

House Keeping

All potential executive housekeepers are required to read over the following material. Please note that there are suggested cleaning tips as well so please scroll all the way down. You will be queried on the material during the interview process. Thank you.

Weekly master cleaning schedule

- Each week the house manager/executive housekeeper must organize time efficient master cleaning plan which can be printed out from the computer or written out by hand on paper.
- The weekly cleaning plan should be specific about which rooms and what wings of the house are to be tackled on what days that week.
- To avoid double over the weekly cleaning schedule should include who is to be responsible for each area and room that week.
- Rooms in frequent use are cleaned more often than lesser used areas in the home.
- Common areas of the house that are cleaned daily are given first priority on the cleaning schedule and then you work down. Examples of common priority areas to be cleaned are master bedroom, master bathroom, kitchen, other family bedrooms and guest rooms in current use, common hallways, family room, frequently used work out equipment & bars, etc.
- Examples of lesser used areas which must be worked into the schedule in a time efficient manner to keep dust free are those areas which are not used daily such as empty guest bedrooms, areas of the home gym not being used, less frequently used bar areas & formal rooms, etc.

Common areas that need frequent attention

- **Kitchen:** clean kitchen counters & sink, appliances, kitchen floor, glass patio doors.
- **Bathrooms:** all showers used daily should be given a thorough cleaning which not only includes washing down shower floors but also the shower walls, shower glass doors as well as gentle wipe down of shower fixtures and faucets.
- Gentle wipe down with mild soap and water of all gold faucets and fixtures in bathroom. Follow up with dry wipe over of faucets and fixtures.
- Bathroom sinks, counters and toilets in current use are refreshed regularly.
- Used towels are collected from bathrooms for the laundry and fresh towels are put out daily.
- Powder rooms in current use are cleaned daily, making sure soaps and fresh towels well displayed.
- Keep cobwebs and dust from collecting in special decorative nooks and crannies that run throughout the house in hallways and other rooms.
- Special attention to keeping dust and cob webs from low hanging crystal fixtures, brass, glass, gold ornaments in hallways.

- During times when there are visiting guests pay close attention to those areas used by guests such as guest bedrooms & bathrooms along with other areas used by guest such as family areas, bars, work out equipment, pool area, theater etc.
- Bars being used need frequent wipe downs- check for dirty glassware.
- Cathedral ceilings and wood walls need regular dusting.
- Use ladder to wipe down higher walls and ceiling areas. Use soft dry dust mop on a long stick for added reach power.
- In addition, gentle central vacuum hose for dusty walls.

Maintaining lesser used areas in the home

- Work in lesser used rooms in master cleaning schedule to insure cobweb and dust free.
- Schedule occasional complete wipe down of all home gym equipment to keep dust free.
- Schedule wipe downs of bars not in use along with glassware, shelves, mirrors, etc.

Suggested cleaning tips for floors and surfaces:

- Paper slippers should be kept in a handy place at all service entrances and front door and given out to any workmen and service people when they first enter the home. These can be worn over their shoes or boots. Paper slippers can be found at Home Depot.
- **Marble floors:** professional prefer plain luke warm water on marble floors with soft mop or by hand with soft cloth. Dry with soft cloth by hand or soft dry mop.
- **Marble floors:** some people use very small diluted amount of vinegar in warm water and then dry with soft mop.
- **Limestone floors:** When dirt builds up on limestone and people walk over the dirt, the dirt particles scratch the finish of the floor and eventually take away the natural shine so gently dry mop the floor often to remove this dirt.
- **Limestone floors:** Soak up any spills immediately!
- Limestone scratches easily so take care--- never drag a vacuum or any object across a limestone floor. Avoid brooms as they can scratch! Dry dust mop with soft microfiber cloth.
- **Limestone floors:** Wash grime off with warm water and mild dish washing liquid. Never use acidic products such as vinegar on limestone.
- **Granite kitchen counter tops:** gentle neutral dish washing liquid with water and with soft cloth. No vinegar or acidic products.
- **14 carat gold fixtures & faucets in bathroom:** wash with very mild soap and water. Never vinegar or acidic or abrasive chemicals- keep chlorine bleach away as it can corrode the gold!!!
- Dry all gold and onyx faucets and fixtures with soft dry cloth after washing.
- **Onyx:** Very mild gentle soap and water--- NO acidic- NO vinegar- NO harsh chemicals.

- **"Restore Organic"** shower cleaner is a nice gentle all natural mild soap with neutral PH that cleans the shower well and is environmentally safe.
- **Waxed wood floors:** do not spill water on waxed wood floors as it will stain the finish. Use only very soft dry dust mop.
- **Wood walls:** for high up areas on the walls use dry soft dust mop on a long stick - the mop on a stick can be purchased at Home Depot.
- For higher areas use a ladder combined with the mop on a stick.
- Central vacuum can also be used for thick dust on wood walls during move in.
- Most upholstered fabrics should just be wiped down with very soft dry cloth.
- Most finer pieces just need wipe down with soft dry cloth.
- Many higher ended homes prefer Weiman's Furniture Polish if polishing wood furniture.

Laundry

- Someone must be delegated the task of the family laundry as well as the ironing.
- The person assigned to laundry needs to put away the clothes in an organized fashion in the closets and drawers.
- The laundry person should be responsible for keeping the common laundry areas and floor clean.
- Clothes with missing buttons or stains should be gathered for dry cleaner.
- All black tie formal wear for dry cleaning should be catalogued in a notebook or by computer file with a description of the item (usually the label or color description will suffice).before being sent out. Likewise when the clothes return the person should account for each item by checking each off.
- Any missing dry cleaning garments are noted and tracked down with dry cleaners.

Vendors & servicemen

- If the house manager is not present you may need to be responsible for the following protocol.
- Keep large box of special paper shoe slippers in convenient location near all entrances.
- Make sure to give the work person the special paper slippers to put over their shoes or boots. These slippers can be bought at any hardware store home depot has larger economy boxes.
- In the case of exceptionally dirty work boots, make sure they remove them and then give them the paper slippers.
- Keep a service log book in which the person doing the work must sign in. Make sure you make note of the time in the book when the person begins the work.
- Always take care that no workmen are wondering away from the work site into different rooms of the house-keep track of them.
- Always oversee that the workers in the home are actually doing the work for the number of hours they have signed in for.
- Sign the workers out in the book when the worker is finished- make sure you include the time and whether he satisfactorily finished the work.

- Pay the worker with a check from the household checking account when work is complete.

Answering the phone protocol

- Never tell anyone who calls the home that the family is out of town. Just tell them they are unavailable.
- Always take a message when no one is home and be sure to get the phone number and the person's name.
- When taking a phone message and you are unsure of how to spell the name of the person calling, politely ask them to please spell it for you.
- Answer the phone: *greeting time of day + last name of family + residence*. For example, "*Good morning, Jones residence.*"

Zoning

- Always important to allow the employer family privacy.
- When the family is home in one area of the house then work around them by starting in another area of the home.
- Never run any vacuums, floor buffers or food processors within earshot when the family is on a phone or reading or doing any kind of deskwork or entertaining a guest.

House Manager

Daily house check over

We have many seasoned housekeepers who are detailed deep cleaners.

- Daily well being look over in each room of the house, including rooms not in current use.
- Make sure all garbage baskets in bathrooms and rooms are emptied and clean daily.
- Look over includes checking for abnormalities and or changes in room heating, cooling and or humidity.
- Check for burned out light bulbs that need replacement.
- Flush all toilets and run all sinks in all bathrooms on regular basis

Wine cellar

- Check regularly to see that temperatures and humidity are functioning within normal range.

Hardware and light bulbs

- Set aside a special area in the home such as one of the larger storage closets where light bulbs and other everyday hardware equipment is stored and organized in neat and orderly fashion in bins.

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Kitchen duty

- One person delegated the duty of throwing out old food from the refrigerator.
- Someone must be designated daily task of making check list of all family favorite foods & staples that need to be stocked in fridge and cabinets.
- Someone designated as regular grocery shopping duties.
- A person to make check list of all cleaning supplies, papers towels, toilet paper & restock when low.

vendors & servicemen

- See HOME SECURITY BELOW about color copy identifications.
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- In the case of exceptionally dirty work boots, make sure they remove them and then give them the paper slippers.
- Keep a service log book in which the person doing the work must sign in. Make sure you make note of the time in the book when the person begins the work.
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heating & cooling system

- In the summer check that each room is properly cooled. If one wing or room in the house seems particularly warm and or humid then call in the cooling expert as it may be a sign the air conditioning is not working probably or that the system is not distributing the cool air evenly.
- In winter check that each room is warm enough. If one room is particularly cold, it could be a bad sign that the heating system is not working properly. In this case call in the heating expert. Lack of heating in the winter could cause a water pipe to freeze and break.

zoning

- Always important to allow the employer family privacy.
- When the family is home in one area of the house then work around them by starting in another area of the home.
- Never run any vacuums, buffers or food processors or let the other household staff run any of this equipment within earshot when the family is on a phone or reading or doing any kind of deskwork or entertaining a guest.

organizer book or calendar

- Keep a journal, organizer or calendar in order to keep track of the dates and times when the couple is going to be out of town.
- Organizer should be used for dates of events and parties at the house.
- Log in dates for any important engagements - either in or out of town- which the family must attend.
- The date organizer should be used to note any dates with expected vendors, service people, meetings with caterers for upcoming events, invitation people, florists, pool service, gardeners, etc
- Consider using the calendar program on the computer in order to catalogue these dates instead of using an organizer/ paper book by hand.

pet care routine

- Choose one designated special person who will be responsible for daily feeding and care of animals.
- Live in person is responsible for babysitting the two dogs when family leaves town.
- Learn complete pet care schedule and routine for the two dogs so when family leaves town you will know how to care for them.
- Keep a written record in the house manual of what kind of food they eat - how much they are fed and how often they are fed.
- Find out where to buy the dog food.
- Also included in house manual is written instructions about any special medications or special needs for pets.
- Important to learn schedule for the dogs in regard to exercise and going outside.
- Name, phone number and address of pet groomer. How often they are groomed and any special grooming details.
- The address and phone number of regular veterinarian.
- Address and phone number for nearest all night animal emergency care clinic, etc.

list of the service fix it people

- There must always be a printed list of service people in a handy place (the household manual and on line as a backup) that maintain the home such as air conditioning/ heating --- plumbing -- landscapers-- pool - etc.
- The list of experts should always include company name, names of any favorite service people to ask for at the company, company phone number & address as well as email contact info. , fax numbers, etc.

work out gym & theater

- There is a large work out gym area in the lower level of the home filled with work out equipment. This gym equipment must be wiped down regularly.
- There is also a large screening theater for movies. There are service people who maintain the gym and the special equipment.

landscapers

- Make sure to oversee gardeners when there are special projects which need special attention.

home security protocol

- Always identify any service man or vendor before opening the door.
- Any service person or vendor entering must present identification (driver's license) at the door.

- You take the identification and make a color copy from a copier which is located conveniently near service entrance in the home.
- All copies of service people are then filed away on record.
- All service people working regularly in the home need a fingerprint background check.
- You will need to learn the security code computer system in the home.

pool

- The service people care for the pool on regular basis.
- Check and note if there are leaves building up in drain or algae growth. Make sure you note this to pool caretakers.

garbage

- Find out schedule of when garbage men come so you and or assigned person can get the garbage out on the right days.
- Find out about recycle bags.
- Organize bins or area in the home or garage for recycle items.
- Arrange garbage pails in kitchen area.
- Make sure bathrooms, powder rooms have garbage baskets in handy place.

organize kitchen for move in

- Put away and organize kitchen items.
- Put away glassware in organized fashion in cabinets.
- Put away silverware into drawers.
- Put away and help organize pots and pans.

organize bar area:

- Put away liquor bottles and organize glassware on shelves.

flowers & florist

- Pay the florist monthly account.
- Arrange flowers in vase.
- Change water daily in flower vase.
- Make sure bottom of the vases are dry before setting down on tables.

the household master manual book

- House manager/executive housekeeper will put together a master book that includes many of the day to day details of how the house is cleaned, run and organized.

- The book should include all security protocol for workmen entering home including identification processing.
- The book should be well organized so that any new staff or temporary part time staff brought in to help can see the step by step details of how the house is cleaned and what safe cleaning products are used.
- Tip: each page of the book should be set in plastic covers to avoid deterioration.
- Each page should be updated accordingly.
- The book should contain a list of all the service people and professionals who will service the home which include their names, phone numbers, emergency numbers and addresses.
- The book should also include pet care and all the details listed above under pet care heading including address and phone number of veterinarian, address and number of emergency after hours vet clinic, the kinds of foods the pets eat, where the pet food is purchased, the name and phone number of the pet groomers, how often the pets are to be groomed and any special instructions when grooming etc., how often pets go outside- etc.
- The book should include regular 911 emergency numbers as well as hospital and poison control emergency numbers.
- Each special counter surface (granite, marble), fixtures (brass, gold onyx, etc) crystal fixtures, flooring (limestone, waxed wood), special bar areas, wall coverings, special upholstered furniture, antiques in the home should be accounted for in the book with snapshot along with details of how it is cared for including what kind of product is used.