

# Maid for Each Other

Spring has sprung and so have all the dust bunnies in your home. Now it's time to bring in the professionals for a clean sweep. Whether you need a professional to come in and do a one-time, big clean or you are looking for a more regular solution to household dust and dirt, it's important to find a reputable service provider and to communicate your needs and expectations up front.

Asking friends or neighbors for cleaning-service recommendations is the best way to start the process. Consider whether you want to use a cleaning service or an individual housecleaner. Call several prospective cleaners and ask them about experience, rates and availability, and if they're bonded and insured. Find out if the people who will be coming through are employees or private contractors and if they bring their own cleaning supplies. For regular services, find out if it will be the same crew every time.



Once you've selected someone, it's a good idea to meet in your home and walk the cleaners through the house, pointing out places you want cleaned and asking specific questions, such as, "How would you remove these stains from my carpet?" or "What do you use to clean hardwood floors?"

Be sure to determine the day and time the cleaners will come and how long they expect the cleaning to take. Ask how service complaints are handled. And make sure to get everything in writing.

## \* DID YOU KNOW

According to *Remodeling* magazine's 20th annual Cost vs. Value Report, the top five midrange home improvements that bring the greatest returns are: a wood deck addition (85.4 percent); siding replacement (83.2 percent); minor kitchen remodel (83 percent); wood window replacement (81.2 percent); and vinyl window replacement (79.3 percent). For more information, go to [www.costvsvalue.com](http://www.costvsvalue.com).

## Say Yes to

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**Do you know someone who is thinking about buying or selling a home? Please mention my name.**

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