



Est.  
1841

YORK  
ST JOHN  
UNIVERSITY

# Cleaning Tips



## CLEANING IN YOUR ACCOMMODATION

Are you fully housetrained? If not, it's time to start learning some new skills. Whilst staying in our student accommodation it is your responsibility to make sure that your communal spaces, such as the kitchen and bathroom, and your bedroom, are kept to a clean standard to avoid safety hazards and unpleasant hygiene consequences such as infestation and stains.

Our Campus Services team are not responsible for cleaning your accommodation for you. Throughout the academic year, accommodation inspections will take place which will be used to keep our students accountable in regards to cleanliness and hygiene. Inspection timings will be communicated, however exact dates will not be given to make sure that we are viewing an accurate portrayal of facilities.

In your accommodation you will find a vacuum cleaner, mop and bucket, dustpan and brush and an ironing board. If you are missing any of these items when you arrive, please email [accommodation@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@yorks.ac.uk).

The easiest way to make sure your shared flat or University accommodation stays clean is discussion with your housemates centered around shared responsibility and accountability within your new household.

A good way to do this is through using a cleaning rota. This is so cleaning activities are able to be shared, such as taking the bins outside for collection, and make sure that everybody has a role to play in the collective cleanliness of your accommodation.

We have provided a cleaning rota in every flat / house within our student accommodation to be used for this purpose. In the first couple of weeks, meet together as a house to discuss what tasks everybody is going to do and set up the rota.

## HERE ARE OUR TOP CLEANING TIPS:

- 1 Everyone is responsible for their own room but you are all responsible for the communal areas.
- 2 Make a list of tasks and break the chores into smaller parts; this will make it easier for everybody.
- 3 Rotate responsibilities on a weekly basis, no one wants to be solely responsible for the smelliest jobs like taking the bins out.
- 4 Don't vacuum up wet liquids.
- 5 Rinse out mop and bucket after every use.
- 6 Remember to use cleaning products safely and always read the label before use.
- 7 Regularly clean the kitchen floor, fridge and light switches. These are areas that get used often so the dirt will quickly build up.
- 8 Don't leave your pots in the sink. When you have used something, wash and dry it straight away otherwise you could end up with the mountain of dirty mugs.





## PRO-ACTIVE CLEANING

A useful way to avoid long-term cleanliness and hygiene issues within your accommodation is to stay on top of small jobs to avoid them becoming major problems. These cleaning activities can be worked into your everyday routine, and make sure that you are able to make use of the facilities within your accommodation without issue.

### KEEPING ON TOP OF CLEANING IN YOUR ACCOMMODATION:

- Make sure that all surfaces, including cupboards, countertops, storage units and appliances are wiped with antibacterial cleaning spray and a absorbent cloth, or with disposable cleaning wipes after use or dirty. Make sure that appliances are cleaned post-use, and are not turned on at the wall to avoid accidents. If the appliance is still hot, wait for it to cool before touching.
- Keep refrigerated food and condiments in suitable storage which close properly to avoid spillage and cross-contamination.
- Avoid leaving out-of-date or mouldy food items in the fridge.
- When washing up in the kitchen sink, make sure that any food or waste debris left in the sink is removed to avoid blockages. After cooking, make sure that kitchen utensils used are washed up and put away in appropriate storage to keep the sink and draining board clear and ready for use by others.
- If you notice that the bin is full, don't just put more waste inside it as it will overflow and cause more cleaning to be done in the long-run. Take the bin out to the appropriate waste disposal, and place a new bin-liner inside for future use.
- After using washing facilities, make sure that the plug based in the bottom of the shower is free of hair or other substances that could block the drain.
- Hoover and mop the floor to avoid a build-up of debris.

## OUR SIMPLE GUIDE TO CLEANING SUPPLIES

Moving into your student accommodation and being faced with cleaning responsibilities can sometimes be intimidating, especially if you have never had to do it before!

Our team have curated a list of our top cleaning products below to be used indicatively when putting together your cleaning supply shopping list. However, never underestimate the good old-fashioned washing up liquid, which can be used for a variety of cleaning activities, such as diluted for wiping surfaces, and stain removal on clothes!

Surfaces	Antibacterial spray or wipe with absorbent micro-fibre cloth.
Fridge/Freezer	Antibacterial cleaner and absorbent micro-fibre cloth.
Oven and grill	Oven cleaner and scouring pad / micro-fibre cloth.
Windows and mirrors	Spray glass cleaner with an absorbent micro-fibre cloth or paper towel.
Sink and shower	All purpose bathroom cleaner and absorbent micro-fibre cloth.
Toilet	All purpose bathroom cleaner (liquid or spray) and toilet brush.



**Kitchen surfaces:** Keep your food and crockery away and not out on the work surfaces to make cleaning easier and to keep your space tidier.

**The fridge:** Agree with your housemates that whoever is responsible for cleaning out the fridge has an unreserved right to throw away any mouldy or rotten food.

**The oven and microwave:** Mop up any spills as soon as they happen using a cloth and antibacterial spray. We advise to clean them both fully every week.

**Rubbish:** Take your rubbish out every day and remember to recycle it into the correct bins. Make sure you are using the bin bags/food bags provided in the laundry rooms.

**Please do not use black bin bags.**

## OVEN AND HOB CLEANING

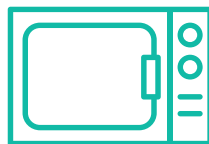
Ovens can smoke heavily if they are not cleaned regularly. Wipe up spillages straight away and don't forget the inside of the oven and the grill pan. All you need is a spray oven cleaner and a sponge. Grill pan and oven shelves can be taken out and given a sink wash with washing up liquid.

## MICROWAVE

### Safety reminders

- **Do not use metal cookware, aluminium foil and foil containers**
- **Food with skins such as potatoes, chicken and fish must be pierced in several places before cooking and reheating.**

Clean the interior after each use, this will stop food getting baked on making it more difficult to clean. If this happens, put a cup of water inside, turn the microwave on for 5 minutes and the steam will loosen dirt. You should then be able to wipe it away easily with a cloth.



## FRIDGE

Cleaning the fridge is easy. Empty it out, remove the shelves, and give them a wash with warm water and washing up liquid.

Wipe up spillages promptly and if your fridge has a nasty smell, a bowl of bicarbonate of soda left inside will soak up the odours.

**Remember to throw away out of date food on a regular basis and if you are going to be away from the accommodation for a while then please store the food in your freezer (if possible) or use it up before you go.**

## FREEZER

- A medium temperature is generally the most suitable option
- Clean interior and exterior with a soft cloth and washing up liquid
- Do not use abrasive substances or scourers as this will damage the finish
- Please remember that defrosting the fridge and freezer is your responsibility to if ice starts to build up, make sure you are following the steps below

### DEFROSTING THE FREEZER

1. The freezer should be defrosted when the frost layer reaches 3-5mm
2. Switch off appliance and remove plug from wall socket
3. Remove the food, wrap it in newspaper or a cool bag and keep in a cool place
4. Defrosting can be accelerated by bowls of hot water inside the freezer
5. Carefully scrape off ice using a plastic scraper when it starts to melt. Never use metal tools as they can cause damage
6. When all ice has melted, dry the interior with a tea towel and turn the freezer back on



## BATHROOM TOP TIPS

- Keep clutter to a minimum
- In shared bathrooms, ask everyone to keep their toiletries in their rooms
- Use a shower blade after every use, this will help to keep limescale at bay
- Clean the shower plug to avoid blockages.



### THE SINK

Don't neglect your sink. Wipe it out at least twice a week and you can use the same product as your shower.

### THE SHOWER

Please clean your shower fully at least once a week using a suitable shower cleaner. In shared bathrooms, please do this after each use to prevent soap scum build up and mould.

Do not turn off your extractor fan as this helps massively with ventilating your room and it will prevent mould from building up. Where possible, please open your window after showering too.



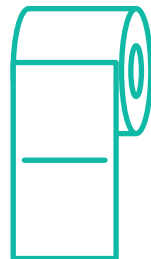
### THE TOILET

Toilet brushes are provided in your accommodation. Please use it, it's there for reason! We also recommend using a toilet cleaner to keep it fresh. Remember to wipe the seat and handle regularly with antibacterial spray or wipes. Please remember to bin your toilet roll middles.

### LOVE YOUR LOO

Toilet sewers are simple transportation systems, and are designed to cope with human waste, toilet paper and water only. Sadly, not everybody treats their toilet in the way it should be used which creates blockages and lots of maintenance issues for our teams.

Remember the 3P's – pee, paper and pool! If it's not one of those then it shouldn't be going in the toilet. Help to stop the block.



## BEDROOMS

Your room is your own private haven -  
**`Tidy house, tidy mind`!**

### BED

Try to wash and swap your sheets every 2 weeks. We also recommend making your bed everyday as it can make your room feel a lot tidier.

### WARDROBE

Keep this well organised. Donate anything you don't wear. Have a laundry basket for your dirty items.

### DESK

Keep your desk clear of clutter so you can focus on your University work.

### FLOORS

Keep your floor space clutter free and vacuum once a week. Clean any spillages straight away as leaving them will only make it more difficult to remove the stain.

### WINDOWS

Where possible, always ventilate your room by opening your windows.

Condensation can be caused by drying clothes on airers with the heating on. If you can, please open your window if you choose to dry your clothes in your room. This will help with condensation and black mould building up. If you are experiencing condensation, please wipe around your windows with a cloth.

If you can, we always recommend using the dryers in our laundry rooms instead of drying the clothes in your room.

### SURFACES

Once a week, clean all surfaces with a cloth and antibacterial spray. Don't forget your windowsills, desk, shelves and any other nook or cranny.



# MOULD PREVENTION

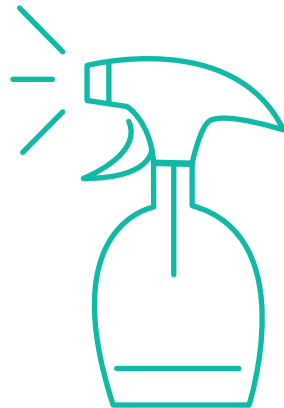
Mould growth in your accommodation can be caused by a damp environment or lack of ventilation in the affected space.

Mould thrives in dark and warm conditions but its main requirement is moisture. That's why it is commonly found in kitchens and bathrooms where humidity levels are high. However other rooms in the home can also be affected by mould if there are damp problems.

Poor ventilation is one of the main causes of damp in the home. If moisture can't escape it builds up in the air and is deposited onto hard surfaces as condensation. Activities that add moisture to a room such as cooking, showering and hanging out damp washing can make matters worse. The condensation needs to dry out within 24 hours otherwise mould will start to grow.

Mildew is the most common type of black mould on walls, it starts as black spots and can spread quickly if left untreated. It commonly grows on walls, around windows, behind furniture, on ceilings and in the top corners of rooms. If it's caused by rising damp it grows up the external doors.

Mould can be found on: shower heads, walls, sinks and other areas within your accommodation. Remember to be mindful of mould hot-spots and follow the below tips on how to best treat and prevent mould growth.



## TIPS ON COMBATING MOULD IN YOUR ACCOMMODATION

- Use white distilled vinegar spray and leave for an hour, scrub thoroughly with a wire brush then rinse with a damp cloth.
- Purchase mould cleaning solutions, such as HG spray, which can be used to treat the affected area.
- Use bicarbonate of soda. Dissolve a quarter of a table spoon in a bottle of water, spray affected area and scrub with a wire brush. Rinse with a damp cloth, spray again and leave it to dry.
- Whichever treatment you choose, always protect yourself with rubber gloves, goggles and a dusk mask. A window must be open for ventilation while you work.
- Interior dehumidifiers can be bought from most value stores such as Boyes and Home Bargains. Placing these in mould hot-spots can help with the prevention of growth.
- Upkeep on cleaning the affected area is important to avoid growth. If you notice that an area of your accommodation is susceptible to mould growth, we would recommend following the above tips routinely which in most scenarios will help the issue.
- If you are noticing that mould within your accommodation, such as black mould, is growing exponentially even when using the above cleaning techniques on a regular basis, please get in touch with our team at [accommodation@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@yorks.ac.uk).



## LAUNDRY FACILITIES



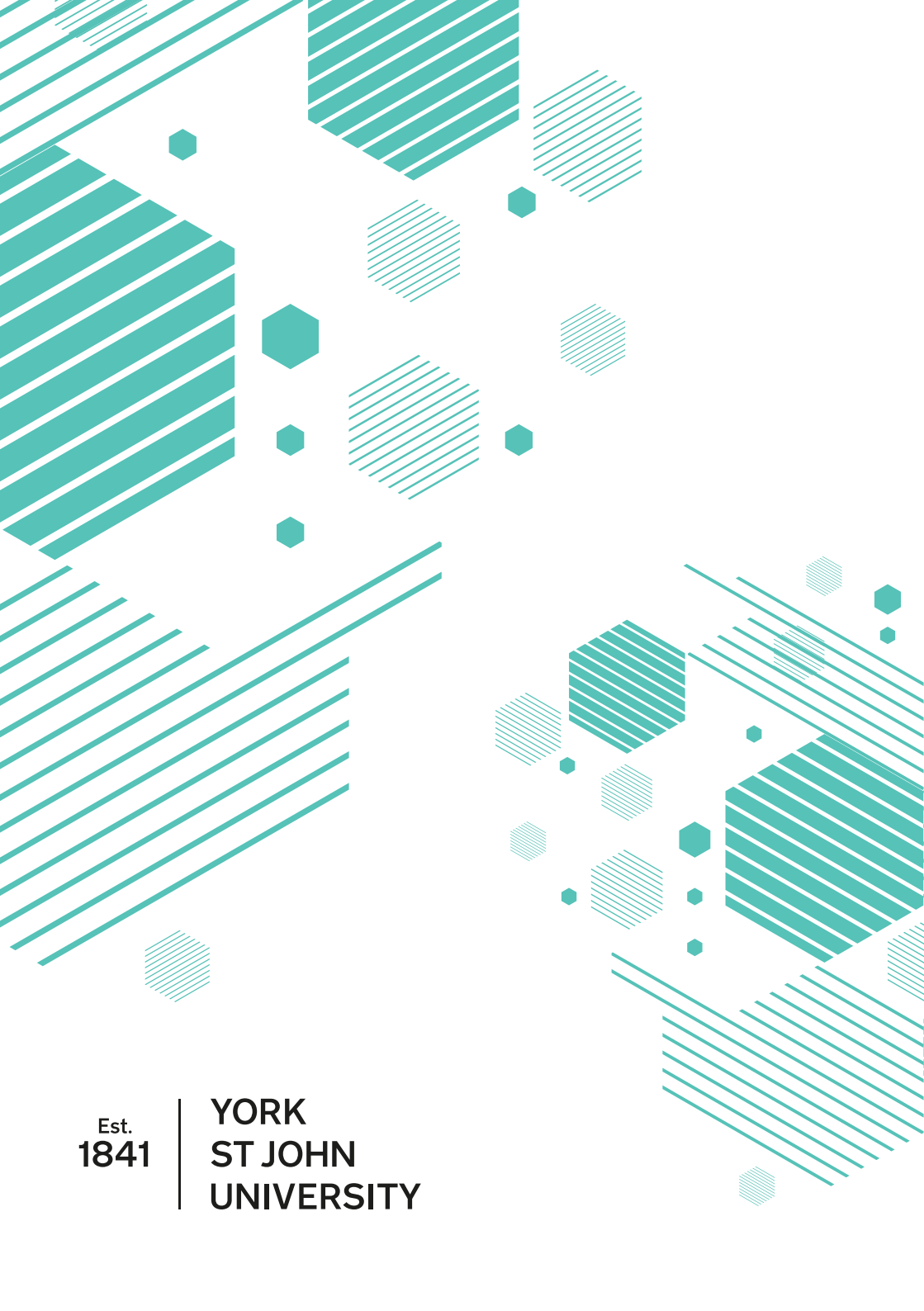
All of our laundry facilities are pay as you go (card payment only) and they have clear instructions inside on how to use the machines but if you have any questions then please feel free to email [accommodation@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@yorks.ac.uk)

- Separate your white/lighter coloured clothes from your darker items
- **TOP TIP:**  
A bit of Fairy liquid (or your chosen brand) is magic on stains – especially grass and grease.
- **TOP TIP:**  
Hairspray is great for ink stains. Spray the garment then wash as normal
- If you experience any problems with the washers/dryers then you can find where to report them to here:  
[www.yorks.ac.uk/students/your-home/repairs-and-maintenance](http://www.yorks.ac.uk/students/your-home/repairs-and-maintenance)

## IRONING TIPS



- Have a practice at ironing a few times before you come to university. It's an important skill to learn, especially when you need a crisp shirt for an interview. An ironing board is provided in your accommodation, but you'll need to provide your own iron.
- Always use the ironing board and keep the iron upright when finished. Placing the iron flat could result in an unwanted burn.
- If ironing isn't your thing, then try this nifty trick! Take the item of clothing straight out of the washer, put it on a coat hanger, shake it out then leave it on the inside of the bathroom door whilst you have a shower, and the creases will disappear.
- Using a fabric conditioner during your wash will help to smooth out fibres.
- Removing your clothes from the washing machine straight away will reduce the number of creases in your laundry.



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