

TIPS FOR A CLEAN HOUSE WITH INDOOR PETS

One of the most offensive odors one can have in the house is the smell of indoor pets. Whether it's true or not, visitors immediately think you're providing poor pet care. If the house stinks and is covered in hair, how on earth could the place be hygienic? It's true. Healthy pets are clean pets. Healthy people live in clean houses. And no one wants to offend visitors with the overwhelming sights and smells of indoor pets. Here are 10 tips that will help even the busiest pet owner keep a clean and pleasant home. Whether you have indoor dogs, house cats, or something more exotic; like birds, these tips are guaranteed to clean up your living environment.

1. Get rid of all carpet

This is simple common sense. One of the biggest sources of odor in even the cleanest house is the carpet. Sure. It feels good on the feet when it's clean, but in a home with indoor pets, it's usually stinky and gritty. All those odors get into the padding underneath, and the fibers just soak up the stink. If you've ever had a house cat who sprayed or a puppy to house train, you've battled the carpet stains and odors that come with it! Pull the stuff up. There are numerous affordable options from laminates, to tile, to stained concrete. Even linoleum is a better choice for indoor pet owners. The key here is that the floors are easily cleaned when there's an accident.

2. Don't let pet accidents sit around. Clean it up immediately.

This leads to my second recommendation. Don't let those little accidents sit around. Clean them up as soon as you see them. I have an indoor dog who is prone to peeing on the floor as a demonstration of her anger with me. She does it in full view, and I'm glad. I see it. I clean it. I prefer a bleach and detergent solution, but pretty much any anti-bacterial spray cleaner will do the trick. Keep it handy with a roll of paper towels. This is a good housecleaning tip for all little accidents, including spills and messy kids.

3. Vacuum at least twice a week

This seems burdensome, but it's not. All you're doing is keeping ahead of the unavoidable collection of hair that comes with indoor pets; especially house cats. That fine hair flies everywhere, and you'll see it collecting around chair legs and in corners. I believe vacuuming twice a week saves time because it's not such a big mess on Saturday; which is my cleaning day. In terms of pet care and healthy pets and pet owners, the more dander you can get rid of the better for all involved. If your pets do go outside and are vulnerable to fleas, not only will you be keeping the hair and dander down, but you'll be keeping the flea dust down. Why not make your pets feel better by reducing the irritants that make them scratch?

4. Keep furniture covered with an old sheet or blanket when guests are not visiting.

Does your house cat have a favorite chair? Have you forfeited your right to that chair? That's o.k. You probably only need it when guests come over, so cover it in an old sheet or blanket. In fact, I cover my couch, too. If I want to sit down, I just take the sheet off. When I get up, I cover the furniture back up. I have indoor dogs who are above laying on the floor. Therefore, I cover my bed with an old sheet, too. Those sheets are super easy to throw in the washing machine. It's a whole lot harder to wash a king sized comforter or steam clean my furniture.

5. Change bedding or cage paper every other day.

If you have birds or hamsters, try to make every effort to change cage paper every other day. Just get a inconspicuous little basket for your daily newspaper, and that makes it fast! I keep a basket between my easy chair and the bird cage. No one even notices it. It takes about two minutes for me to pull the dirty paper out and put the clean paper in, and I have two birds in two separate cages. Once a week I can give the cage a good cleaning, but frequent paper changes keep the smell at bay and the heavy cleaning minimal. This is also basic pet care. Keep your animals healthy. Don't make them walk around in their own waste.

6. Sweep up hair as soon as you see it.

The easiest way to get rid of those little hair balls is to sweep them up immediately. It's inevitable that your dog or cat will scratch furiously, and dislodge hair, right after you vacuum. It's an indoor pet fact. I keep a little whisk broom and dustpan at easy access. Just like I would wipe up a spill on my counter as soon as I see it, I whisk up hair and crumbs, too.

7. Mop weekly.

The gold standard in housecleaning tips is to mop weekly! It keeps your floors sanitary, and the odor at bay. You'll also have healthier pets as you pick up the dander and flea dust your vacuum missed. Just get in the habit, and do it!

8. Give dogs plenty of time outdoors.

Don't make your indoor dog hold it for hours and then only give it a few minutes outside. If you have a back yard, fence it and let the dogs run and play! Just keep the dog waste in the yard scooped up. Healthy pets are active pets. Healthy pets don't have as many accidents inside. If you don't have a yard, don't get a dog unless you're committed to walking it every day. This is a great opportunity for both of you to get some exercise.

9. Scoop litter boxes as soon as they're used.

Most house cat owners want that litter box out of sight, and I agree! However, don't forget about it. Not only will you have a healthy pet, but you won't have an odor problem if you'll scoop the box as soon as you see it's been used. Keep a trashcan with a lid near the box. Line it with a plastic trash bag. Super simple. See clot, scoop it and toss it. The closed lid on the can keeps the odor down. A whisk broom and dust pan by the litter box is a good idea, too. That way you can quickly sweep up that little litter trail a house cat will inevitably leave.