

RANDOM HOUSE  BOOKS



Speed Cleaning

Shannon Lush & Jennifer Fleming

CONTENTS

Cover

About the Book

About the Author

Title Page

Key to Symbols

How to Speedclean

Setting Up the House

Making an Entrance

Lounge, Dining, Family Rooms and Study

The Bedroom

The Bathroom

The Kitchen

The Laundry

Outside

Spring and Autumn Cleaning

Organisational Do's and Don'ts

Quick Guide to Removing Stains

Index

Cleaning Lists

Copyright

About the Book

With today's hectic lifestyles the last thing you want to do after a busy day is clean the house. But *Speed Cleaning* is here to provide the answers for everyone who wants a clean house but doesn't have the time to spend hours with cloth and duster in hand. Shannon Lush and Jennifer Fleming show how, in just 15 minutes a day, their sure-fire systems and ingenious methods are all you need to achieve a spotless house without the hard work. Filled with brilliant and practical advice, non-toxic cleaning methods and good old-fashioned common sense, this book shows how to clean your house top to bottom, room by room as well as providing handy hints and tips for yearly Spring and Autumn cleaning and organisational dos and don'ts for everyday routines. A must-have for anyone who wants a spotless house with limited time and minimum effort.

About the Authors

Shannon Lush is a fine arts restorer. More than that, she has become known in Australia as 'Queen of Clean' due to the success of her books. Adored by her fans, besieged by their questions every time she appears on one of her regular ABC radio segments around Australia, Shannon's knowledge and authority make her the ultimate domestic guru.

Jennifer Fleming brought Shannon Lush to the Australian public. She works as a producer and radio broadcaster and currently presents her own daytime radio show.

SPEED CLEANING

A spotless
house in just
15 minutes
a day

Shannon Lush &
Jennifer Fleming



EBURY PUBLISHING

KEY TO SYMBOLS

You will find that different types of cleaning information are included in this book. To make finding the correct cleaning tips easier, we've included symbols and boxes.



Broom symbol This is your speedcleaning guide.



Glove symbol This helps with setting up strategies to make cleaning easier and speedier.



Flower symbol This is your Spring and Autumn Cleaning Guide.



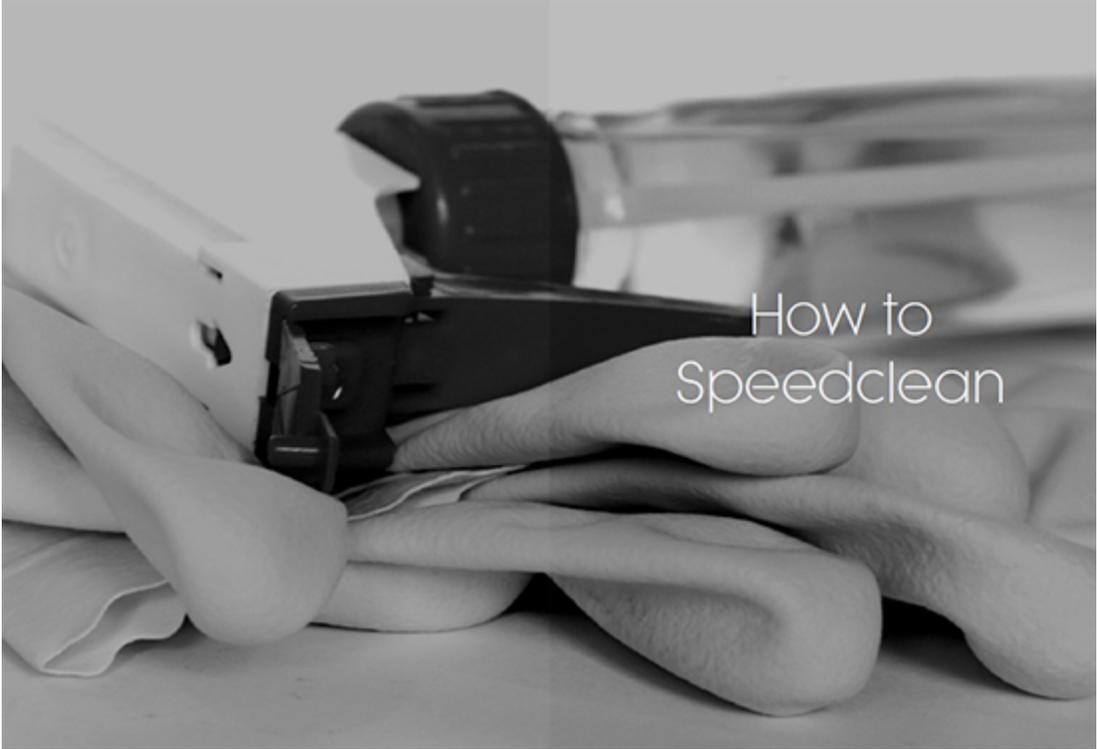
Hints box General hints are boxed like this.

'Priceless' box Hints from yesteryear are boxed like this.

If you think your cleaning is slow...

HOW TO ... FROM *LEE'S PRICELESS RECIPES, 1817*





WHY SPEED CLEANING?

These days, everyone is flat out and on the go. The last thing you want to do at the end of a hectic day is clean the house. It's why we've devised Speedcleaning. It's for people who want a clean house but are time-poor. The approach can be summed up in one word - systems. Having systems in place will mean your house will run more smoothly and efficiently. The best news is that with some organisation and 15 minutes a day, you can transform your cleaning routine!

WHO ARE WE?

For those readers who are not familiar with the book *Spotless*, Shannon Lush is a fine art restorer who knows how to repair anything, whether it's an expensive antiquity or a favourite aunt's vase. Shannon is also a keen collector of handy household hints, a lifelong passion that has been handed down through generations. Not only does she collect hints, she also tests and modifies them to make them even better. Shannon is also known as the 'Queen of Clean', appearing as a regular guest on radio and television across Australia and New Zealand. She helps listeners with all manner of domestic disasters and has never been stumped.

Jennifer Fleming is a presenter and producer on ABC Radio and has worked with Australia's leading journalists and commentators. Jen first met Shannon over the telephone - when Shannon rang James Valentine's Afternoon Show on 702 ABC Sydney as a talkback caller. Week after week, people would ring for help with new spills and stains and Shannon would have an answer for every

problem. Jen noticed there was a huge interest in non-toxic remedies and a desire to remember old-fashioned tips and advice. She approached Shannon with the idea of writing a book. Once *Spotless* was released, people started asking if there was another book. They wanted information on cleaning techniques, and that is how *Speed Cleaning* came to life. Like most listeners and readers, Jen doesn't know a lot about stains and cleaning, but she's good at asking the right questions and extracting the best information from Shannon's encyclopaedic database brain. It's a perfect collaboration.

We hope you'll keep *Speed Cleaning* next to *Spotless* on the bookshelf and use the two in tandem.

JENNIFER'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have assisted in the creation of this book. Thanks to James Valentine from 702 ABC Sydney for allowing it to begin. Thanks to Susan Morris-Yates, Megan Johnston, Nanette Backhouse, Ian Faulkner, Stuart Neal, Jane Finemore and the team at ABC Books for their contribution. Family and friends have given so much support. Particular thanks to John and Pat Fleming, Tony Speede and Jodi McKay. Thanks also to Amanda Woods who relayed the advice about spiders and lemons in the first place. Thank you to Elizabeth Troyeur - and, of course, to the Queen of Clean, Shannon Lush.

SHANNON'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I'd like to add my thanks to all those that Jennifer listed, and to add a few more. To the women of my family, Eleanor Saich (my wonderful mum), Bronwyn Macinante and Narelle Dean (my supportive sisters), Tamara Custance and Erin Lush (my beautiful daughters) and my aunts and grandmother and all the rest. And to the men of my family, John Referendum Hayes (my dad), Trent Hayes, John Hayes

Jr (my brothers) and so many more that I could fill a book just with the names of my loving, supportive and inspirational family.

My ABC family - James Valentine, Richard Fidler, Carole Whitelock, Bernadette Young, Louise Saunders, Annie Gatin, Alison Buchanan, Bonita Brown, Scott Levi, Madeleine Randall, Aaron Kearney, all the producers and technical staff, publicists, publishers, way too many to list.

A special thank you to all the listeners and readers. I've enjoyed meeting so many of you.

I can't bypass big thank yous to Jennifer Fleming - a friend and collaborator.

And last but definitely not least my wonderful husband Rick who not only puts up with a workaholic wife, but aids and abets her.





Setting Up
the House

To do list!

- take dog to the vet
- pick up dry cleaning
- go to soccer

SETTING UP THE HOUSE

Can you find a spare 15 minutes a day? That's all the time it will take to speedclean a standard room in a house. Sounds too easy, doesn't it? Well, there may be some initial changes you'll have to make before you reach top speed, but once you do, you too could become a lean, mean, speedcleaning machine!

In this book we outline three types of cleaning: daily cleaning, speedcleaning and spring/autumn cleaning. Daily cleaning includes jobs like wiping worktops, washing dishes, sorting laundry and emptying bins. Speedcleaning includes weekly and emergency cleaning. Spring/autumn cleaning is done only twice a year and is like a stocktake or audit of the household. We'll take you through the house, room by room, outlining speedcleaning techniques as well as describing how to make general cleaning speedier. We also anticipate cleaning emergencies and include lots of tips and hints for around the home.

Here are the basic rules for speedcleaning:

10 STEPS FOR EACH ROOM



Follow this order to speedclean each room.

1. Assemble the clean kit.
2. Declutter the room and empty wastepaper bin.
3. Dust ceiling and light fittings.
4. Dust walls and tops of cupboards/bookshelves/wardrobes.
5. Dust paintings, hangings and other wall features.

6. Clean light switches, door jambs and window sills.
7. Clean furniture.
8. Clean floors.
9. Do refills, arrange fresh flowers, add fragrance and what I call froufrou, or frilly things, such as doilies.
10. Empty the clutter bucket. Put away your clean kit. Adjust the master list (the list of long-term cleaning needs).

A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING, AND EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE

No matter what the item is, everything - from sticky tape to DVDs - needs to have a designated spot. Putting things in their special place will not only speed up your cleaning, but life inside the house will be easier because you won't be searching high and low for whatever you need. The best way to work out where to keep things is to start with some graph paper, a tape measure, a pencil, scissors and plain paper. Pick a room in your house and measure the furniture. Represent the room to scale on graph paper and work out the corresponding size of your furniture to scale. Create flat cutout models of your furniture using scissors and plain paper. You can arrange and rearrange the furniture in the room until you work out the best layout. Keep your paper cutouts in a zip-lock bag in case you want to rearrange the room again or if you move house. If paper cutouts aren't your thing, you could also use a pencil and draw the furniture directly onto the graph paper, but it's harder to move around if you change your mind.

When working out your floor plan, take into account the breezeways in each room. They will be different for each house and each room. To determine a breezeway, light a candle and see in which direction the flame blows. The flame will bend away from the breeze indicating how the air circulates. What you're aiming for is air to flow as easily

as possible: so don't put a heavy item of furniture near a window if it blocks the flow of air. Good airflow helps to prevent mould and creates a much healthier atmosphere - and it's cooler in summer.



While arranging a room, think about creating the smallest walking distance between two points; which means items should be stored near where they are used. For example, scissors could be kept in a kitchen drawer or in an office drawer, or you may decide to have two pairs if they are used often in both locations. You don't want to be going backwards and forwards constantly. Another example is cutlery, which should be stored near the dishwasher or dish rack so you don't have to move far to put it away. For items that don't have a regular home, set up a miscellaneous bowl or basket. Just make sure you clear it out regularly.

If there are several people in your home, consider colour coding. The way this works is that everyone in the house is allocated their own colour and that colour is then attached to their items. For shared items, there's a household colour. By using this method, the household has a system for sorting and storing things.

A small bit of advice: no matter how enthusiastic you are, don't overwhelm yourself and attempt to overhaul the whole house in one go. Take it one room at a time!

'Hints for Blokes' are included throughout the book because men and women clean differently. Men generally clean from one side of a room to another whereas women tend to be more job-specific. Men tend to be visual when cleaning, so make sure their line-of-sight is unimpaired. They may need to stand on a ladder or sit on the floor to see the dirt. Women tend to clean because they know it's there, even if they can't see it - they'll rewash clothes because they're in the dirty pile rather than because they need it. There are pluses and minuses in both ways of cleaning. Neither style is better - they're just different. Allow for these differences in approach.

DO A LITTLE BIT OFTEN



It's easy to let things pile up, but really, you're just creating more work for yourself. Keep in mind that old saying: 'a stitch in time saves nine'. It's better to have one pile than nine! And let's be honest: no matter how busy you are, you can always find some time in your day if you really want to. Schedule it in if you need to.

The speedcleaning routine is based around a nine-room house. The idea is to clean one room per weekday and four rooms on Saturday with a day off on Sunday, or whenever you'd like it to be. You may prefer to clean the whole house one day each week. It's up to you to work out the system that suits you best. Add 10-15 minutes extra time for each additional person in the house per day because more people mean more mess. The important thing is to have a system and for that system to be as efficient as possible.

I also think it's crucial that everyone in the house knows the system so it's not a 'one-person rule' situation - because that one person then tends to get a bit cranky. Assign the worst or laziest cleaner in the house to coordinate the schedule because they'll be more likely to follow their own rules. Also, you can't get cross with a list!

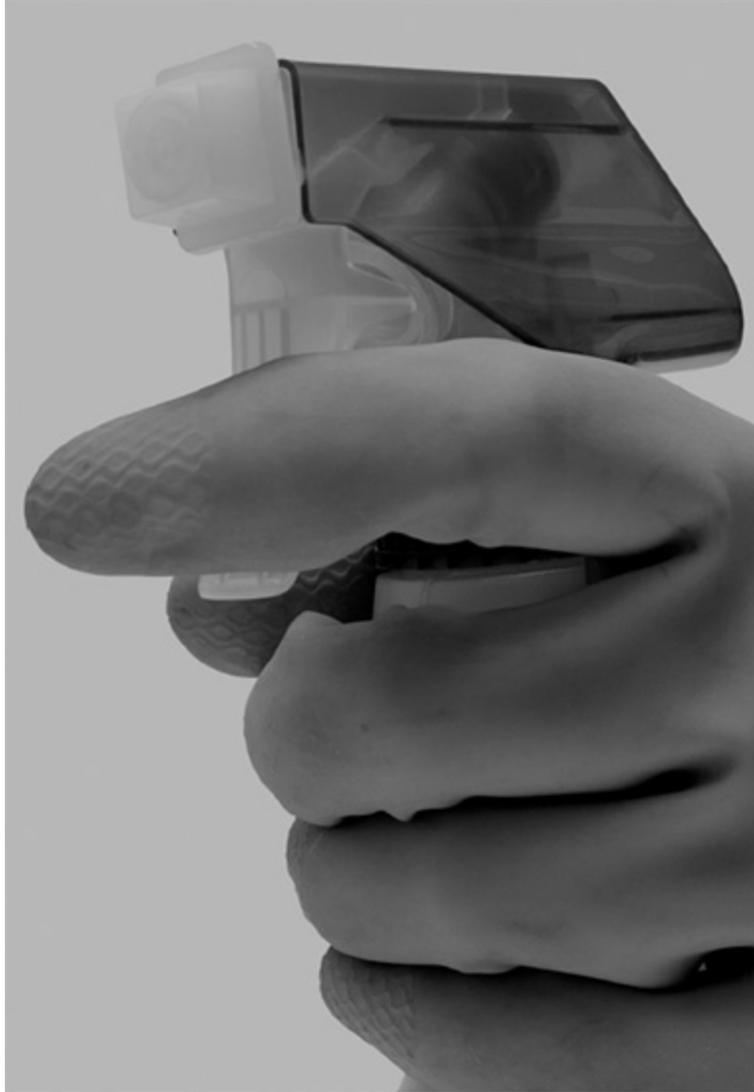
HAVE THE RIGHT CLEANING TOOLS FOR THE JOB

I can't emphasise enough just how important it is to have the right cleaning tools for the job. Storing the tools in the nearest location will keep cleaning time to a minimum. There are several ways to organise your clean kit. You could have everything stored at a centralised spot or divided up and kept in different parts of the house. You could have different kits for different rooms. You might like to carry items in buckets or plastic toolboxes or you may even use a trolley like they do in hotels. It depends on your storage situation and preferences. I like to be able to pick up my clean kit with one hand - and have found that a nappy bucket is the perfect size for me. I attach a butcher's hook (available from hardware shops) to the edge of the bucket so I can hang a rag from it. Whatever you decide to use, just make sure the kit isn't too heavy.



Another suggestion is to store a cloth for cleaning wood in a zip-lock bag in the family room, for example. That way, when you've got a spare couple of minutes or when you're talking on the phone, you could speedclean some furniture. The main thing is to have your kit ready to go for the speedclean.

If you don't have a broom cupboard, create a storage area by fixing hooks from the hardware shop on the back of doors or in cupboards.



THE CLEAN KIT

Brooms come in many varieties, including nylon, straw, copra, bristle and polycarbonate. Select the broom according to the surface and amount of soil to remove. As a general rule, the heavier the soiling, the tougher the broom required. They can be long-handled or short-handled. Nylon brooms have soft bristles and are best used inside the house. If you wrap an old T-shirt around the head of a long-handled nylon broom, it can also be used as a mop. Straw brooms are good for outside the house to sweep bulky dust and to collect cobwebs. Yard brooms have a wider head and are good for large areas such as driveways, paths, verandahs, garage floors and patios. If you can, clean the broom every time you use it. Do this by wetting a bar of soap with water then rub it over the broom bristles. Rinse the broom under warm water, shake the excess water off then stand the broom upwards to dry. Brooms are quite cheap these days so have several. You could even colour code them!



Buckets come in many shapes and colours. Square, oblong and round are the most common shapes. Round buckets

are either standard or nappy size. Choose ones with a pouring spout and lid. Use buckets to soak clothes, store washing water and transport items.



Clothes' baskets aid the transport of clothes. They can be plastic, cane or wicker. Never have one bigger than you can lift when full. Plastic ones are light, come in a variety of colours and are easily cleaned with a little washing-up liquid on a damp cloth. Cane baskets are popular but wear more quickly, take less weight and, because they're unsealed, collect mould. Wicker baskets are rarely made any more but Shannon loves them. Wash them with salt water applied with a cloth every two months. When not in use, store all baskets upside down, so they don't collect dust.



Cloths come in many varieties, but the best cloth is an old cotton T-shirt or old cotton knickers with the gusset cut out. Both are lint-free and can be washed in a washing machine on a hot setting. You can use proprietary cloths but there's no need to. See the Rag Bag ([here](#)) for other types of cloths.

Clutter bucket is any kind of handled bucket used to transport items from one room to another. Select whichever size suits you best. I find allocating a particular colour for each family member is a good organisational approach.

Dusters I think the best duster is an old cotton T-shirt because it picks up dirt really well, is easy to wash out and won't scratch surfaces. Fluffy dusters tend to spread the dirt around the house so it just settles elsewhere. The best way to dust is to wipe a damp cloth over a surface. When we say damp, this means the cloth has been wrung out so tightly that it feels cool against your skin. If it's wet, you can feel the moisture and the water will end up creating mud trails when you clean. When storing a dusting cloth, wring it out in methylated spirits to make it antiseptic and sterile. Once it's dry, put it away with your clean kit ready to use next time. Never wipe surfaces directly with methylated spirits!

Dustpan and brush collect dust, dirt, leaves and other items.

