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# 7 Hacks to Allergy-Proof Your Home

Allergy attacks can hit anyone - they are your body's natural response to allergens. These same allergens can have little effect on somebody else, but provoke a full bout of itching and wheezing from you. And if you don't work to get rid of the allergens at home, the allergic bouts won't stop.

So put those anti-histamine tablets aside, and try these 7 simple hacks to allergy-proof your living space.





## 1 | Filter Out the Allergens

The numbers are staggering - more than 344 million people worldwide suffered from asthma in 2014 according to a report compiled by the Global Asthma Network. That's a worrying statistic. We recommend getting a vacuum cleaner that doesn't just suck dirt, but also takes care of you. Move over plain old suction dustbags, we're talking HEPA filters. HEPA, or High Efficiency Particulate Air filters have the added advantage of being able to remove tiny allergens like spores, pollen and bacteria.

Choose a vacuum cleaner that has a washable HEPA filter - not only does it keep your costs down because you can wash and reuse, it can filter out more allergens than ordinary dust bags, which make them highly suitable for allergy sufferers. If you suffer from allergies, you will probably also have to vacuum more than usual - so opt for a "quiet" vacuum cleaner that won't wake the family while you clean. For a low-maintenance option, choose a bagless vacuum cleaner to reduce the hassle of constantly having to replace dust bags – saving you time and it's friendlier for the environment too.

## 2 | Flush Out Potential Dust Traps

While you may love to unwind with a book every evening, consider this - bookcases are one of the biggest dust traps in most homes, which normally go unnoticed. So keep your books in cabinets with doors, and try to cut down on the number of open storage cupboards in your home - a great way to declutter and also get rid of dust-attracting furniture. Carpets attract - and trap - dust making them one of the biggest causes of allergy attacks. If you can, go for hardwood or easy-to-clean laminate. If you don't want to give up the comfort of soft thick-shag carpet under your feet, consider investing in good vacuum cleaners fitted with a turbo brush, for better dust pick-up. Alternatively, have a try at low-pile rugs which don't trap allergens as easily, and be sure to vacuum them once a week.





### 3 | Slippers in the Home

Shoes don't just pick up outdoor dust and allergens, they also track dirt into your home and make cleaning up all-round more difficult. So instead of wearing your footwear into the home, consider buying each family member their own pair of fluffy slippers - now we're talking clean and comfortable!

*Installing and keeping a shoe rack by the main door reminds your family members to switch out their footwear when entering the home - keeping your doorway neat and free of clutter.*

### 4 | Chase Mold Out of the Way

Mold flourishes in moist conditions, and we all know your kitchen and bathrooms are the most prone to being breeding grounds for mold. When cleaning, check cracks or sealant areas around sinks and tubs carefully to see if mold is forming. If you see moldy parts, nip them in the bud by giving a good hard scrub, and dry them well so mold doesn't resurface.

*Remember to clear dormant containers of water (dengue is not an allergen, but also a threat) and consider installing a dehumidifier in the most damp and wet areas of your home to keep away mold and mildew.*



### 5 | Dander and Pollen - Keep Them at Bay

Allergies to dog or pet dander and pollen are just two of the most common allergies we experience. If you suspect you may be allergic to pet dander, get tested before you decide to buy a pet. If you're already a pet owner, try to minimise having your pets sleep in your bedroom and definitely not on your bed where their dander can cause breathing difficulties. Keep your pets clean and groomed regularly. As for those of you with green thumbs, just like pets, try to keep your plants outdoors. If you can't give up your gardening hobby or enjoy having greenery around, consider artificial plants, terrariums or even hydroponic gardening instead for a sneeze-free experience.





## 6 | Pleather is Pleasant

For furniture, choose easy-to-clean and lower maintenance materials like leather or pleather, which generally don't trap dust and can be wiped clean for convenience. But if you can't resist the texture and comfort of suede, linen, shag or fabric couches, make sure you give them a good vacuum at least once a month. Certain vacuum brands carry special brush nozzles meant specifically to clean upholstery and fabric sofas. These use a gentle pressure that prevents too much wear and tear or accidental soiling, and the soft brushes help pick up dust and dirt more effectively. Try to avoid heavy drapes for your windows and go for venetian blinds or light, gauzy materials which are easy to wash.

## 7 | Sunshine and a Good Workout

After giving your sheets a good wash, try to sun them whenever possible to get any allergens out. UV rays from the sun help kill dust mites and microbes. If sunning your laundry is difficult due to the weather or space constraints in the drying area - use the steaming iron to disinfect your sheets and clothing instead. It's best to wash your clothes in hot water between 45 to 60 degrees Celsius. When they are dry, hit them with a laundry beater to get rid of any other dust balls which may have settled in your sheets. Keep dust down to a minimum by storing clothes (e.g. winter wear) which you won't use for a long time - that saves time, space and helps keep things neat and dust free!



# 4 Fabulous Ways to Use the Vacuum Cleaner

Did you know that besides the very obvious answer – cleaning your floors – vacuum cleaners have many other interesting and useful purposes around the house? From finding tiny lost objects to keeping your bed dust and fur-free, here are four fabulous things you can do with a vacuum cleaner. **Read on and be surprised!**







## 1 | Vacuum Your Light Fixtures

Before whipping out the glass cleaner and polishing cloth to clean your light fixtures, why not try vacuuming them instead? Light fixtures are often magnets for dirt and are covered in a dusty, sticky film that is hard to remove by scrubbing. If you've forgotten to clean your lights for months, you might even find insects lodged in that sticky film.

To try out this hack, simply vacuum your light fixtures on "low" power setting (if applicable) using a soft brush attachment and be amazed at how the dust comes right off. Follow up with glass cleaner or alcohol and you will have sparkling light fixtures in just a few minutes.

## 2 | Vacuum for Clean, Fur-Free Sheets

If you own a pet and it's allowed on your bed, you've probably encountered quite a few furballs in between your sheets. The mattress is also unfortunately home to another 'pet' – the dreaded dust mites which can cause breathing difficulties and trigger asthma symptoms. Here's what you can do.

Detach the portable vacuum from your handstick device, and simply swish over the top of your bed and between the sheets with the upholstery nozzle or mattress tool to remove all the fur and dust. This cuts down on fur getting trapped in your sheets and on your clothes.





## 3 | Shine Up Those Windows

When was the last time you really looked at your windows? If you're busy, it's probably been a month or so. Our windows are places we often overlook in the hustle and bustle of daily life and are not always a part of our cleaning routines.

***However, they can get very filthy and dusty (especially if there is a construction site nearby) and can pose as an allergen hazard if you have people in the house with dust allergies.***



## 4 | Find Hidden Treasures

Yes, you read that right. You'd be surprised at how many bibs and bobs and lost jewellery you can find under your beds, or hiding in various corners of your house. Then comes the dilemma – how do you hunt for them and get them out without accidentally sucking them up through the vacuum cleaner?

Through this ingenious and tested hack – just pull pantyhose over the nozzle of your vacuum cleaner, and then vacuum under your bed on the lowest power setting possible. Watch as all your lost items fly towards the nozzle – and stay on the hose. No more lost earring backs or hairpins! After you try this trick under your bed, go on to use it under cushions, chests or bookshelves. You never know what you may find.





## ***5 Dishwasher Accessories That Make Life So Much Easier***

Getting more out of your dishwasher can be as simple as acquiring a handful of dishwasher accessories. From spray heads to bottle holders, accessories can drastically improve your dishwasher's performance and free you from the mundane task of hand-washing your more delicate kitchenwares.

**The specific accessories to get will depend on your personal cleaning needs. However, here are our picks of the crop!**





## 1 | Baking Spray Head

We all know how painful scrubbing down our trays and pans can be after a round of baking. Trying to get all of the stains off them can sometimes even work up a sweat! Thankfully, baking spray heads take the tedious work out of the equation.

***Perfect for washing large items such as baking trays, grill racks and even fridge shelves, baking spray heads can be easily attached to the dishwasher to provide powerful jets of water to get rid of stubborn food particles and grease.***

## 2 | Glass Secure Tray

Take the stress out of washing up after a sip of wine or bubbly by using a GlassSecure Tray. These trays sit in the dishwasher baskets and are able to hold up to 4 wine or champagne glasses securely during the dishwashing process. If you need to clean more than four glasses in one cycle, you can always clip in traditional trays to expand your glass-washing capabilities.

***As a guide, 45cm dishwashers can hold up to 2 trays (8 glasses) while 60cm dishwashers can hold up to 4 trays (16 glasses).***







## 3 | Baby Bottle Clip

These baby bottle clips come in packs of three and make cleaning baby bottles a cinch! Use them to keep your small bottle parts like bottle nipples, lids and cups secure during the wash for a thorough clean. However, there are a few important things to be mindful of when washing baby bottles in the dishwasher. Firstly, leave them out your dishwasher unless it is made of glass or dishwasher-safe plastic. Secondly, while dishwashers clean items, they do not sterilise them.

## 4 | Bottle Holder

A good quality bottle holder is an incredibly simple yet functional device that fixes all your bottles and small plastic containers firmly in the bottom basket. This way, they'll stay secure even in the most powerful of dishwasher programmes.



## 5 | Silver Polishing Cassette

Contrary to popular belief, silverware can actually be safely washed in a dishwasher if you place it in a silver polishing cassette. These aluminum cartridges protect your silver cutlery from both corrosion and tarnishing, and can be easily inserted into the cutlery basket. While this will obviously save you a lot of time and energy, there are three things you should never do. Don't pour detergent directly onto your silverware, overload the silver polishing cassette with cutlery or load it with both silver and stainless steel wares.





# 5 Surprising Ways to Clean with a Vacuum

Vacuums do an excellent job of keeping your floors and carpets clean and dust-free, but did you know that they can also tackle other areas in your house?



## 1 | Dryer Lint Filter

Start off by using your vacuum's brush attachment to clean your dryer's lint screen. Next, finish the task by removing any remaining lint with the crevice tool.



## 2 | Refrigerator

Keep your refrigerator in top shape by clearing the buildup of dust and lint on the hard-to-reach backside condenser coils! We recommend using the Ready'y 2-in-1 Handstick Vacuum Cleaner with a flexible nozzle joint that swivels and picks up dust from every nook and cranny.

## 3 | Curtains

Using your vacuum to give your curtains a quick clean not only gets rid of dust and dirt, it also lets you get away from the whole washing regime!

## 4 | Mattress

To clean your mattress thoroughly, the GS-50 Power Animal Bagless Vacuum Cleaner comes with an extra wide ProAnimal Mattress Tool.

## 5 | Computer Keyboard

To keep your keyboard spotlessly clean, attach your vacuum's furniture tool and vacuum the keyboard itself to lift any crumbs.



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