return washed fruit or veggies to their original packaging.
- Avoid cross-contamination by using a separate cutting board and utensils for raw meat, poultry or fish. Never put cooked food or food that can be eaten raw on a cutting board or surface where raw meat, poultry or fish has been.

Label containers of perishable food or leftovers with the date purchased, opened or cooked. (A roll of masking tape and a Sharpie are unlikely kitchen essentials.) Storage times vary with different foods. We've got a list on [our website](#).

KITCHEN SAFETY

- Cooking-related activities cause most home fires in Canada. Don't leave cooking food unattended. Even if you're leaving the stove for "just a few minutes," play it safe. Turn off your stove before you walk away. Burning your supper is bad; burning your building down is much worse.
- Wipe up spills and clean your oven. Built-up grease can catch fire.
- Don't store items on the stovetop or toaster oven, as they could catch fire. Don't use the oven as a storage bin; forgotten items may ignite the next time you preheat the oven.
- Keep pets away from the stove, especially when opening the oven.
- If you have a fire start in the oven, turn off the oven and keep the oven door closed until the fire is out.
- Don't wear loose clothes while cooking. An electrical coil on the stove reaches a temperature of 800°F and a gas flame goes over 1,000°F. A dishtowel, pot holder or a loose sleeve can catch fire at 400°F.
- Never pour water onto a cooking oil fire! This only makes things worse, as it causes the fire to flare and spread. Turn off the stove and put a lid on the pot or pan to smother the flame. Do not try to move a burning pot or pan to the sink.
- Keep the hood, filter, fan and duct above the stove clean. Grease buildup is a fire hazard. Plus, if there's enough grease above your cooktop, heat from cooking can cause it to drip down into the meal you're preparing.
- Always turn pot handles toward the back of the stove to prevent them being bumped into while working in the kitchen.
- Be careful when removing lids from hot pots or pans. Always open the lid away from yourself.



Even a small kitchen is often the heart of our home. We cook here, gather here and enjoy meals here with friends. But as warm and inviting as it is, the kitchen is also the most potentially dangerous room in a home. The last thing you want is a kitchen fire. A little bit of care and attention goes a long way to preventing bad things from happening.

- If you have a fire in the microwave oven, unplug the microwave and keep the door closed.
- To deep-fry safely, use an electric deep fryer with a temperature control. It's safer than frying food in a saucepan or frying pan.
- Keep electrical cords of appliances at the back of the counter, and make sure any toasters, kettles or other appliances that heat up are a safe distance from anything else on your counter.
- Do not use extension cords to plug in appliances long term. This can become a fire hazard and tripping hazard.
- While you may take precautions, your neighbours may not be as careful. Tenant insurance is surprisingly cheap and you'll be glad you have it if something bad happens in your building.
- Keep a fire extinguisher near the kitchen towards the exit. If you need advice on the right type of extinguisher to buy, your local fire department would be happy to answer questions.

HOW TO WASH DISHES

If you've lived with a dishwasher all your life, going without can be a major challenge. Not only that, but even if you have a dishwasher, they aren't really meant to wash everything in your kitchen. Doing dishes is a chore, but you don't have to let it be dead time. Listen to music, chat with a roommate (you wash, they dry), or call someone on speaker.

GETTING READY

1. Scrape off any lumps of food into the garbage or compost bucket.
2. Rinse off very dirty dishes or ones with a lot of sauce.
3. Stack dishes in the order they will be washed. Wash from least to most dirty:
 - glasses and cups
 - forks, knives and spoons
 - bowls and plates
 - serving bowls, plates and utensils
 - cutting knives, cutting boards
 - cooking pots and pans

WASHING AND DRYING

1. Fill sink partially full with water as hot as you can stand. Wearing rubber gloves makes this easier.
2. Squirt in enough dish detergent to make a small layer of bubbles.
3. Fill the second sink (if you have 2 sinks) with hot water for rinsing.
4. Put into the first sink a few dishes of one type.
5. Using a washcloth, rub over all the surfaces of one dish until clean.
6. Drain soapy water from that same dish and put into rinse water.
7. Drain rinse water from that dish and place in dish drainer or on drainboard.
8. Repeat with the rest of the dishes.
9. Drain and replace washing water and detergent as needed.
10. If someone is drying dishes, the drainboard won't get too full. If no one is drying the dishes, only stack as many dishes as can be done safely, then dry those dishes.

Add disinfectant bleach to your water if washing anything that has touched raw meat, fish or poultry. These items should be washed separately and air-dried to kill bacteria.

FINISHING

After all the dishes have been washed, rinsed, dried and stacked or put away:

1. Rinse and wipe out the sinks and sink stoppers.
2. Wipe counters and tabletops.
3. Hang up all cloths and towels to dry.

DISHWASHING SAFETY TIPS

Safety tip for washing dishes? You bet. Here are a few quick tips that should help you keep all your fingers intact.

- Do not put dishes into water while they are hot. You could burn your fingers, and it's not good for the dishes.
- To carry a knife, hold it away from your body, by the handle, with the blade down.
- To avoid nasty surprises, don't put sharp objects (knives, peelers, blades) loose into the wash water. Hold it in one hand while washing with the other hand, one at a time. Continue holding while rinsing and put in a safe area to drain and dry. Always hold the sharp part away from you.
- If something gets broken in the sink, the water will need to be drained carefully without allowing the broken pieces to go into the drain. If you have to, scoop the foam out of the way so you can see where all the pieces are.
- If water gets spilled onto the floor, clean it up right away. Wet floors are slippery!



There are costly consequences to not knowing how to do laundry. Sweaters can shrink from adult to toddler size, white shirts can turn irreversibly pink, food stains can set, and your favourite pants can come out of the dryer too tight to wear. All of these mistakes are expensive, and all can be prevented if you read the labels and know how to wash your clothes.

These are basic instructions only, and different washing machines and dryers may have special settings or require things to be done in a specific order. When in doubt, dust off the manual.

HOW TO WASH LAUNDRY



- First things first. Check pockets for paper, tissues, pens, gum wrappers, cash, etc. Also check for any needed repairs or stains you may not have noticed yet.



- Check for washing instructions on each garment. If you're not sure what the symbols mean, check the laundry symbols on the next page.



- Treat any stains you find. Do not launder until the stains are gone. If you're not sure how to treat the stain, call, email or live-chat with our Answer Line home economists.



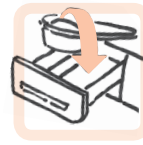
- Turn garments inside out to prevent rubbing and protect buttons and zippers.



- Sort loads by colour, fabric, construction, and amount of soil.



- Check the manufacturer's instructions on how to use the washing machine as many variations exist.



- Add laundry to the machine. Add detergent to the dispenser.



- Select the appropriate cycle and water temperature.

LAUNDRY TIPS

- Don't overload the washer or dryer.
- Sort as much as possible. To save time and money, try to hold off on washing a load until you have enough similarly sorted items to justify running a wash.
- Don't use too much detergent.
- Use the correct type of detergent. If it's a high-efficiency washer, use only high-efficiency detergent. Look for the "he" symbol on detergents made for high-efficiency washers.
- Do not use too low a water temperature. In general, wash darker colours in colder water, lighter colours in warm and some whites in hot water. Follow the laundry care labels carefully.
- Try not to wash lint-producing items, like towels, with non-lint-producing items.

HOW TO DRY LAUNDRY

- When removing laundry from the washer, shake it to separate each piece.
- Sort by amount of drying needed and level of heat called for. Consider the type of fabric and weight of the garments.
- Check the manufacturer's instructions on how to use the dryer.
- Select the temperature based on fibre content. (The laundry care label usually lists a temperature setting.)
- Some items are labelled as "Line Dry," "Dry Flat" or "Do Not Tumble Dry." These don't go in the dryer.
- Remove clothing promptly when dry.
- Folding or hanging garments immediately will help prevent wrinkling.

Laundry Basics

These are some of the most common LAUNDRY CARE SYMBOLS you'll likely run into. If you encounter a symbol you don't see here, a comprehensive guide is available through the Government of Canada's website.



WASH IN MACHINE



HAND WASH



BLEACH WHEN NEEDED



DO NOT BLEACH



TUMBLE DRY IN DRYER



DO NOT DRY IN DRYER



HANG TO DRY



DRIP DRY



FLAT DRY



IRON



DO NOT IRON



DRY CLEAN



DO NOT DRY CLEAN

STAIN REMOVAL TIPS

- It's wise to have a few basic stain removal products in your home, just in case. Stain removal products are found in the laundry section of grocery stores and the household cleaning product section of hardware and housewares stores.
- Read care labels on garments for instructions before purchasing and before cleaning. If you want to avoid dry cleaning costs, avoid purchasing dry clean-only garments.
- Always follow the instructions on stain removal products and the care label on each garment. Do not assume that a successful stain removal for one fabric or stain will be successful on another fabric or stain.
- Always test any product or treatment on an inconspicuous area of the garment. This does not ensure that the stain removal will be a success, only that the use of this stain removal product or treatment will not damage the fabric.
- Be sure to use the stain removal product only on the stained area. Open the garment up or put something behind the stain so that you are only treating one layer of fabric.
- Protect your working surface and put a pad of absorbent white or light-coloured cloth behind the garment before starting any treatment.
- Thoroughly rinse out the stain removal product. Do not leave a product on your garment or leave it soaking, unless you know the fabric will be safe.

TECHNIQUES & SUGGESTIONS

- Always pre-treat stains before laundering and drying in a dryer.
- Pouring boiling water carefully through a fresh fruit juice stain, if temperature is safe for the particular garment, can be effective.
- Ballpoint pen ink stains can be treated with Oxy-based stain removal products following instructions.
- To remove wax on a garment or carpet, place ice cubes in a zip-lock bag and hold against the wax until the wax hardens and can be easily removed.
For garments only: then, use mechanics' hand cleaner followed by Sunlight Bar Soap to get the last of the wax out, rinse well, and then put it in the laundry. DO NOT use mechanics' hand cleaner and Sunlight Bar Soap on carpet.
- Chewing gum and tree sap can generally be removed with Goo Gone, but the Goo Gone needs to be removed with Sunlight Bar Soap.
- Mustard stains often require glycerin and Sunlight Bar Soap.
- If you're stuck and don't know how to treat a stain, get in touch with our [Answer Line](#).

BE PREPARED! Make a Stain Removal Kit!

Instead of waiting until you're faced with a stain to buy a stain remover, build a basic stain removal kit beforehand. This kit should contain some or all of the following:

- Sunlight Bar Soap: A general all-purpose cleaner
- Oxy-based product: Great for cleaning coloured stains
- Mechanics' hand cleaner, plain with no grit: Good for grease and oil-based stains.

Make no mistake. Grocery shopping is a skill, and you can't learn it overnight. If you've never had to buy pasta noodles, bananas or broccoli before, it's tough to know what a good price is. With all the options available, it's especially hard to find the right mix of budget, convenience and health.

We've put together some tips that we've figured out over the years that you'll probably find helpful while shopping. Some tips may seem obvious, but you'd be surprised by how many people fall into the same shopping traps.

GROCERY SHOPPING SECRETS

- **MAKE A PLAN.** Think variety and nutrition for the next week so you don't get bored or hungry.
- **STICK TO YOUR LIST.** Don't add extra things to your basket if you don't need them.
- **CHECK FLYERS.** Get to know prices of the foods you normally buy so you can do comparison shopping. (And pay attention to package size when comparing.)
- **LOOK FOR SALE PATTERNS.** Some items routinely come on sale every few weeks, so note which of your favourite products do this. Resist the urge to buy at full price if you know it'll likely be on sale next week.
- **DON'T SHOP ON AN EMPTY STOMACH.** Hungry shoppers are more prone to buying snacks (often expensive, empty calories) and other impulse items.
- **ONLY BUY ITEMS ON SALE IF YOU NORMALLY USE THEM.** A half-price deal means nothing if you throw it out.
- **AVOID MOST CONVENIENCE FOODS.** You'll pay extra for the convenience and the packaging.
- **IF CHICKEN OR ANY OF YOUR FAVOURITE MEATS ARE ON SALE AND YOU HAVE A FREEZER, YOU CAN STOCK UP.** Divide large "warehouse packs" into smaller portions and freeze them in freezer bags for up to 6 months.
- **PLAN FOR LEFTOVERS WHEN SHOPPING AND COOKING.** For example, leftover chili can be used in a wrap if you have tortillas on hand. A roast chicken one day can be used in a salad, on a pita pizza or in a quesadilla the next day. Plan ahead.
- **ROTISSERIE CHICKEN IS A GREAT TIME SAVER** when you need a quick meal. However, remember that the meat needs to be removed from the bones as soon as possible to help the meat cool down quickly so it stays safe to eat. Use leftover chicken to top a salad or make a sandwich.
- **ONLY BUY IN QUANTITIES YOU CAN USE BEFORE IT GOES BAD.** Companies want you to buy the bigger size and price accordingly (it's only two dollars more!), but if you don't use it before it expires, you've thrown out money. Best-before dates can help you decide how much to buy.
- **LOOK FOR FREE LOYALTY PROGRAMS** that give you reward points that can be put towards free items or groceries.
- **WATCH FOR DISCOUNT DAYS** as they can also save you money.
- **BUYING AS A GROUP AT BULK STORES CAN ALSO SAVE YOU MONEY.** Divide out the wares and store appropriately.

CHEAP & DELICIOUS

- **LENTILS OR BEANS AND GRAINS**, when combined, make a healthy and economical source of protein.
- **NUTS, SEEDS, AND DRIED FRUITS** are packed with nutrients and can be added to yogurt, salads and wraps, and can make a healthy snack as well.
- **PACK A LUNCH.** Yes, the stir-fry place smells great, but it'll cost you several times what you paid to pack a lunch from home. Invest a few bucks in some mini ice packs and an insulated lunch bag.
- **NEED SOMETHING TO EAT** before you run out the door in the morning? Granola and yogurt with sliced bananas make for a quick breakfast.
- **CANNED VEGETABLES AND LEGUMES** are a convenient, frugal option, especially if you don't have a freezer or full-sized fridge. Just be aware that not everything in a can is equally good. (Canned pasta? Avoid!) Best bets include canned beans (including chickpeas), canned corn and canned tomatoes. If you see a good sale and you know you'll use them, stock up.
- **FRESH FRUIT** regularly goes on sale (different types every week), so tailor your fruit snacking to what you can buy on the cheap. Either make sure the quantity isn't too big to eat all by yourself (3 lbs of strawberries is a whole lot for one person), or split bigger package deals with a friend or roommate.
- **SPEAKING OF FRUIT**, if you've got a blender, you can make your own smoothies with frozen fruit and plain yogurt (and kale, if you're into that sort of thing) for a meal you can drink while on the go.
- **CONSIDER THE ECONOMICAL EGG.** 2 eggs equal a serving of meat. Eggs are quick and easy to prepare; scramble or hard cook them for protein in a hurry, or turn them into an omelette, frittata or quiche if you're feeling fancy. They're Mother Nature's convenience food.
- **IF YOU NEED MEAL INSPIRATION**, check best-before dates and use up items that are going to expire soon.
- **WHO DOESN'T LOVE CEREAL?** Sales are frequent, and it's a simple breakfast for those days when you just don't have the time for anything more elaborate. But check the ingredients to make sure you're not eating a box of glorified sugar cubes. Scan the nutritional info panel for fibre (more is better), sugar and sodium (less is better).
- **TOFU** is another great protein that's not expensive and can be used in place of chicken or beef in stir-fries. For something different, try our Tofu Scramble for a weekend breakfast.



Eating well doesn't have to cost a lot of money. Here are some of our favourite budget-friendly foods that are both healthy and delicious.

Here's the thing about living on your own or with a roommate: If you don't clean up after yourself, nobody else will. Here are some tips for scrubbing things down and keeping 'em neat and tidy.

Don't know where to start? Here's some guidance on how to clean common things and areas around the home, and how often they need a good clean.

HOW'S THIS FOR CLEANING?

Disinfecting cutting boards and kitchen counters:

- Whenever counters and cutting boards are contaminated with raw meat, poultry or fish juices, they must be disinfected with a solution of 1 tablespoon chlorine bleach in 4 cups water or thoroughly soaked with a disinfecting kitchen spray and left for 10 minutes or as directed.

Bathroom cleanup:

- Thoroughly clean once a week, and do touch-ups as needed.
- Never use abrasive cleaners when cleaning toilet bowls. A small amount of commercial toilet bowl cleaner and a good toilet brush are all you need once a week.
- Never mix bleach and products containing ammonia! Mixing cleaning products of any kind may be dangerous.

Mirrors and windows:

- Clean mirrors as needed and windows twice a year.
- A microfibre cloth wrung out in hot water can be used to clean and shine mirrors and windows.
- Glass cleaner is often not necessary and can build up over time, making mirrors and windows streaky. A short handled squeegee is also great for windows and mirrors, as well as glass shower doors.

Upholstered furniture:

- Vacuum once a week to remove dust and crumbs that will damage the fabric.

Leather and vinyl furniture:

- Damp dust with a soft cloth or microfibre cloth and water twice a month. Use leather conditioner as needed.

Wood or painted furniture:

- Dusting should generally be done once a week.
- Damp dust with a soft cloth or microfibre cloth. This is less costly than using silicone-based furniture sprays. Silicone-based sprays may also ruin some furniture finishes.

Walls:

- Dust walls twice a year with a long-handled mop covered with a damp microfibre cloth.
- Wash around light switches and smudged areas as needed using an all-purpose cleaner.

Floors

- The general rule: clean once a week or as needed.

Tile and vinyl flooring:

- Vacuum or sweep, then wash using a drop of dish soap or all-purpose cleaner in a bucket of hot water. Rinse.

Hardwood and laminates:

- Vacuum, then wash with water or a hardwood floor cleaner. Dry well. Commercial wet-mop products can build up and make floors tacky.

Carpets and area rugs:

- Frequent vacuuming is a good way to prevent carpets from soiling. Clean up spills quickly to help prevent permanent stains. A mat or rug on the floor at the entry door can decrease the amount of grime brought into a home.

Appliances:

- Clean out the refrigerator regularly. Discard old food promptly, wipe with hot soapy water and dry well with a clean towel.
- Clean the microwave regularly with hot soapy water as well as after each spill. A quick wipe now saves elbow grease later.
- Cooktops should be cleaned with a cooktop cleaner after each use, then rinse and dry well. This is the easiest and safest way to prevent damage to your cooktop.
- Stainless steel appliances should be cleaned with water and a lint-free cloth or microfibre cloth, going with the grain; dry and buff. Some appliances may recommend using a stainless steel cleaner as directed.

Oven:

- Clean the oven window regularly with hot soapy water. Stubborn marks can be removed with a paste of baking soda, taking care not to rub hard.
- Use commercial oven cleaner if your oven does not have a self-clean cycle. Be sure to follow instructions and place newspaper on the floor around the oven door.
- If you have a self-clean oven, follow the instructions for use exactly
- Always wipe out spills as soon as safely possible to prevent fires and smoking.
- Never line the oven with foil as it can permanently adhere to the oven floor. If necessary, use a small pan directly underneath cooking dishes to catch oil overs.

Clothes dryer:

- Minimize the use of anti-static dryer products, as these can build up over time on the fabrics, causing stains and reducing absorbency of towels.
- Clean out the lint trap after each use. A buildup of lint can contribute to fires.

HOUSEHOLD SAFETY TIPS

- Don't store items on your stove cooktop surface.
- Keep the area around your furnace and appliances clear to avoid fires and blocking vents.
- Don't run a vehicle in a garage, especially with the door closed.
- Don't leave a space heater running when leaving your home.
- Burning candles should not be left unsupervised.
- Don't use a barbecue indoors.
- Don't leave cooking food unattended. Even if you're leaving the stove for "just a few minutes," play it safe. Turn off your stove before you walk away.

Essential Cleaning Products

- All-purpose cleaner: Can be used on many surfaces. Must be rinsed off.
- Bathroom cleaner: Gel, spray or cream – to clean sinks, counters, showers and tubs.
- Disinfectant: Only to be used when necessary.
- Microfibre cloths: One for cleaning and one for glass and mirrors. Light-coloured cloths are best.
- Soft, light-coloured, lint-free cloths
- Toilet bowl brush
- Toilet bowl cleaner

