

Cleaning Tips From Miss Priss

LOU ANN GOOD
Lancaster Farming Staff
LITITZ (Lancaster Co.) — Is cleaning a frustrating, time consuming job in your home?

If so, you definitely need the advice of Miss Priss, a cleaning expert. Although she runs a cleaning business, she does not want more cleaning jobs. What she does want to do is to share professional tips to make your job easier.

Miss Priss, who is really Priscilla Hodecker of Lititz, and her husband Terry have two sons and two daughters, ranging in ages from 17 to 25.

"I love to clean," she said. She believes that you, too, will murmur those words if you follow her cleaning advice. "When you have order, you feel better," she said. "People do not realize how much work they make for themselves because they allow clutter to accumulate."

Dejunk

"Many people have an overweight house. If they thin it out, they feel better," she said.

To make cleaning easier, it is necessary to de-junk. Miss Priss suggests that you set aside a day to dejunk. Sort through stacks and drawers and dispose of items in one of four boxes labeled: junk, charity, sort, and emotional withdrawal. The emotional withdrawal box is for items that you don't need but really cannot part with at that time. Put the items in a box, stack it in a closet, and six months later throw it away without looking in the box.

"It's a constant effort to keep your home free of clutter," Miss Priss said. "Keep your eyes open to getting rid of clutter before it is overwhelming. Pitch junk mail the day that it arrives."

A house with basic order is more inviting than a house in disarray. Extra touches such as fresh cut flowers and the aroma of something baking in the oven makes the home seem more appealing.

Windows

If you're perplexed trying to decipher what really is the best window cleaner to use, your problems are over. Throw them all away and get a bucket of plain water, add a drop of dishwashing detergent. Dip a sponge lightly into the water solution and quickly

wipe across window area, just enough to wet glass. Take a squeegee blade, tilt the squeegee with the bottom away from the glass and pull across top and then from top to bottom and across bottom of window. Presto! A sparkling window without streaks! If you have high windows, add an extension handle to the squeegee. Do not purchase a cheap squeegee from the grocery store or you will not be pleased with the results. Miss Priss recommends the Ettore brand.

Walls

Stop dipping a used rag into the same bucket of dirty water. Get two buckets. Fill one with water and general purpose cleaner. Let the other bucket empty. Dip sponge into water and wipe on walls, starting at the top and going back and forth. Squeeze out sponge in empty container. Dip in water again and wash wall. Always squeeze out the dirty water in the same container. That way the water with the general purpose cleaner will stay clean for the walls. Wipe wall with a dry terry towel, folded in quarters so that eight different sides can be used.

Dusting

Use a Lambswool duster for mini-blinds, windowsills, door frames and to remove cobwebs from room corners. Lambswool attracts dust much better than feather or cloth dusters because lambswool has a slightly electrical charge.

Vinyl Floors

Dust mop regularly with a treated dust mop. To clean, Miss Priss prefers to work on her hands and knees.

"You can see dirt that you could not see otherwise," she said. "Remember anything horizontal collects dirt so before you wash the floor, wash the baseboards."

Waxed floors are easier to keep clean, but if you have a build-up of old wax it should first be removed.

To strip old wax, apply mixture of one part ammonia to one-half part water. Apply liberally to about a 10-foot-square area. Let the solution set five to 10 minutes to dissolve old wax. The secret is to let the water and ammonia mixture do the work. After wax has loosened, scrub vigorously with a scrub



Proper cleaning supplies make Miss Priss's cleaning job easier and enjoyable. She often takes fresh flowers to her clients because those extra decorating touches makes a home appear more inviting.

brush. Squeegee the dirt into a plastic dustpan and dump into an empty bucket.

When stripped, rinse the floor with a mixture of 1 cup vinegar in the rinse water and then with plain water. Let the floor dry completely before waxing.

Apply a thin coat of floor wax; let dry completely and apply two more thin coats to traffic areas.

Damp mop using two buckets: one to apply the cleaning solution and another in which to dispose of the dirty water.

Bathrooms

Use a pumice stone to remove water rings in the commode. Clean commodes on a weekly basis with an acid toilet bowl cleaner, you will have little trouble with water rings.

Use spray bottle with disinfectant to clean washbowl, tub, shower, and tile. A cleaner that removes soap scum should be used and a cotton cloth used to buff the faucets.

Dirtiest spots in the house
 The telephone and door knobs

are the dirtiest spots in most houses, according to Miss Priss. Clean these on a weekly basis. Keep a constant lookout for fingerprints at door jams and wipe with a damp cloth.

Maintain

Miss Priss is alarmed by the waste that many families allow because they do not take proper care of items. She believes that one should buy the best they can afford and take care of it.

As an example of carelessness, Miss Priss said that too many couples buy an expensive sofa and then delay having their cat declawed, which quickly results in a ruined sofa.

"How differently would you care for an item if you knew that you could never replace it?" she asks.

She advises: read labels, don't be wasteful, give away items that are still in good repair but no longer in use. Maintain what you have.

She believes that homes are not cared for the way they were in former days because too many women's hearts are not in the home. She thinks this is a reflection of women not spending as much time at home.

Cleaning professionals

While, in some ways, this is a

negative of society, it also provides an opportunity for many women to operate their own cleaning business. Miss Priss has these words of advice for those who clean for others: be efficient, have an eye for detail, be thorough, always do a little bit more than is expected, be completely trustworthy — if you break something, always be upfront and tell your client.

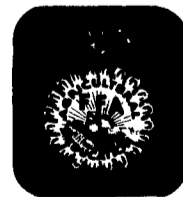
Miss Priss believes that a home that smells clean, looks cleaner. She prefers to use a bit of Pine Sol or lemon cleaner to impart that freshly clean aura.

People who clean for others should develop an eye for dirt, Miss Priss advises. She wears an apron with pockets when she cleans. She always carries a scissors so that she can snip threads hanging from upholstery. A grout brush or a toothbrush should be included to clean crevices that cannot be reached otherwise. A 100 percent cotton cloth is used to buff faucets and other surfaces because residue left behind collects more dust and dirt.

Miss Priss credits her cleaning expertise to Don Aslett, who holds national teaching seminars and has written several books on cleaning. Miss Priss offers an entertaining program based on Aslett's video, "Is there Life After Housework?" For more information, call Miss Priss at (717) 626-6802.



Miss Priss uses a lamb's wool duster because lambswool has a slightly electrical charge that attracts dust and cobwebs.



HAPPENINGS

Snyder Wins Contest

Kelly Snyder, of the Conrad Weiser FFA Chapter, has been selected as the national fourth-place winner for her entry in the FFA New Horizons "Up with Agriculture" writing contest.

Kelly has been awarded \$200 and will be presented with a certificate at the Pennsylvania State FFA Convention.

Kelly wants to become an elementary teacher. She said, "I want to make the excitement of agriculture come alive for young people. It is important for them to realize what agriculture is and everything it involves."



Kelly Snyder