

Guide To Prepare Your Home for A Family Gathering

by Andrew Thompson



Abstract

Preparing your home for a family gathering involves a thoughtful blend of organization, comfort, and hospitality. Start by decluttering and creating a welcoming atmosphere, ensuring that common areas are tidy and inviting. Arrange ample seating to facilitate conversations and consider adding cozy touches like cushions and throws. Plan a menu that accommodates various tastes and dietary preferences, and set up a designated dining area for communal meals. Take advantage of outdoor spaces, if available, by creating cozy nooks or setting up games for entertainment.



1. Introduction

Ensure that essential amenities are readily available, from extra toiletries to additional bedding for overnight guests. Prioritize safety by checking for any potential hazards and addressing them proactively. Finally, infuse personal touches that reflect your family's unique traditions and create lasting memories. With attention to detail and a warm ambiance, you can set the stage for a memorable and enjoyable family gathering in the comfort of your home.

2. How to Plan a Family Reunion

Family reunions are as varied as the families that attend them. Some reunions are big, outdoorsy, expensive, frequent, spontaneous, or action-packed; while others are small,

indoors, economical, once in a lifetime, thoroughly planned, or laid back. There's no best way or one-size-fits-all approach to a family reunion that suits every family or host.

With that in mind, we tapped our travel experts for their advice on pulling off a family reunion that best suits your family's size, interests, and budget. They offer tips for a wide range of reunion ideas—from an afternoon backyard BBQ to a week-long transatlantic cruise—to make your reunion fun and stress-free for your family and, most importantly, for you.

Getting Started

As you know, planning is the key to successful event, and a family reunion is no exception. There's a lot to consider, so here's to ensuring you cover all the bases.

Setting a Date

The sooner you set a date, the more time you have to plan the event and the more time your guests have to plan to attend. Setting a date a year in advance is by no means too early. Keep in mind that, if your invitation list includes families with school-age children, you may want to plan around the school schedule.

Who to Invite



When compiling your invitation list, consider everyone, ideally. After all, sometimes it's the random second cousin you never thought would show up who ends up being the life of the party.

If you can't include every branch of the family tree, "the general rule of thumb is that you should decide the parameters first—whether you'll invite first cousins, second cousins, or beyond—then include everyone that falls under that umbrella," says Scott Haltzman.

How Long It Should Last

For an annual reunion, a weekend is generally an appropriate timeframe. For reunions that don't occur as regularly, plan a few extra days for those who can stay longer, but keep this in mind: "The longer a reunion lasts, the more space you should have to spread out," Haltzman cautions. "I don't recommend sharing a small cabin if it's a weeklong event."

How to Organize It

To decide which route to take in the early planning stages, pick a point person to communicate with from each nuclear family to avoid getting wires crossed. Before you decide on a specific plan, take an informal survey of what invitees are willing to spend, when and where they would like to meet, and how they react to your initial ideas.

After firming up your timeframe, invitation list, and family members' preferences, it's time to pin down exactly what kind of family reunion you plan to host. Our travel experts were full of ideas for a wide range of reunion possibilities, along with each's pros and cons, as well as great ideas for how to deal with downtime and meals.

A Home-Based Reunion



A home-based reunion is ideal for small groups, families with elderly relatives, and families concentrated in the same geographic area. Everyone saves money with this style except for the host, who often gets stuck footing the bulk of the bill.

For a host who's unable to bear the cost, consider collecting cash before the event, or hold a raffle or a silent auction at the reunion with each family contributing something of value, whether it's a homemade quilt or a framed painting. The host can then use the money collected to reimburse for decorations or rentals, replenish their pantry, pay the caterer, or enlist a service to help with the cleanup.

Where to Go

Ultimately, the best place to stage a home-based reunion is wherever someone is willing to host it. If that someone is you, take heart that not everything has to take place in your living room. Consider holding the event—in whole or in part—at a local park, pool, or event center. Before you commit, check for availability and find out if a reservation or permit is required as early as possible.

If planning an outdoor event—whether at a public park or in your backyard—keep a Plan B in your back pocket in case of inclement weather. This could take the form of an activity like bowling or a movie matinee, or an alternate location—such as an indoor entertainment venue like Dave and Buster's—that can accommodate a crowd with just a few days' notice.

Dealing With Downtime

Regardless if your reunion is an afternoon affair or a weekend-long event, some out-of-towners may choose to stick around longer. To accommodate these folks, or anyone who may need to escape the festivities for a bit, provide local maps marked with spots like coffee shops, walking trails, and bookstores. “It's important to remember your limits as far as togetherness goes and to know that everyone needs his privacy at some point,” says Laurie Bisig, a Kentucky-based, family-travel veteran.

Organizing Meals

If a majority of guests live within an hour's drive, consider a potluck. If you choose to cook most or all of the food, buy more ingredients than you think you'll need. It's easy to run out of food when you're not used to cooking for 40, and who is?

If ordering in, tell the caterer or restaurant staff how many people you're ordering for. They can assess how much food you'll need for your-sized party.

An All-Inclusive Reunion

If you want to host a family reunion but recoil at the prospects of planning and talking about money, an all-inclusive venue is for you. With this option, the host is relieved of tasks like arranging travel and paying expenses, because each family pays upfront for their own package, which often includes lodging, food, drinks, and child care.

The advantage of choosing this type of reunion is that it minimizes group decision-making. “At an all-inclusive resort, the group is not going to have to decide about where to eat, what to do for fun, and who’s in charge,” says Haltzman.

Where to Go

Cruise lines and beach resorts are often top-of-mind as all-inclusive options, and many provide special services for family reunions. For example, Carnival Cruise Lines offers free event-planning assistance before departure. They also accommodate private parties in lounges and dining rooms—from coffee, tea, and cookies to a two-hour cocktail party with hors d’oeuvres. If you book on Norwegian Cruise Line, they offer a free cruise for two for every 14 passengers and 7 cabins, among other group perks.

Dealing with Downtime

At an all-inclusive, entertainment is largely provided by the cruise, resort, or ranch. To keep your group's participants on the same page, pick a few events during the trip that almost everyone will want to attend. Alternatively, create sign-up sheets for different events that your folks can attend together to help retain the reunion feel.

Organizing Meals



Fortunately, you can take this hosting task off your list completely, or almost. To get the most out of the all-inclusive venue's dining experience, consider mixing up the nightly seating arrangements so everyone gets to mingle.

A Great-Outdoors Reunion

If you have a nature-loving, outdoorsy-type family, a camping adventure may be just the thing to bring everyone together. It's low-cost, and everyone can choose lodging that fits their camping comfort level and budget—from pitching a tent, to a cabin in the woods to a glamping experience with all the perks.

This economical option has its distractors, though. "National parks tend to book six months in advance, so that requires early planning," warns Mack. Another consideration is access, as many parks are several hours away from a major airport. And if bad weather strikes, you could face several long days of playing Go Fish.

3. Decorate Your Entire House



Professional home stagers know how to play up your house's strengths, hide its flaws, and make it appealing to just about everyone. We talked to several pros across the country to get their tips for freshening up the rooms in your home without breaking your budget.

DIY Home Decorating Tips

1. Set The Tone at The Front Door

If you want your house to make a great first impression in Melbourne, paint the front door a fun, glossy hue. "Red is a lucky color in many cultures," says Lara Allen-Brett, a New Jersey-

based stager. A red door meant “welcome” to weary travelers in early Australia, and on churches it represents a safe haven.

Two other hues gaining favor: orange and yellow, according to San Francisco-based stager Christopher Breining. Both colors are associated with joy and warmth. One thing that should go: an outdated screen door. Get rid of it or replace it with a storm door with full-length glass that you can switch out for a screened panel.

2. Paint Wall Colors Light and Neutral

Stick to colors like beige or gray, especially on the first floor, where flow is important. “You want to minimize jarring transitions,” says Breining. Neutral walls give you the greatest decorating flexibility, allowing you to easily switch up your accessories.

And if you have two small rooms next to each other, painting them the same neutral color helps them feel larger. Look at a paint strip and move up or down a shade or two for a subtle variation from room to room, suggests Allen-Brett.

3. Living Area: Make Sure Your Sofa Talks to Your Chairs



Think of a nice hotel lobby: The furniture is arranged in groupings that invite conversation. When you place the furniture in your living room, aim for a similar sense of balance and intimacy.

“A conversation area that has a U-shape, with a sofa and two chairs facing each other at each end of the coffee table, or an H-shape, with a sofa directly across from two chairs and a coffee table in the middle, is ideal,” says Michelle Lynne, a Dallas-based stager.

One common mistake to avoid: Pushing all the furniture against the walls. “People do that because they think it will make their room look bigger, but in reality, floating the furniture away from the walls makes the room feel larger,” she says.

4. Let The Sun Shine In Your Kitchen

“When it comes to heavy, outdated drapes, a naked bank of windows is better than an ugly one,” says Lynne. Ideally, window dressings should be functional and elegant: Think sheers paired with full-length panels.

If your room gets a lot of sun, opt for light colors that won’t fade. The most recommended lightweight fabrics for panels are cotton, linen, and silk blends because they tend to hang well.

5. Hang at Least One Mirror in Every Room

“Mirrors can make a space feel brighter because they bounce the light around the room,” says Breining. But placing one in the wrong spot can be almost as bad as not having one at all.

Put mirrors on walls perpendicular to windows, not directly across from them. Hanging a mirror directly opposite a window can actually bounce the light right back out the window.

6. Scale Artwork to Your Wall

“There are few things more ridiculous-looking than hanging dinky little art too high on the wall,” says Breining. The middle of a picture should hang at eye level. If one person is short and the other tall, average their heights.

Also take scale into account; for a large wall, go big with one oversize piece or group smaller pieces gallery-style. For the latter, don’t space the pictures too far apart; 2 to 4 inches between items usually looks best.

7. Layer Your Lighting

Every room should have three kinds of lighting: ambient, which provides overall illumination and often comes from ceiling fixtures; task, which is often found over a kitchen island or a reading nook; and accent, which is more decorative, highlighting, say, artwork.

For a living room, you should have at least 3 watts (42 lumens) per square foot. One visual trick Breining swears by: using uplights. “Placing a canister uplight or a torchiere in the corner will cast a glow on the ceiling, making a room seem bigger,” he says.

8. Anchor Rugs Under Furniture Feet

Follow these basic rules for an area rug: “In a living room, all four legs of the sofa and chairs in a furniture grouping should fit on it; the rug should define the seating area,” says Breining. “At the very least, the front two legs of the sofa and chairs should rest on it,” he adds.

Even living rooms with less than generous proportions usually require an 8-by-10-foot or a 9-by-12-foot rug to properly accommodate a seating area. Go too small with the rug size and everything looks out of scale.

9. Call in a Pro to Declutter



The longer you live in a house in Melbourne, the less you see the mess over time. Sometimes you need a fresh pair of eyes. You can hire an organizer for a few hours (expect to pay \$35 to \$150 an hour, depending on where you live) to tackle bookshelves and closets, which stagers say are often packed with twice the amount of stuff they should hold.

Breining suggests whittling down what’s on your shelves by 50 percent. Then mix horizontal stacks of books among the vertical rows and intersperse decorative objects, such as bowls or vases, among them.

10. Use Visual Tricks to Raise The Ceiling

If your ceilings are on the low side, paint them white to make the room feel less claustrophobic. Hang curtains higher than the windows, suggests Allen-Brett, to trick your eye into thinking the room is taller. Most standard curtain panels measure 84 or 96 inches, allowing you to go about 3 inches above the window casing before the length gets too short.

If you want to hang them higher, you'll have to order custom drapes. Love patterned panels? Try vertical stripes; the lines visually elongate your walls. Leaning a large mirror against a wall can also make a room seem taller.

4. Make Your Guest Room Feel Like Home



Preparing your home for house guests in Melbourne can be a very enjoyable experience. There's something satisfying about helping your visitors feel welcome and comfortable.

When you start to plan your guest room, think about what you'd expect to find in a 5-diamond hotel and try to make your room measure up to that standard. Your budget may not be enough to create a getaway oasis, but you can clear the decks, lay out all the necessities, and provide a quiet place to relax.

Read on for a comprehensive list of things to do or buy to help you set up a welcoming guest room for your visitors.

Provide a Comfortable Bed

Don't give your guests the oldest, saggiest mattress you have. If you can't afford a new or good used bed, think about getting a quality air mattress. They're really quite comfortable and can be placed on top of a box spring, over a sofa bed mattress, or on the floor.

Upgrade Your Bedding

Beyond clean bedding, think about adding luxurious bed linens and comfort items supplied by fine B&Bs: a featherbed mattress topper, a choice of pillows, a cozy down comforter, extra blankets, and freshly ironed pillowcases.

Supply Extra Linens

Always have an extra set of bed and bath linens available for your guests. Accidents do happen! Or you may have one of those wonderful guests who insists on changing the sheets when they leave. Let them do it, and thank them profusely.

Make Room for a Suitcase

Clear a space to put a luggage rack or provide a small table or bench to set down a suitcase. No one likes to have to stoop over to the floor to pull out a clean pair of socks. Even a chair is better than nothing.

Clear the Decks

Resist the temptation to put your beautiful collection of dolls on the dresser or fill the closet with out-of-season clothes. In a guest room, less is more—more space, more comfortable, and more welcoming. Get rid of anything you would not find in a hotel room. Keep only the most useful items in the room, like a clock and calendar.

Make Sure There's a Comfy Place to Sit

Some people do not feel comfortable sitting on a bed and your guests shouldn't have to. Place an upholstered armchair or side chair in the room with a table and lamp close by.

Brighten Things Up

One of the biggest hotel decor missteps is when an otherwise nice room has no light to read by. It's always helpful to have a light control near the bed so your guest won't have to stumble around in the dark just to turn a light on. If nothing else, provide a good reading light near a chair or over the bed. Another fixture or lamp near the desk would be great. A small night light is helpful, and a lighted magnifying makeup mirror is a real luxury.

Clean the Closet

If your guest room shares space with a home office, clear at least a foot or two of pole space in the closet. Or purchase an inexpensive over-the-door hook that can accommodate some hanging clothes. Don't forget a supply of six to eight hangers. A simple hook on the wall or behind a closet door can hold a robe, coat, or a purse.

Make Some Drawer Space

If you have an extra chest of drawers, that's ideal, but if not, clearing out at least one or two drawers for small items is sufficient. Both you and your guest will feel better with odds and ends out of sight.

Don't Forget Simple Basics

A lighted clock next to the bed is a great amenity, and an alarm clock or clock/radio is even better. Provide paper and pens, scissors, tape, tissue, and a hairdryer to have all the bases covered. If you don't have an extra iron and ironing board to offer, be sure to tell your guest where they can find yours.

Provide Privacy

You might know that the big maple tree just outside the window camouflages everything going on, but your guests won't. Choose window coverings that add to the character of the room and also provide privacy and light control. If you need to keep it simple, blinds work great. You can always add a beautiful valance or side panels later.

Supply a Set of Keys

Put together several sets of keys to your home (and car if your guests will be using it). Color-code the sets and keep track of who has what. Keep a simple log of who has which colored set, and check them in when they're returned.

Give Guests the Inside Scoop

If your home has a security system, provide instructions for your guests. This applies if you live in a gated community or neighborhood that has a swimming pool, walking paths, parking regulations, emergency evacuation rules, or any other HOA guidelines that your house guests in Melbourne should be aware of.

Share Local Tourist Info



If your guests will be going around town without you, they'll appreciate area maps, brochures on the hot spots, and directions to your home. Make a list of the best shopping areas, museums, parks, and your favorite restaurants. Mark special locations on the maps with highlighter pens. Place all the items in a box or basket that you keep in the guest room. That way, you won't have to re-gather everything when another guest arrives.

Provide Snacks to Enjoy

House guests get "the nibbles" in the evening, just like everyone else. Place wrapped snacks, fresh fruit or cookies, and a bottle of water in the guest room. How about a small coffee pot or water heater, instant cider, tea, and coffee, and creamer and sugar? When your guests are up late at night reading that book they can only get to while away from home, they'll be able to put together a tasty snack without sneaking down to your kitchen.

Leave Good Reading at Hand

If you've read a wonderful novel, share it with your guest. Five-minute mysteries, travel books, an assortment of magazines, classic novels, or the local paper will provide quiet-time activities for your guest.

Set Up a Center for Entertainment



A TV in the guest room is much appreciated. Don't forget to place the remote control near the bed so they don't have to get out of bed to turn it off.

Help Guests Stay Connected

If your home is wired, great! Write down your wi-fi password and leave it on the nightstand for your house guests in Melbourne. If not, provide a cable connection to hook up a computer. Many people travel with laptops and do work or check e-mail when away from home. Provide a desk and chair and a good lamp.

The list of ideas you've just read might seem long, but everything is simple and logical to provide. By thinking of what you would like to find in a fine hotel room, you'll be on your way to creating a perfect guest room.

5. Cleaning Tips for a Party-Ready House



The tips and ideas in our seven-day plan will help you deep clean your home ahead of a party with low-stress, easy-to-achieve tasks.

When you're making your party to-do list, add "Clean the house" near the top, but don't think of it as a chore. Organize the tasks into easily achievable components. With a little planning, cleaning the house for a party is so simple, you'll be tempted to use these hints for your regular cleaning routine.

Divide the work into tasks that can be completed in small chunks of time throughout the week preceding the party to reduce the stress of party preparations. Give each day a cleaning theme, and finish that day's tasks in an hour or less. You can slip in many of the tasks among other daily activities. Start here:

Day 1: Strategize

Day 2: Brighten the Windows and Entry

Day 3: Clean the Bathrooms

Day 4: Clear Guest Areas

Day 5: Attack the Kitchen

Day 6: Polish the Party Spaces

Day 7: Do Touch-Ups

Preparation is the key to no-stress party planning. Get our 7-Day "One Day at a Time" Housecleaning Plan in Melbourne, available below, to make sure you'll enjoy your party instead fret over smudges and clutter as your party guests arrive. We walk through each day on the following pages.

Day 1: Strategize

On the first day of party cleaning, the task is evaluation: See what needs to be done, and devise a strategy to accomplish the chores in an efficient way.

Check out these three easy tricks for recognizing important cleaning tasks and developing an achievable strategy for accomplishing them. By planning first, you'll save time cleaning and be able to see your progress throughout the week.

Pretend you're a guest. Amid the routine of daily life we often overlook clutter and dusty corners. Walk through your home with a visitor's eye, and use these tricks to get a new perspective on your home. First, identify imperfections.

Stand at the curb and look to your front door. Make a note of debris on the sidewalk, dust on the steps, bushes intruding onto the walkway, and anything else that impedes a guest's entry.

Stand at the front door. Jot down anything that needs to be cleaned up: cobwebs in the corners, smudged glass in the door, dirt on the floor, or other clutter.

Move to the foyer or entryway. List anything that guests might notice as an inconvenience, such as obstacles in the walkway or an overstuffed coat closet.

Continue to the living area. Write down anything that distracts: Fingerprints on glass, dead plant leaves, dust on bookshelves, clutter on tables, and mused furniture. While you're in the main party spaces, list anything you'd like to put away for safekeeping, such as fragile glassware.

Eye the kitchen. Make a list of areas that need special attention, such as the top of the refrigerator and the pantry floor. Because you're making a list of all the tasks you want to complete before the party, go ahead and add cleaning out the refrigerator and clearing countertops.

Check out the bathrooms. Note any countertop, bathtub, or shower clutter. Give your medicine cabinets and linen closets a critical review.

Scan the bedrooms and other private spaces. You might not intend for guests to wander into your bedroom or office, but sometimes they will. Record any elements you want to straighten, refresh, or put away.

Consolidate your list. After you've finished your walk-through, it's time to organize the list into achievable tasks.

Combine like tasks so you only have to pull out equipment, such as the vacuum cleaner, once or twice during your cleanup effort.

Organize some chores by room so you can complete a space, see your progress, and move on to the next item on your list.

Consider ways to maximize your efficiency. For example, plan to wash throw rugs early in the cleaning process. By the time you're done with your floors, the clean rugs will be ready, too.

Assign tasks. Gather family members to help clean for the party. When you split the task list among the family and by day, the chores will be finished more quickly than you expect.

Editor's Tip: Make cleaning for the party into a game so kids will be more willing to participate. Have a dance contest while you dust. Race to put away toys, clutter, or laundry.

Day 2: Brighten the Windows and Entry



On the second day of your party-cleaning effort, it's time to get down to the dirty work. If you follow these hints, you'll spend only an hour or so on each day's cleaning tasks.

Stick to your list. Avoid distractions, such as a messy drawer or a stack of photos you intend to add to a scrapbook. Those extra tasks drag out the time it takes to finish your list and undermine your cleaning efforts. Be sure to include cleaning time in your daily schedule.

Start by giving your whole house a brighter outlook.

Wash the windows in your party spaces. It's amazing how much prettier clean glass is. Even if your party is at night, the glass will glow and shimmer in candlelight or party lighting.

Vacuum the window screens. Get rid of dust and cobwebs that give windows a dingy feel.

Clean the glass in your front door.

Sweep your front porch, steps, and walkway. Brush away cobwebs, and clear away any obstacles. Give your entry a fresh, welcoming appearance.

Damp-mop the baseboards to add a little shine near the floor.

Toss window and shower curtains in the laundry. Take a little time to press them, too. The fresh, clean smell will begin to permeate your house in Melbourne, and the crisp, pressed look highlights the newly cleaned windows.

Day 3: Clean the Bathrooms

Impress your guests with a sparkling-clean bathroom or powder room. Take care of the messy work early, and the bath will only need a quick refresh on the day of the party.

Scrub the toilets.

Clear the counters of clutter. If you don't have enough storage space to put everything away, tuck the toiletries into a small basket. Leave the basket on the counter for everyday use until party day. On the day of the party, hide the basket in a closet, under a bed, or in some other discreet spot.

Clear the tub or shower, and scrub it until it shines. Either neatly arrange bath essentials in an organizer, or nestle them in a container to be hidden away just before party time.

Organize the contents and clean the surfaces of your medicine cabinets. People are nosy by nature. They will peek. Tuck away anything you want to keep private.

Straighten the bedrooms. Store any clutter out of sight.

Day 4: Clear Guest Areas

In the middle of the cleaning effort, it's time to make sure guests have plenty of room to mingle during the party.

Review your list of fragile or irreplaceable items. Put them in safe places on high shelves or tuck them away from errant elbows and messy spills.

Clear the clutter from your living areas. Use an empty laundry basket to gather odds and ends, stray clothing or shoes, papers, books, magazines, toys, and other items that have been left on tables or the floor. If you have time, put everything in its proper place now. If you don't, tuck the laundry basket into an out-of-the-way spot such as a laundry room, closet, garage, or basement storage area.

Straighten the entryway and coat closet. Make room for guests' outerwear. Consider moving your family's outerwear to another closet or other temporary storage until after the party. Add extra hangers for guests, if necessary. Clear away backpacks, briefcases, shoes, scarves, gloves, sports equipment, and other items that are typically left in the entryway (a laundry basket makes a convenient temporary container).

Scan your living spaces for unnecessary everyday items. Even things you use regularly might be in the way during a party. Clear your walkways and tabletops to make plenty of room for guests to rest plates or glasses.

Wash your throw rugs and set them aside until the day of the party.

Day 5: Clean the Kitchen



You'll need your kitchen in tip-top shape for party prep. Scrub now so everything is ready when it's time to prepare and serve the party food.

If you've been able to keep your kitchen relatively clean, this deep-cleaning will be a breeze. Pay attention to areas you typically save for spring cleaning, and then check the kitchen off your list.

If your daily obligations have caused some kitchen cleanup tasks to build up, now is the time to attack them with vigor. Use the party deadline to make progress.

Clean out the refrigerator. Discard any expired food and leftovers that have outlived their edibility. Make room in the refrigerator for party food. Move large containers and infrequently used items to the back. Make room in the freezer for ice for the party.

Wipe down the refrigerator, including the top, and all large and small appliances. If they're not needed, tuck small appliances away to give you more working room on your countertops.

Clean the range or cooktop, including all the surfaces and grates.

Use an appropriate household cleaner to wash off cabinet doors, frames, drawers, and handles.

Clean the floor.

Empty recycling containers into outdoor bins or take material to be recycled to the recycling facilities.

Day 6: Polish the Party Spaces

As the day of the party approaches, turn your attention to polishing the spaces where guests will spend the most time during the party.

Don't fret over the spaces. Follow your list and imagine the area filled with mingling guests. Take this opportunity to make sure the party area reflects the atmosphere you want to present to guests.

Every party space will have unique cleaning requirements. Start with these basics.

Dust all surfaces, including bookshelves, framed photos and art, knickknacks, displayed china, and other decorative pieces.

Dust the ceiling fans. Guests will notice the brighter look, and it might even make the air seem a bit fresher.

Sweep the entryway. Add decorative touches to your front door as desired.

Clean the kitchen sinks. Giving them a good scrub now will make quick work of refreshing them just before the party. Wash the dish drainer, too.

Handle any specialty cleaning you noted in your original list. If something bothered you when you did your original walk-through, take care of it before the day of the party.

Party time is drawing near. The tips on the next page will help you breeze through last-minute cleaning.

Day 7: Touch Up for the Party



A few things always have to be finished just before guests arrive. Use this smart strategy and a cleaning checklist to have your home shipshape in plenty of time for the party.

All of these tasks are intended to simply refresh the hard work you've already completed. To make the touch-ups go even faster, ask your family to help with these easy jobs.

Don't linger on these cleaning tasks. You've done the hard work ahead of time. Now the spaces just need a final polish.

Use household cleaner in Melbourne and paper towels to give bathroom surfaces a quick shine. Pay attention to water spots and residue on the faucet and liquid soap dispenser. Hide toiletries and countertop clutter in an out-of-the-way spot.

Clean bathroom mirrors. A sparkling mirror reflects the light and makes everything brighter.

Use a damp towel to clean the bathroom floor.

Apply toilet bowl cleaner, and give the toilets a quick brushing.

Hang fresh hand towels in the bathrooms. Put out fresh hand soap or fill the liquid soap dispensers.

Vacuum the carpets and use a dust mop on hard-surface floors in your living spaces.

Fluff sofa cushions and pillows. Straighten stacks of magazines or books. Fold or arrange throws. Make sure tabletops are clear of clutter and dust-free.

Damp-mop the kitchen floor.

Polish kitchen counters, faucets, and sinks with household cleaner and paper towels.

Empty the trash from the containers throughout the house. Wipe off the outsides of your trash receptacles. Insert clean liners. This simple detail makes the kitchen and all your guest spaces feel fresher.

Set up your party area. Arrange fresh flowers. Light candles. Turn on music. Set up your food and beverage stations. Finish food preparation.

Don't let cleaning eat up your party preparation time. It needn't be the thing that fills your days. Use these hints and tips for cleaning to develop a plan that leaves you relaxed and confident with a home that shines.

5.1. Secrets To Hiring Professional Cleaning Service



End of lease cleaning is one of the most important moving tasks in Melbourne. It is necessary to get your bond back in full and ensure you end a tenancy successfully.

However, end of lease cleaning differs from routine house cleaning in Melbourne and requires expertise. It is also, time consuming and tiring which is why most renters ending a tenancy prefer to hire end of lease cleaning Melbourne professionals. These experts are trained and experienced who can perform multiple tasks within a few hours which take an inexperienced person to complete in days.

Most reputed cleaning companies offer bond back guarantee which makes hiring professional cleaners a better option than doing end of lease cleaning yourself. However, to get the best services, you must book reliable professionals.

Thus, here is your complete guide outlining secrets to hiring the right end of lease cleaning service. Have a look.

Outline Your Requirement



Before you start looking for professionals who perform end of lease cleaning in Melbourne, it is important to know what you want them to do.

To get your bond back you may have to avail multiple services as you have to return the rental property in the same condition it was in at the start of your tenancy. For example, pet owners must get pest control and carpet cleaning done in addition to bond cleaning to get a full bond repayment.

Similarly, assess your situation and discuss the terms of rental agreement with your landlord to know what things you must hire the professionals for to claim the security deposit without deductions.

Look For A Local Multi-Service Cleaning Company

When you are ending a tenancy, you may need to avail multiple services to vacate the property successfully. Therefore, it is always better to look for a one stop destination to meet all your requirements. Do proper research to find end of lease cleaning companies offering varied customisable solutions.

It is best to choose local businesses as they are better at understanding individual requirements and provide personalised services. What's more, local businesses care more about their reputation and also it is easier to conduct their verification.

Inquire About Their Services

Most reputed cleaning companies provide comprehensive end of lease cleaning Melbourne solutions. Meaning, their professionals can deep clean surfaces and fixtures and perform special tasks to help you get your bond back without dispute.

While inquiring about services, ensure to ask about end of lease cleaning inclusions and exclusions. It will help you decide which additional services like carpet cleaning, wall-washing, pest control, upholstery cleaning and more.

Ask About Booking, Cancellation & Refund Policies

Before hiring a service, ask about a company's booking, cancellation and refund policies to ascertain its reliability. Reputed companies offer advance booking services to allow you to hire their experienced cleaners and ensure their availability on the dates you want.

Additionally, they have cancellation and refund policies to return the booking amount in case you change your mind about availing of their services. The cancellation period is usually between 24-48 hours, and it can be more depending on a company's policies.

Ask For Client Feedback

Reputed end of lease cleaning Melbourne professionals can arrange for client feedback by conducting customer satisfaction surveys via calls, email or direct messages. The feedback allows them to build their reliability and attract new customers.

Therefore, to determine a company's credibility, you can ask for client feedback and make an informed decision. You cannot expect a company to have 100% positive reviews, but when they outweigh the negative ones, it indicates the cleaning company provides quality services, and you can hire its cleaners to sanitise your home.

Don't Believe Rates Too Good To Be True



When a company's service rates are extremely low and too good to be true, it is a scam to lure clients. Often budding or unregistered cleaning companies do false advertisements and claim to provide end of lease cleaning or house cleaning solutions in Melbourne at dirt-cheap rates.

Such companies impose hidden charges or ask for more money on the day of cleaning when clients don't have a choice but to comply. Therefore, only consider companies offering services according to industry standards and at competitive rates.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the key to a successful family gathering lies in the careful preparation of your home to foster a sense of warmth, togetherness, and joy. By attending to both the physical and emotional needs of your guests, you create an environment where cherished moments can unfold naturally. Whether it's through delicious meals, comfortable spaces, or shared laughter, the effort put into preparing your home becomes the backdrop for creating lasting family memories. So, embrace the opportunity to celebrate the bonds that connect you, and savor the joy that comes from bringing loved ones together under your roof. With thoughtful planning, your home can be the perfect setting for a meaningful and delightful family gathering.

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