

A Complete Guide To Successful Property Handover



By Abigail Smith

Abstract

This comprehensive guide serves as a valuable resource for tenants navigating the intricate process of preparing a property for handover. Titled "A Guide to Successful Property Handover," it addresses common pitfalls encountered during this crucial phase and offers proactive solutions for a seamless transition. The guide explores the significance of deep cleaning, emphasizes the importance of choosing the right cleaning products, and provides practical insights into tackling stubborn stains and wear. Additionally, it delves into communication strategies and documentation tips to navigate potential disputes during the handover process. With a focus on maximizing the chances of reclaiming security deposits, this guide equips readers with the knowledge and tools necessary for a successful and stress-free property handover experience.

The Importance of Deep Cleaning



Explore the significance of deep cleaning and how it contributes to a more thorough property handover. Discover practical tips for addressing deep cleaning tasks efficiently.

Hygiene at Home

Studies suggest that coronaviruses (which includes the COVID-19 virus) may be able to survive on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. Coronaviruses on surfaces can be killed through cleaning and disinfection. While cleaning is important, the risk of transmission from a contaminated surface is much lower compared to having close contact with a COVID-19 case.

Cleaning frequently touched surfaces

Regularly clean these surfaces with a household detergent, followed by disinfectant.

Alternatively, you can use detergent/disinfectant wipes as long as you scrub the surface hard:

- doorknobs

- handles
- light switches
- phones
- tablets
- touch screens
- tables
- hard-backed chairs
- remote controls
- keyboards
- desks
- toilets
- sinks/basins
- car steering wheel
- car seats.

Cleaning less touched surfaces

For general surfaces, using a household detergent solution/wipes for cleaning is adequate:

- floors (use a damp mop rather than dry mopping hard floors)
- walls (clean when visibly dusty or soiled)
- ceilings
- window blinds (clean when visibly dusty or soiled)
- curtains (change regularly in addition to cleaning when soiled).

What is the difference between detergent and disinfectant?

Detergents help remove germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. By removing them it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

Disinfectants are chemical solutions that are designed to 'kill', but not remove, viruses and bacteria. Disinfectants do not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

What can I use if I don't have disinfectant?

For hard, non-porous surfaces, a diluted household bleach solution can be used in a ratio of four teaspoons of bleach per one litre of water.

Importantly, never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleaner. You need to check the product is not past its expiration date, which makes it ineffective. You must also ensure good ventilation of the area during and after application.

Arriving home after being outside

Remember:

- wash your hands as soon as you get home, after putting groceries or other items away and before you eat
- clean regularly used items such as your phone and keys.

Hygiene advice for people living in residential buildings

People living in residential buildings should take care when moving through common areas to reduce the risk of COVID-19:

- Clean your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand rub/sanitiser after touching any frequently touched surfaces in common areas. This includes doorknobs or door handles when you enter and exit the building or when using communal washing machines or dryers
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing and sneezing or use your elbow, not your hands
- Avoid close contact with people unwell with cold or flu-like symptoms
- Avoid touching your face and avoid shaking hands with others
- Try to maintain a distance of 1.5 metres from others as much as possible in your apartment block, such as in elevators, stairwells or hallways.

Cleaning guidance for NSW strata managers and body corporates

- Regularly clean frequently touched surfaces in common areas with a detergent followed by disinfectant, or use detergent/disinfectant wipes
- Consider providing adequate alcohol-based hand rub (sanitiser) for residents to use.

Personal hygiene



In addition to cleaning your home, good personal hygiene can help stop the spread of COVID-19:

- Clean your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand rub/sanitiser
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing and sneezing or use your elbow, not your hands
- Avoid close contact with people unwell with cold or flu-like symptoms, and stay home if you have these symptoms
- Avoid touching your face and avoid shaking hands with others
- Try to maintain a distance of 1.5 metres from others as much as possible, and avoid crowded places.

Remember, when washing your hands all you need is water and a detergent (surfactant) such as a bar of soap, body wash or shampoo. It doesn't need to be expensive, or 'antibacterial'. The key to handwashing is to wash often and wash well, for at least 20 seconds.

Hand sanitiser safety and children

Alcohol-based hand sanitiser is dangerous if ingested, particularly for children.

Safety tips for parents include:

- store hand sanitiser products safely and out of reach of children
- any use by young children should be under the supervision of an adult
- be aware of imported products which may not be clearly labelled and may contain more toxic alcohols such as methanol that make the product more dangerous
- washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds is a safe and effective option
- At temperatures above 40°C for extended periods of time, there is a higher risk of the alcohol content of hand sanitiser evaporating, so keep hand sanitiser out of the sun and don't leave it in a hot car.
- If you suspect your child has ingested hand sanitiser, regardless of the quantity, call the 24 hour Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 for first aid and monitoring advice. Have the container of the ingested product with you.

Choosing The Right Cleaning Products

Choosing the Right Cleaning Products" is a crucial aspect of the property cleaning process. This section of the guide emphasizes the significance of making informed decisions when selecting cleaning agents and tools. It recognizes that tenants often make mistakes in this area, and by providing guidance, it aims to help them avoid common pitfalls.

Here's an expanded explanation:

Why is it important?

Selecting the right cleaning products is essential for ensuring effective cleaning without causing damage to surfaces or materials within the property. Using improper products can result in suboptimal cleaning results, potential damage to surfaces, and, in some cases, may even pose health risks.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

- **Mismatched Products:** Using cleaning products that are not suitable for specific surfaces or materials.
- **Harsh Chemicals:** Opting for overly harsh or abrasive chemicals that can cause damage.
- **Environmental Impact:** Neglecting eco-friendly alternatives, contributing to environmental concerns.

Guidance Provided:

- **Understanding Surface Compatibility:** Educating tenants on matching cleaning products to the surfaces they are cleaning, preventing unintended damage.
- **Eco-Friendly Options:** Recommending environmentally friendly cleaning solutions to minimize the ecological impact.
- **Effective Alternatives:** Providing insights into effective yet gentle cleaning products for various surfaces.

By addressing the topic of choosing the right cleaning products, the guide aims to empower tenants with the knowledge needed to make informed decisions. This, in turn, contributes to a successful property handover by ensuring a thorough and safe cleaning process.

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Common Bond Cleaning Mistakes To Avoid

Do you have to do an intensive cleaning of your rental home in Sydney, as you need your bond back? This bond cleaning is important because you must carefully inspect every part of your home and remove the tiniest dirt and grime.

Once your bond cleaning is complete, your landlord will come to inspect the home and give you your bond back if he is satisfied.

Thus, you must do this intensive cleaning properly and maintain your rental home so your landlord does not hold back a part of your bond.

You can always hire detailed end of lease cleaning Sydney professionals who use superior equipment and techniques to get rid of even the toughest stains and dust particles from your home. However, if you want to do this bond cleaning on your own, then you must make sure you avoid the below mistakes that can cost you your bond amount:

1. Not Creating A End-Of-Lease Cleaning Plan

An end-of-lease cleaning is very different from a regular house cleaning as you have to make sure that you cover each corner of your home and remove even the tiniest dirt specks.

Thus, you must be prepared for such cleaning and create a detailed checklist of all tasks you must complete so that you do not skip any area or reclean an area twice. You can tick off this checklist once all tasks are done and ensure you have done a thorough job.

2. Using Store-Bought And Commercial Cleaning Solutions

When doing an end-of-lease cleaning, scrubbing and wiping off dust and grime from every crevice is important. But using store-bought cleaners to do this job will only make your indoor air polluted and cost you a fortune. It is better to use organic and natural solutions that you can find in your pantry, like white vinegar and baking soda.

But make sure you test these out on a small part of the area you are cleaning to see whether they will be effective in that region.

3. Forgetting To Do Regular Cleaning And Maintenance

Your end of tenancy can be a difficult time as you will be sorting and packing your belongings and completing other moving tasks as well. With so many tasks to handle, you might be skipping your regular cleaning, but this can affect your bond cleaning. If you maintain your home regularly, there will be less dust and dirt to remove during your bond cleaning.

But if you find this too difficult to handle, you can always hire professional end-of-lease cleaning Sydney services who can spruce up even the dirtiest of homes.

Tip

Here is a weekly house cleaning schedule to help you clean your homes.

4. Leaving Mould Spots For The Landlord To Deal With

When your landlord comes to inspect your home at the end of your tenancy, he will expect that the house is in the same condition as when you started living there. Any stains and mould spots must be removed before your landlord arrives because this is your responsibility as a tenant. Thus, you should inspect and test the mould; if it is not harmful, clean it with vinegar and a microfiber cloth.

Tip

Wear rubber gloves and a mask when removing mould, as it can cause allergies if you inhale the spores.

5. Avoiding Hard-To-Reach Areas As They Are Too Difficult

In a bond cleaning, you cannot afford to leave any place untouched and have to turn your rental home upside down to ensure it is flawless. This means you must get down and scrub even those hard-to-reach areas in your home, like underneath your furniture, behind your appliances and beneath your carpet. You must also clean cobwebs on your light fixtures and ceiling corners.

If you find this hard, hire end-of-lease cleaning experts in Sydney to do this job, as they have superior tools to reach these difficult areas.

Tip

Here are also some commonly overlooked areas in your home.

6. Keeping Your Carpets In Bad Shape

One of the main areas your landlord will inspect is your carpeting, as these lend an aesthetic appeal to the home and will attract new tenants. If your carpets are full of dirt and stains, your landlord might deduct this from your bond amount, as he will have to get the carpets cleaned professionally.

It is best to vacuum your carpets regularly and properly but do not overdo it as well, as this could damage the fibres of the carpets. You should also avoid wetting your carpet, and if there are stains, use a damp microfiber cloth to dab at the stain in circular motions without rubbing it too hard.

Tip

Here are some ways you can tackle tough stains during your bond cleaning.

7. Not Getting Professional Help For Your Cleaning

Lastly, if you are doing bond cleaning for the first time in Sydney and are trying to figure out how to handle it, it is always best to get professional help. Doing this intensive cleaning on your own just to cut costs can make you lose your bond at the end of your tenancy.

You can cut costs by doing most of the basic cleaning and scrubbing on your own and hiring professional end-of-lease cleaners in Sydney to complete specialised services like steam cleaning of carpets, pressure cleaning and upholstery cleaning.

Conclusion

Therefore, if you avoid the above mistakes when doing a bond cleaning in Sydney, you can easily keep your home in good shape and get your security deposit back. Make sure you ask for professional help when needed, and create a checklist of tasks to cover every part of your rental home.

Scary side-effect of common cleaning products found in most Aussie homes



If you mix two commonly found cleaning products it can produce a deadly concoction used in warfare. And that's just the start.

Should we be afraid of our cleaning products?

Here's a statistic that will scare you: according to the World Health Organisation, 3.2 million people each year die prematurely from illnesses attributable to household air pollution. This is caused by combustion of solid fuels and kerosene used for cooking — which I admit would not be a problem for 99 per cent of Australians but is a stark reminder for why we need to be careful of what's in the air in our house.

There's a whole library of studies about the hazards of cleaning chemicals. Did you know if you mix bleach with windex, or really any of your ammonia based cleaning products, you'll make mustard gas?

That's the stuff they used in the trenches in World War One. If it's that easy to mix a deadly concoction, then maybe it's a sign we should opt for natural ingredients.

Keith, I recommend you invest in your wife's interest in natural ingredients. A report found that using bleach even once a week boosts your risk of chronic pulmonary obstructive disease, which is a lung disease that blocks airflow.

The other common ingredients in cleaning products such as ammonia, phthalates and volatile organic compounds have all been linked to respiratory illnesses such as asthma. These cleaning products could also cause cancer.

Another common side effect of cleaning products, particularly heavily fragranced ones, is headaches and migraines.

University of Melbourne research found one-third of Australians suffer from migraine headaches to asthma attacks when exposed to the fragrances found in consumer products like air fresheners, cleaning products, laundry supplies and personal care products.

Health effects from poor indoor air quality won't show up overnight. They can materialise slowly over time. Easy ways to improve the air quality in your house is to boost ventilation with open windows, indoor plants and by regularly dusting. And of course, using natural cleaning products. Since we are on the topic of hidden dangers in your life, I'd like to remind you of microplastics. As I have stated in a previous column, microplastics are tiny plastics (so small you can't see them) which are derived from petrochemicals extracted from oil and gas products. A number of these tiny plastics are toxic, and contain carcinogenic chemicals which can cause cancer. Some are even mutagenic, which means they can damage DNA.

When you heat food in your plastic takeaway containers, you are potentially leaching microplastics into your meal. Not only is the food you are eating most likely nutritionally inferior, you could also be eating troublesome plastics.

Investigating microplastics levels in Australian homes, a study found that 42 per cent of collected dust was microplastics. An easy way to minimise plastics in your home is by having hard surfaces, like polished wood floors, instead of carpet. You should also vacuum weekly to reduce dust levels in your home.

Environmentally Friendly Options

DEEP-CLEANING MY HOUSE tends to leave me with a lot of plastic bags, paper, and plastic containers to throw away. It got me wondering how I could make my cleaning routines less wasteful. Scientists are developing new ways to recycle plastic, but it's not an Earth-friendly material, and cleaning supplies use a lot of it. Common solutions like disinfecting sprays and soaps are largely composed of water, which makes those products heavy and hard to ship efficiently. Excessive packaging is another factor in cleaning-product waste, as are harmful chemicals that can end up in the water supply (or in you).

Eco-Friendly Cleaners for the Whole House

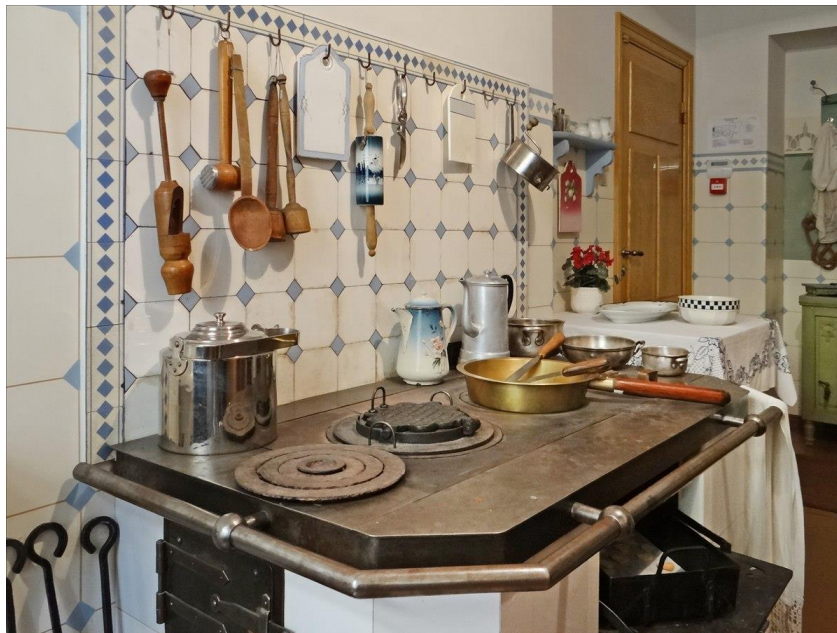
Some makers of cleaning supplies offer general-use products you'd typically buy in spray bottles. All of the brands mentioned here also take additional steps, like offering refills, using simpler ingredients, or shipping without plastic. The products below all work fine, so go with

whichever fits your cleaning style, budget, and aesthetic goals—because, yes, they're all nice to look at.

Supernatural's kit is pricey, but it goes on sale a few times a year. The glass spray bottles are hefty (in a good way), and the silicone bottoms keep them in place. The nozzles don't clog or get jammed, though the bottles can leak if you don't twist the lid closed carefully. The glass concentrate vials contain blends of essential oils designed for windows and mirrors, counters and granite, bath and tile, or wood and floors. The products smell amazing—like fresh botanicals, not artificial or chemical like most cleaning solutions. This set is the only one I've continued to purchase refills for.

Blueland's cheap refills come in the form of dissolvable tablets. You'll get a few reusable Tritan Forever Bottles by purchasing a \$39 starter kit. Starter kit refills include hand soap, bathroom cleaner, glass and mirror cleaner, and multipurpose cleaner. Blueland also offers laundry soap, dishwashing essentials, and various accessories. You can mix and match products to suit your needs. Everything I tried smelled great and worked well. The tablets can take a little while to dissolve, so mix the solutions up an hour or two before you plan to tackle your chores.

For the Kitchen



Seventh Generation Liquid Dish Soap

After my testing, I permanently converted to this dish soap. It's made of plant-based ingredients, and the biodegradable formula gets the job done. It doesn't dry out my hands as much as the stuff I used to use. It's available in multipacks online.

JuniperSeed Mercantile's Laundry Bar

This bar is technically meant for cleaning tough stains on your clothes before you toss them into the laundry. Dampen the end of the bar and the stain, scrub away, and then toss the garment into the laundry. However, the bar effectively doubles as dish soap. I also like No Tox Life's (\$12) dishwashing block.

Three Bluebirds Swedish Dishcloths

These fast-drying biodegradable cloths are made of cellulose and cotton. Unlike typical washcloths, these don't get smelly or mildewy. You can wash them up to 200 times in your washing machine or the top rack of your dishwasher. The eye-catching designs are a bonus. Mine started degrading after a couple of months of use but lasted longer than similar products I tried.

For the Laundry Room

Dropps Biodegradable Laundry Detergent Pods

These pods smell fantastic, work with high-efficiency machines, get your clothes squeaky clean, and are made of plant-derived ingredients. There are no dyes, and shipping is free and carbon-neutral. I also like the company's wool dryer balls (\$29) as an alternative to fabric softener sheets. If you don't like pods, try MyKieri's Easy-Spray Laundry Detergent (\$28).

Defunkify Stain Remover Spray

I tested this plant-based spray on blood, coffee, red sauce, and makeup. It removed them all. It doesn't contain chlorine, dyes, or other common irritants typically found in stain removers. It does sell out occasionally, but you can sign up for email alerts to know when it's back.

Branch Basics Oxygen Boost Bleach-Free Detergent Booster

This baking soda booster is free of bleach, ammonia, dyes, and fragrances. It's also septic-safe. I especially like it for linens and towels—it leaves them really fresh and banishes any lingering smells.

What Makes a Cleaning Product Sustainable?

“Eco-friendly” is an extremely vague term that can be misleading, especially when it comes to marketing. No product is perfect, but the Environmental Protection Agency has a list of some things to look out for when searching for more environmentally friendly cleaning supplies.

When it comes to product composition, the smaller the list, the better. A concentrated product produces fewer carbon emissions and creates less waste to ship than a heavier, more diluted version, and a powder or tablet is even smaller. The EPA Safer Choice program vets products and certifies them if they meet the agency's standards for safer, more environmentally friendly products. Certified products feature the Safer Choice label on their packaging.

You can also take a look at the ingredients. For example, we look for products that are biodegradable and have less fragrance and other unnecessary additives.

Navigating Property Handover Disputes

Real estate transactions often involve a significant amount of money, often representing the most expensive transaction a person enters into.

In real estate transactions, it is not uncommon for problems to arise. These problems have the potential to make the deal fall through. However, with a spirit of cooperation, the parties may be able to resolve these problems and continue with the transaction despite these issues.

Failure to Disclose

One of the top disputes between buyers and sellers is the failure to disclose defects or material fact that may have affected the buyer's decision to purchase the property or the price he or she would pay. States differ as to which types of defects sellers are required to disclose. Some states allow buyers to hold real estate agents accountable if they fail to disclose defects.

Purchase Contract Issues



Many real estate agents use standard forms for the purchase of property. These forms often include sections that agents can fill in. However, there may be special considerations in the contract that are not easy to fill in a contract of this nature. Inaccurate information may also be filled in this document.

Not Acting in Their Interests

A common problem in real estate transactions actually involves a third party: disputes involving real estate agents. Sometime a buyer or seller may believe that an agent is not acting in his or her best interest and is only interested in making the sell. Real estate agents are paid based on a commission from the sale, so they have an incentive to move for a sale for their own interests.

Deposit Disputes

Another potential issue confronted in real estate transactions is disputes over the deposit. If the real estate transaction does not go through, the parties may disagree as to who should retain the deposit. This is usually a legal issue that must be determined on state law. The purchase agreement may specify what happens in the event of this nature and should also be reviewed.

Legal Issues

Other problems that may arise may be some type of legal issue. For example, there may be a restrictive covenant that impacts the sale. An easement may be requested. The boundary line may be in dispute. Certain provisions may be requested by the buyer or seller that are not part of the standard real estate purchase contract.

Disputes between Owners

In some situations, the dispute is not actually between the buyer and seller but rather between multiple buyers. Parties may purchase real estate as tenants in common, through a trust, as joint tenants, as a partnership or as an LLC. The parties may not have a clear understanding of

their rights and duties to the property. Often, the parties may not agree about who can possess the property or their right to rents.

Hire the Right Agent

One way to prevent problems from arising in the first place is to hire the right real estate agent. A common concern is that the agent did not act in the client's best interest. Real estate agents typically owe a fiduciary duty to their clients to act in their best interest. Buyers and sellers can make a diligent search for an agent before retaining his or her services. The agent should have a clear understanding of his or her fiduciary duty. Friends or family may be able to recommend someone who served them well.

Disclose Defects

Sellers should be familiar with their duty to disclose requirements. They may even want to disclose things that they may not technically be required to simply to avoid potential problems from arising. Real estate agents are often required to disclose material facts and defects and should be encouraged to do so.

Improve Communication

Better communication between the parties can help prevent problems from arising. Communication can help the parties avoid having their expectations unmet. Even if the parties do not have direct communication with each other, they can communicate between their real estate agents. They can negotiate things such as having to move a closing date due to a hiccup in the financing or the need to relocate from another home, whether the seller will have the home professionally cleaned, what items are included with the purchase of the home and other issues related to the transaction.

Hire a Real Estate Lawyer



Many real estate transactions are not routine and require the assistance of a real estate lawyer. A real estate lawyer can prepare a purchase contract or review an existing contract to explain the buyer or seller's rights and duties.

Bottom Line

In the realm of bond cleaning, meticulous attention to detail is paramount. By steering clear of common product mistakes, especially those specific to bond cleaning, tenants can safeguard their security deposit and facilitate a smooth property handover. Choosing the right cleaning products tailored to each surface, understanding compatibility, and considering the environmental impact are key steps in achieving a thorough and effective bond cleaning experience. Remember, a well-informed approach to product selection is not only about cleanliness but also about preserving the integrity of the property and ensuring a successful transition.

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