

# 500+ TIME-SAVING *for* HINTS EVERY WOMAN

Emilie Barnes

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## *Setting Up Routines*



Life is simpler when you have a routine and a certain rhythm. Imagine if a gymnast did not have a sense of rhythm or timing. There would be a lot of falling, tripping, and accidental tumbling. A routine would become complicated. The same thing happens to our daily routine when we do not consider the value of well-timed activities, planning, and simplified steps.

I have discovered that when I divide my days and weeks into segments and then plan, the scheduling is easier. You won't find a magic solution to maintaining a clean, well-organized home. Each individual and each family is different. If you create a routine that works for your lifestyle and cleanliness requirements, you can stay on top of your home. When you do plan and have a schedule, chores don't get out of hand.

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Since habits become power, make them  
work with you and not against you.

E. STANLEY JONES

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If you keep your home reasonably de-cluttered, clean, and neat, you'll avoid the need of marathon cleaning sessions. Depending on your

lifestyle, you may find it easier to perform basic chores on a daily basis and relegate big chores to a weekend schedule. If you are one who likes to enjoy recreation on the weekends, you might want to tackle one room or one big chore every day, in addition to the daily chores, to allow time for leisure on the weekends.

I like to start out each week with things in order. Don't be surprised or disappointed when you have to continually be on top of the home. Disorganization will occur naturally. That's why a little each day—a routine—will prevent you from being overwhelmed. Also, remember Mom doesn't have to do it all. Proverbs 22:6 states: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (RSV). Remember, if you are going to raise responsible children, you have to give them responsibility.

Each family will determine what level of neatness they expect. Some things, such as a clean kitchen and bathroom, are not negotiable—they are to be clean, but shelves or door moldings that don't pass the test may be acceptable. Keeping public rooms neat may be important to you, while other areas can occasionally slide.

May I stress that the master bedroom needs special attention? This area needs to be preserved for sleeping and romance. Often couples make this room a catchall—but this room is meant to be a sanctuary. Keep it neat and pretty. Be sure that the beds are made up immediately after the last person has gotten out of bed.

Here are basic tips to start a new cleaning routine in your home.

- Refrain from dumping and piling. Your home will feel more orderly and function better if at least the living and dining room aren't cluttered.
- Never pile up mail or projects on the dining room table, entry table, or coffee table.
- Before going to bed each night, have all the clutter picked up. Teach the children to put away their toys. Practice it every day.
- You'll be amazed at how much cleaning you can do in 15 minutes. Set a timer to see what can be accomplished in this little amount of time.

- I have found that an ostrich feather duster is the best dusting tool you can own. Their feathers have little vacuum-like ends that seem to suck up dust. They also can be cleaned easily in a mild detergent and warm water. Just hang to air dry.
- You can do minor chores while talking on a telephone. Remember, women can do more than one thing at a time. You can:
  - sweep the kitchen floor
  - wash a load of laundry
  - fold a load of wash
  - iron a few items of clothing
  - spray and wipe countertops, range top
  - scrub sink
  - wipe down refrigerator door
  - unload the dishwasher

It only takes 15 minutes a day and you'll be on your way to becoming a creative home organizer.

## **SIMPLE IDEAS**

- Getting organized is not an end in itself. There is no right way to do things—it's got to be right for you.
- Order and organization is a way for us to function effectively.
- I have found that my motto "Do the Worst First" helps me get started. Once the worst is done, everything else is much easier.
- It takes 21 consecutive days of doing a new task before it becomes a habit.