emergency cleaning checklist

QUICK CLEANING FIXES

- Focus on whatever room you think guests will see the most. Don’t worry about the rest.
- In the bathroom, spray a little glass cleaner in the toilet bowl, swish the brush around the edges and bowl, then flush.
- Clean your bathroom fixtures and mirror to fool your guests into thinking the whole house is clean.
- Make a grand sweep through your kitchen and carpeted areas, sprinkling baking soda in the kitchen sink and on the carpets. Let the soda sit on the carpet for 10 minutes while you wipe out the sink and polish the kitchen faucet.
- Vacuum all the carpets you sprinkled with baking soda.
- Grab a large trash bag and make the rounds of all the rooms you’ll be using. Empty trash cans into the bag and to the garage.
- Dust hard surfaces, starting with the high areas and working your way down. Make sure you get large surfaces such as side tables, chairs, and the television screen.

QUICK ORGANIZING TIPS

- Declutter spaces such as the entryway and areas where your guests will linger.
- Fan magazines you want to keep on display. Put books, boxes, and papers into neat stacks.
- Move from room to room to get messy items out of sight. Put dirty dishes in the dishwasher or oven. Take toys, bills, shoes, or anything else that creates visual disorder and put it in a closet or in the garage. Pull the shower curtain closed and put the tub and accessories out of sight.
- Light candles that have a mild scent. Or put cinnamon sticks and cloves in a saucepan and fill with water. Bring the water to a boil, then simmer it for the rest of your evening.
- If you completely run out of time, just keep the lights low and your guests will be none the wiser.