

# BLUEGREEN LIVING

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## Spring Cleaning Tips

The thought of spring cleaning may seem overwhelming. Especially when you think about all of the projects involved; cabinets, oven, cooktop, pantry, microwave, vent hood and backsplashes. Don't forget the refrigerator and freezer. And that's just the kitchen! Cleaning and organizing the garage, closets, attic and basement storage areas are on the list, too. Ceiling fans, light fixtures and chandeliers also need cleaning.

Then there is finding the stuff you will need to get it done, as well as the time and motivation. When you have the time, you don't have the motivation. When you feel motivated you don't have the time. Eventually there comes a day when you say, "We really need to get this done!" Here are some suggestions on how to get motivated, accomplish more, and maybe even have a little fun in the process!

**1. Break each large task into a list of smaller ones.** For instance, divide "clean the garage" into "organize garage shelves", "sweep garage floor", "sort tools", etc. Write them on a pad, and cross each off as you complete it. Writing

them down and crossing them off gives you visual reinforcement and a feeling of accomplishment.

**2. Pick a small reward for yourself when you complete a project.** This can be something as simple as taking a little break to call a friend, read a chapter out of a book, or even some kind of sweet treat. Don't underestimate the value of a short nap and don't overdo the chocolate.

**3. Listen to your favorite music.** Up-tempo music is great while you are doing mundane activities like sorting through a "junk drawer" or cleaning out the closet. It's okay to dance and sing while you work. In fact, you'll enjoy working more if you move around! Remember the vacuuming scene from the movie Mrs. Doubtfire? Classic!

**4. If you feel overwhelmed by a big project, don't commit yourself to finishing it.** Simply commit to work on it for 30 or even just 15 minutes. Then if you feel like it, keep going. Most often the momentum will be enough to keep you going. If not, quit and resolve to give it a go on another day.



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## Chef John's Sausage & Shrimp Jambalaya

### Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 8 ounces andouille sausage, cut into 1/4-inch slices
- 2 tablespoons ground paprika
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/2 cup diced tomatoes
- 1 large green bell pepper, diced
- 2 stalks celery, sliced 1/4 inch thick
- 4 green onions, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 cup uncooked brown rice
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 1 pound large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- salt and ground black pepper to taste

### Directions:

1. Place butter and sausage in a large stockpot over medium heat; cook and stir for 5–6 minutes until sausage begins to brown.
2. Stir in paprika, cumin and cayenne; cook for 1 minute.
3. Stir tomatoes, onions, celery, green pepper, green onions, salt, and bay leaf into sausage mixture.
4. Add brown rice and stir to combine. Stir in chicken stock and turn heat to low. Cover and cook for until rice is just tender, about 45 minutes.
5. Stir in shrimp, replace lid and cook for 5 minutes. Season with salt and black pepper.

recipe courtesy [allrecipes.com](http://allrecipes.com)

## Spring Cleaning Tips *(continued from cover)*

**5. Read your to-do list and prepare the necessary tools and supplies the night before.** Your subconscious mind will work on the project while you sleep. Often you will wake up with ideas on how to do the job more efficiently. If you get the prep work out of the way, you will have a lot more momentum when you get started on your projects. Your attitude will be much better and you will be fired up and ready to go if much of the prep work is done beforehand.

**6. Be ruthless with clutter! If you are cleaning out a closet or storage area, keep a large trash container nearby.** Undecided

as to whether you should keep something? Ask yourself, "When was the last time I used this? What's the worst thing that could happen if I get rid of this and how hard would it be to replace?" Donate useful items to a charity. You'll have less to store and you will feel really good about it!

**7. Big projects like carpet and upholstery cleaning require expert help.** Call Bluegreen to help make your home look, feel and smell fresh. An added benefit? Just knowing we are coming to clean will give you the incentive to start on other spring cleaning projects you may be putting off.

## Preventing Homework Headaches

Spring fever can affect people in many different ways, but for children of school age, it can mean more difficulty in completing homework each day. You may find yourself needing to help your child more than before with homework, but it is important for children to learn how to complete this work independently. Here are some tips to help ease the difficulty for both you and your child.



» Take care of your child's physical needs first. Offer a healthy snack and an opportunity for some physical activity before settling down to tackle homework.

» A regular schedule for homework will be beneficial, as your child will know what to expect and will not be tempted to put it off. Set a regular schedule and plan on sticking to it.

» Make sure your child has all of the materials and supplies he or she needs to complete each assignment. You may want to set up a designated area in your home in which to do homework, with plenty of school supplies, pens, pencils, paper, and other necessary items.

» Offer an incentive if your child is struggling to complete daily assignments. You may wish to have a sticker chart to track progress, with an outing or prize at the end of week given for a full week of completion.

» Finally, plan on taking breaks during homework time if your child is not able to concentrate for long periods of time. A kitchen timer will let your child know when to start homework and how long breaks will last.



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## Keeping Your Pets Safe this Easter

Easter is a fun and exciting holiday for children; but for your pets, it can be filled with danger. The treats in your children's Easter baskets and the decorations around your home can be hazardous to your pet's health.

Some plants, especially Easter lilies, are highly toxic to pets and can be fatal if eaten. All parts of the Easter lily, day lily, and tiger lily are toxic to cats. Eating even a small part of the plant can lead to kidney failure, which if left untreated, can cause death. Other spring

plants that are concerning include daffodils, hydrangeas, wisteria, and ivy. Ingestion of these plants can cause stomach pain, vomiting, dehydrations, and difficulty breathing.

Also harmful if eaten is the plastic grass used in Easter baskets. It can become twisted within a pet's intestines and can require surgery to remove. Foil candy wrappers are tempting to pets, but can cause intestinal blockages. Keep these items out of your children's Easter baskets or up out of the way of your pets to be safe.

Finally, candy can be harmful to pets, with chocolate possibly fatal to cats, dogs, and ferrets. Dark chocolate is worse for pets than milk chocolate. Xylitol, an artificial sweetener used in many candies and gum, can be toxic too. All candy in your family's Easter basket should be kept out of the reach of your animal companions.

What are some ways to treat your pets this Easter? Give them their own Easter basket filled with healthy treats, a new leash, and some fun chew toys.

## Reduce Bedtime Stress

Falling asleep can be difficult when you are stressed. Try these tips to help make your bedtime more peaceful and relaxing.

1. Do something physical for a few minutes. Dance around your living room, take a short walk on your treadmill, or run in place for a minute or so. You will release some of your pent up tension and help to begin the relaxation process for your mind.

2. Enjoy a warm drink. Herbal tea (without caffeine) or warm milk will temporarily increase your body temperature and calm your nervous system. It is also a way to slow down your mental energy.



3. Massage your aching body parts. You can very easily give yourself a foot or scalp massage. This will cause your tensed up parts to release, allowing your whole body to feel more relaxed.

4. Take a warm bath. This will calm your entire body. Use your soaking time to relax your mind as well. Once you've spent this time relaxing, you will find that it is easier to fall asleep.

## Bluegreen Client Testimonials

"Bluegreen was extremely accommodating to our shifting schedule around moving to a new home. We appreciated their professionalism and friendly expertise. We will definitely use their services again whenever needed."

**- Rebecca, Delafield**

"Was very impressed with the care that was taken to protect walls and keep the cold air out of the house."

**- Sharon Dolven, Pewaukee**

### The Good Life



## Quick Tips

### Home Tip

Want a quick and easy upgrade to your bathroom? Install a curved shower rod. Not only does this give you more room in a shower, but it also adds an elegant detail to the look of the space. To complete the upgrade, get a new shower head. They come in a variety of styles and offer special features that improve both function and look.

### Car Tip

If your wheels are looking particularly dirty, you may have a buildup of brake dust. It is best to remove this as soon as possible. If left on your vehicle, it can combine with road grime and moisture and get baked on by the heat from your wheels. A damp sponge and clean cold water is the best way to remove brake dust.



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**INSIDE THIS ISSUE OF BLUEGREEN LIVING**  
**Spring Cleaning Tips**

**APRIL SPECIAL**  
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