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Lighting Cleaning and Maintenance Essentials

You'll be happy to know that lighting maintenance doesn't take a lot of time, and every minute you spend on it will pay you back exponentially – in lights that are bright as can be and fixtures that look like new. Regular lighting maintenance maximizes light output and keeps your bulbs burning energy-efficiently and your fixtures looking fabulous.

Love Your Lists

Most of us have a love-hate relationship with our lists. They can be buggers with stubborn items that never seem to get checked off, but your lighting maintenance list can be easy breezy, done before you know it. All you have to be is organized. Make a separate list for each starting with your fixtures (one for interior, one for exterior) and the other list for supplies. See? It seems more doable already. No worries – you've got this.

• Fixtures List

Start small and go big. Make your fixture lists one area at a time if you need to. What's the rush? As long as you get it done right and get it done safely. Here's a list started for you:

- LED Tape lighting
- Wall sconces
- Indoor step lights
- Cabinet lighting
- Ceiling lighting
- Pendants
- Chandeliers
- Ceiling fans
- Outdoor lighting



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- **Supply List**

Use the list here to start, but know that everybody's home is different with indoor / outdoor fixtures that need attention in a variety of ways.

- Ladder or step ladder
- Replacement bulbs
- Lint-free cloths
- Screwdriver
- Warm water
- Mild detergent



Be Smart About Safety

A few key points here: electricity and access.

- **Turn off the power source.**

You're dealing with electricity. So before you clean any fixture, inside your home or outside, make sure the power is off. That means beyond the switch – turn off power at its source before you do any lighting cleaning or maintenance – even if you're just changing a bulb.

- **Access suspended lights safely.**

That chandelier in your foyer? Don't try reaching it from the landing on your staircase. It might not work out so well. The same goes for flush and semi flush ceiling fixtures. If you are not 100% within comfortable reach of a lighting fixture, figure out how to get to it in a safe and secure way. Need a step ladder? Use one. If you need a full-size ladder, enlist a friend to hold the ladder steady.

Know the Fixture Cleaning Fundamentals

Lighting is durable, yet fragile. Its designs span so many styles, and so do the materials lighting is made of too. From crystal to polished metal, every surface requires a special touch.

- **Polished Metal, Painted Fixtures and Glass**

- Remove any glass shades and hand wash them.
- Dry polish and dust all metal, painted and wood parts.
- Dry fixtures and glass thoroughly with a lint-free cloth; this is particularly important on textured glass finishes as they tend to catch lint easily. You can also let the glass air dry.

- **Things To Avoid**

- Glass is not dishwasher safe and we recommend only hand washing.
- Avoid abrasive cloths or cleaners and products with ammonia or alcohol - this includes metal polish.
- Stay away from general purpose household window or glass cleaners – these types of cleaners could damage the coating on the fixture.

- **Other Fixture Maintenance**

- LED Tape Lighting Care: Use a dry cloth to clean unless covered by a lens, whereby a slightly damp cloth can be used.
- Downlights, Recessed, and Ceiling Fixtures Care: a slightly damp cloth can be used on the acrylic diffuser, followed by a dry cloth.
- Ceiling Fans Care: Finishes and glass can be cleaned in the same manner as decorative fixtures. However, you will want to take extra precautions to ensure no moisture or cleaning products enter the vent openings of the motor housing; we suggest using a dry cloth around this area.

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- Landscape Lighting Fixtures: Clean the fixture to remove all debris and use gentle soap and water if you need to.

Bulb Maintenance

Did you know that a dirty bulb can suck up more energy than it needs to? Turn off the electricity, remove the bulb and clean it with a non-abrasive, dry cloth to remove the dust.

- **Wattage**
 - Check the fixture label for recommended wattage and be sure not to exceed the maximum wattage per bulb as indicated.
- **LED Bulbs**
 - Many fixtures can accommodate an LED bulb. But did you know there are a variety of LED bulbs to fit different style fixtures? You can find ones for table lamps, enclosed fixtures, open glass fixtures, damp-rated and exterior. So, make sure to double-check that you have the right LED bulb for your fixture before installing.

The right light bulb can make all the difference. Read more about selecting the right bulb and [What To Know About Bulbs](#).

Make a Schedule

Make this a routine and create a schedule to stay on top of your cleaning and maintenance.

- **Once a week.**

Some lighting fixtures need attention once a week. Dust and cobwebs gather on ceiling fan bulbs and blades, downlights, flush and semi-flush lighting. These fixtures are simple to build into a weekly cleaning routine – all you need is a long-handle duster and a step ladder.
- **Twice a year.**

For most other fixtures indoors and outdoors, twice a year is your maintenance mantra. Chandeliers and ceiling fixtures can be a messy proposition, so be sure you have a plan before you begin. Think spring cleaning and fall cleaning, and remember that caring for your lighting keeps it looking its best.

Lighting gives us so much. It works hard day in and day out, sitting there, hanging there, standing there, just being beautiful. Once you add lighting into your cleaning schedule, your home will really shine.

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