

Spring Cleaning Your Pantry

A simple checklist to get you started.

Spring Cleaning: Pantry Checklist

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- Purge.** Be ruthless and weed out anything that doesn't belong. Past its prime? Throw it out. Never going to use it? Donate it. Wrong place? Put it where it belongs.
- Create a system.** Group items by weight and likeness with labels facing out. Place commonly used items on a shelf at waist height. Less frequently used items on lower shelves, heaviest on the bottom. Lightweight items on higher shelves.
- Easy to see.** Pour anything that is in awkward or space-hogging boxes or bags into transparent containers. Choose containers that have a good seal to lock in freshness.
- Stow spices.** Label spices and keep them in airtight tins or jars. Place tins in a box on a shelf and jars in a spice rack on a pantry wall or door.
- Use vertical space.** If you're lacking shelf space, double it by using expanding wire racks or sliding shelf organizers. You can take advantage of the closet door by storing small items in a shoe organizer or by installing a wire door rack.
- Use leftover space.** Delegate an area at the bottom of the pantry for less used pans and small appliances.
- Cleaning supplies.** Cleaning and food don't mix; find a new home for these items. If you can't; gather them in bins, buckets, or baskets. Install hooks and pegs on available space of the pantry wall or to hold brooms, mops, and aprons, etc.
- Stash a step stool.** If retrieving items from high shelves is difficult, invest in a collapsible step stool that you can fold and store.

Spring cleaning doesn't have to stay in spring!

Turn this checklist into a magnet or laminated card and use it anytime of the year.
You can find all the necessary materials at office-supply stores.