



CLEAR THE CLUTTER, CLEAR YOUR THOUGHTS: Spring Cleaning for Mental Clarity

As the days get longer and the air begins to warm, many of us feel the urge to refresh and reset. Spring is a great time to embrace this renewal. Whether it's tidying up your home, decluttering your mind, or simply creating a fresh start for the season, everyone has their own reason for cleaning. A clean and organized environment can reduce stress, enhance focus and even elevate your mood, making it a valuable tool for achieving mental clarity. With National Cleaning Week starting on the fourth Sunday of March, it's the perfect reminder to clear out what no longer serves you — both physically and mentally. Here are some tips to help you get started on your spring cleaning journey.

What Matters Most? Reflect Before You Refresh

Before diving into spring cleaning, take a moment to reflect on what truly matters to you. What areas of your life feel cluttered — physically, mentally or emotionally? Are there commitments or habits that no longer serve you? It's important that you take the time to answer these questions to reassess your priorities and eliminate the mental clutter that comes with decision-making.

Make a Plan

Creating a to-do list can help turn overwhelming tasks into manageable steps. Start by listing both short-term tasks, like organizing a single drawer, and long-term goals, such as adopting better cleaning habits. Breaking things down and putting your frequent thoughts on paper makes progress feel achievable.

Overcome Procrastination and Address Your Delayed Projects

We all have those projects we've been meaning to get to — whether it's cleaning

the garage, deep-cleaning the fridge, or finally donating that pile of clothes. Use the momentum of spring cleaning to check these tasks off your list. Look at your calendar and write down the tasks you can complete in a day or less. Then, find your next free day or time when you can finish these projects.

Refresh Your Physical Space

Things that take up physical space also take up mental space. We often find ourselves in a constant state of tidying and reorganizing when we accumulate clutter, rather than having enough time to relax. So, instead of trying to tackle your entire home at once, clean space by space to stay motivated. You can even try to get the rest of your household involved to help spread out the workload and talk through how you can most functionally organize your environment. Don't forget to incorporate seasonal chores, like swapping out winter clothes or cleaning outdoor spaces, so they're not lost on an endless to-do list.

Declutter Your Mind

Spring cleaning is an opportunity to refresh your mental space, making it a great time to let go of or reframe any negative thoughts. Take a moment to step away from distractions, journal your thoughts, engage in deep breathing or practice positive self-talk. Just as a clutter-free home feels refreshing, decluttering your mind can bring a renewed sense of focus and peace.

As you spend time cleaning this season, use these tips to take note of how each space makes you feel. Does it bring comfort and inspiration, or does it feel chaotic? Let go of items that no longer serve a purpose in your life and set an intention to maintain a more peaceful and organized environment moving forward. Happy spring cleaning!

"Spring Cleaning for Your Mental Health" Jefferson Center for Mental Health, jcmh.org, Dec. 30, 2022.

"National Cleaning Week", The American Cleaning Institute, cleaninginstitute.org, 2024.

ONE-PAN Chipotle-Lime SHRIMP DINNER

Prep time: 10 minutes • Cook Time: 40 minutes • Total: 50 minutes

Ingredients

- 1½ pounds baby potatoes, any variety, quartered
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 3 limes, halved
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon ground chipotle pepper
- ½ pound fresh asparagus, ends trimmed
- 3 tomatoes, diced
- 1 pound (15-20 pieces) cooked shrimp, tail off
- 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, chopped
- Lemon, sliced, for garnish

Directions

- Preheat your oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Place the quartered baby potatoes on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Drizzle the potatoes with olive oil and dust them with a sprinkle of salt. Bake the potatoes for 30 minutes.
- Squeeze fresh juice from your limes and set aside in a bowl. Set aside the limes, too. Combine the lime juice, melted butter, ground chipotle pepper and dash of salt.
- Pull the potatoes from the oven and stir. Add the trimmed asparagus, shrimp, tomatoes, and the reserved limes to the baking sheet. Pour the lime-juice mixture over the veggies and shrimp.
- Bake the mixture for 10 minutes, or until veggies are tender.
- Garnish with finely chopped cilantro and enjoy!

Tip: Add more zest by re-squeezing the limes once you're done roasting the dish. There's still juice left in them!



Serves: 4, Calories Per Serving: 394, Total Fat: 17 g, Saturated Fat: 8 g, Sodium: 535 mg, Total Carbohydrate: 41 g, Dietary Fiber: 6 g, Sugar: 4 g, Protein: 25 g

Recipe adapted from [tasteofhome.com](https://www.tasteofhome.com)



SEE A BRIGHTER TOMORROW With Workplace Eye Wellness Awareness Month

Workplace vision health deserves our eyes (and attention). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), over 2,000 eye injuries that require medical treatment occur on the job daily in the U.S. However, the correct eye protection and other preventive measures would likely lessen the severity or even prevent up to 90% of these injuries, according to the predictions of ophthalmologists.

DID YOU KNOW? Nearly 40% of work-related eye injuries take place in office settings, healthcare environments or laboratory facilities. Taking the proper steps to protect your eyes while working is essential to ensuring your safety, no matter your profession.

Long-term effects of visual impairment or poor eye health caused by injury can disrupt everything about your daily functioning, from the development and utilization of fine motor skills to language and your overall quality of life. Left wholly unaddressed, these issues can lead to lifelong impairment or blindness. Fortunately, early identification and treatment of eye disease can prevent loss of sight and its long-term effects.

By taking preventive action against workplace eye injury and other vision-related issues caused by possibly unexpected job-site hazards, you can protect yourself against long-term harm and build toward a future that's really something to look at.

TIPS TO KEEP YOUR VISION 20/20 IN THE WORKPLACE

1 Follow all recommended safety procedures. The single-most important step you can take to protect your vision at a physically hazardous worksite is to always remember the appropriate protective eyewear. Check out OSHA regulations for eye and face protection for more specific guidelines as you find the perfect equipment for you. In addition, use similar preventive measures like machine guarding, work screens or other engineering controls to protect your eyes from hazards such as rogue shards of glass or metal,

malfunctioning tools, small particles like wood splinters or metal shavings, splattered chemicals, etc.

2 Take steps to avoid digital eye strain. If long days at a desk look more like your office-day routine, then taking breaks from staring at a screen should be a basic part of your preventive care toolkit. You can employ the 20-20-20 rule and make these moments of shifting your gaze away from the screen to look at something 20 feet away, for 20 seconds long, at least once every 20 minutes. Similarly, be mindful of your space, adjusting as you go to create a more ergonomic environment. It's recommended that you should sit roughly a foot and a half to two feet away from your computer screen, or about an arm's length. Shift your screen brightness so that it feels comfortable. Position the screen so your eyes naturally look slightly downward, not straight ahead or upward. If you struggle with dry eyes in the workplace or otherwise, talk to your ophthalmologist/optometrist about over-the-counter or prescription eye drop options.

3 Get regular eye exams. While ongoing preventive care is always essential, regular eye exams are especially vital if you spend long hours in front of a computer screen or in other work environments that could be strenuous to your eyes or vision. Regular vision exams can identify and address any issues early before they lead to more severe and debilitating complications such as vision loss or even blindness. Prioritize your vision health by scheduling regular eye exams and taking the necessary measures to protect your eyes from occupational hazards in the workplace.

"March is Workplace Eye Wellness Awareness Month!" UNC School of Medicine, med.unc.edu, Feb. 27, 2023.

"Fast Facts: Vision Loss," U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, cdc.gov, May 15, 2024.

"Safety Tips for Workplace Eye Wellness Month," Cumberland Eye Care, cumberlandeye.com, Feb. 28, 2024.

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