

HOW TO CLEAN A TEENAGERS ROOM W/O CALLING A HAZMAT CREW



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We all know that the easiest way to avoid cleaning your teenagers room is to simply keep the door shut, put a “caution do not enter” sign on their door, and walk away. I know that getting your teenager to do it themselves is a never ending battle of rants: “I LIKE MY ROOM LIKE THIS!” and our passed down from generations reply: “IF YOU DON'T DO IT, I'LL DO IT FOR YOU!” Well from my own personal experience my Dad DID clean my room for me, but in a not so presently accepted way...let's just say the front of my house looked like someone got evicted by the local Sheriffs, and that someone was me! But my room was clean! In this day and age our only possible saving grace is to wait until that inevitable day when they move out! College, a great job offer, rooming with their friends, whatever the occasion for them to fly out of the nest and test their independence has arrived, and now you remove the caution sign from their door and prepare to enter a room that would make Oscar Madison look like Mr. Clean.

How to start the “Decon”:

First off be prepared to wear thick rubber gloves, old shoes that you don't care if they get ruined, old work clothes, plastic eye protection and an inexpensive dust mask. There is most probably going to be layers of thick dust, cobwebs and science experiments growing amuck, so it does pay to be ready for anything. Be sure to bring PLENTY of 30 gallon trash bags, large plastic storage bins, and have your all natural cleaning solutions pre mixed and ready for battle.

- 1) OPEN the windows and air out the room. It's best if weather permits to leave the windows open during the cleaning process if you can, but you can leave them open for at least 15 minutes if it's cold outside.
- 2) Take everything that's not nailed down from the room and put it in one location, if weather permits outside on a back porch or your garage. Remove everything from drawers, the closet, under the bed, the desk, the floor and walls. The only thing that should remain in the room is the actual furniture, but if the room is becoming your new office or a “man cave” then remove that too.
- 3) Set up your storage containers by labeling as follows: "keep," "donate" and "mystery." Trash anything that's broken, give away anything in fairly good condition that they don't use or aren't likely to use, keep things they may want to keep, and put anything that you're unsure about in the "mystery" box. This should make the process go faster, and decisions should be the responsibility of your teenager when they come back home for their first visit. After that the “mystery” box becomes a “donate” box.
- 4) Clean the room while mostly everything is out of the way. Look under the bed, in the closet and dresser drawers for dirty dishes, empty food wrappers and rotting and dried food that may be causing unpleasant odors so you can throw them away. Dust, wash down the walls and the furniture, clean the fixtures, windows, baseboards, and always vacuum last. If the carpets are

stained beyond recognition you might want to save that for the professionals and have it steam cleaned, but do that only after you have patched and repainted the walls.

What to do with the “new” space

The realization is that you most probably will not do anything to their room until you know for sure that your young adult will not be coming back home permanently. When you know this for certain, then you need to make the decision as to what you can do with this new space. A guest room? Media room? Home office? Ultimately the decision will be yours to make, so enjoy it!

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