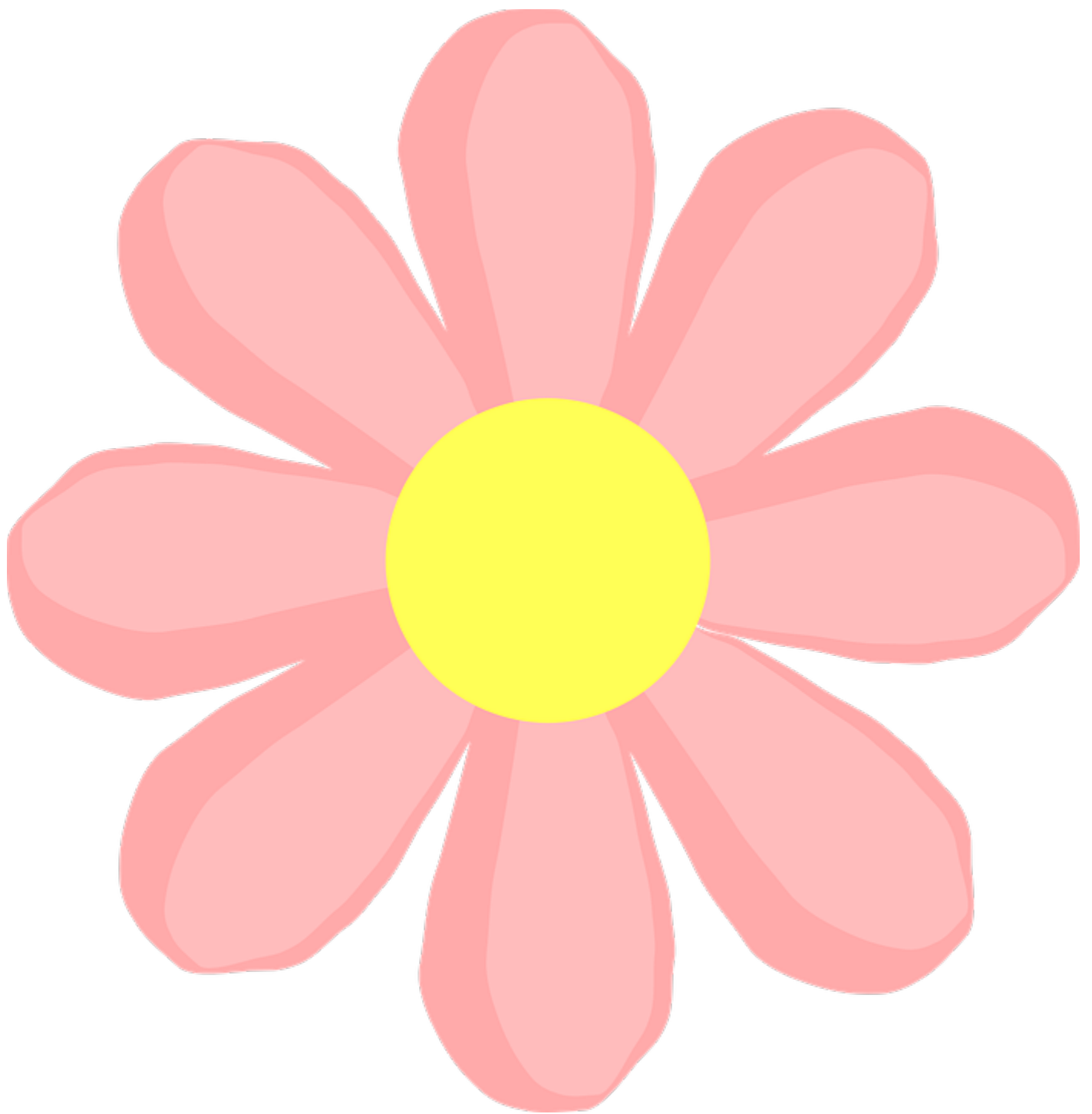


Spring Tranquility du Jour Live





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26 ways to celebrate spring

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- Pack a picnic
 - Plan a hike
 - Sit outside at your favorite restaurant
 - Wear open-toed shoes
 - Spring clean
 - See the cherry blossoms
 - Repot plants
 - Visit an animal sanctuary
 - Plant impatiens in your garden
 - Pick up succulent fruit at the farmers' market
 - Go berry picking
 - Visit a winery and sip into the afternoon
 - Snap photos of blooming trees and flowers
 - Savor the sunshine on your skin (hello, vitamin D)
 - Add pops of color to your desk and home with tulips and daffodils
 - Go camping
 - Cultivate a garden (windowsills count)
 - Line dry your clothes
 - Hit the beach
 - Ride a bike
 - Create a bird feeder
 - Grow fresh mint for your tea
 - Pack up your heavy winter gear
 - Practice yoga outside
 - Host a mini cocktail party
 - Fill out the Wheel of Life in your Daybook

set up a creative space



spring clean within



spring clean without

throughout the house

The tips below outline basic techniques that will help you clean almost every surface (or object) in any room. The tasks on the next page are broken down by location, including outdoor spaces. The final page of this foldout focuses on window washing and upkeep, which is essential if you're going to let the sun shine in on the bright days to come.

● **WIPE WALLS AND CEILINGS** Use a vacuum to remove dust. Tackle stubborn surface grime, especially prevalent in kitchens, with a solvent-free degreaser (test it first in an inconspicuous area to ensure it won't mar the surface).

● **RESEAL GROUT LINES** The cement-based material between wall, floor, and countertop tiles is extremely porous and stains easily. Protect it with a penetrating grout sealer; it's best to apply it with a small foam brush.

● **VACUUM AND SHAMPOO RUGS** Synthetic carpets and rugs with waterproof backings can be deep-cleaned with a rotary shampoo machine and a hot-water extraction machine. Rugs without backings, including Orientals, require professional cleaning.



● **DUST BOOKS AND SHELVES** Take everything off the shelves, and brush shelves and books with a feather duster. Use the dust-brush or crevice tool on a vacuum to reach into tight spots. Wipe the spines of leather-bound books with a clean, soft cloth.



● **CLEAN UPHOLSTERED FURNISHINGS** Take cushions outside and gently beat them by hand to remove dust. If there are stains, check the pieces for care labels. Use a vacuum's upholstery and crevice tools to clean under seat cushions.

● **POLISH METAL DOOR AND WINDOW HARDWARE** Liquid polishes and polish-impregnated cloths work well for medium-tarnished surfaces; pastes and creams are for heavier work. If tarnish doesn't come off, try a stronger product.



● **DUST YOUR HOME THOROUGHLY** This includes hard-to-reach places, such as the tops of ceiling fans and window casings. Always work from the top of a room down, vacuuming the dust that settles on the floor. Avoid using dusting sprays.



● **WAX WOODEN FURNITURE** Wipe surfaces with a soft cloth dampened with water and mild dishwashing liquid. Apply paste wax, such as Butcher's wax, a few feet at a time with a cotton rag folded into a square pad. Let wax dry; buff with a clean cloth.

● **ENSURE FIRE SAFETY** Change batteries in smoke detectors (this should be done twice a year), and make sure units are free of dust. Teach everyone in your household how to use a fire extinguisher, and review escape plans.

● **WASH WINDOW SCREENS** Using warm water and a mild dishwashing liquid, scrub each screen with a brush; rinse thoroughly.

● **CLEAN WINDOW TREATMENTS** Many draperies and curtains are machine washable; check labels. Dry-clean fabric shades. Wipe wooden blinds with a damp cloth; warm water mixed with a mild dishwashing liquid is safe for metal and vinyl blinds.



● **WAX NONWOOD FLOORS** Vinyl and linoleum floors that have lost their shine should be waxed with a polish designed for these surfaces. Most stone and tile floors can be treated with either a paste or a liquid wax designed for the material.



room by room

KITCHEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DUST REFRIGERATOR COILS Turn off power at circuit breaker or fuse box. Coils are usually at the bottom of the refrigerator, under the grill. Clean coils with the crevice attachment of a vacuum or a specialty refrigerator-coil brush, available at hardware stores. ● DEFROST THE FREEZER Turn off power at circuit breaker or fuse box. Empty freezer's contents; wipe interior with a solution of 2 tablespoons baking soda per 1 quart hot water.
LIVING ROOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SWAP HEAVY CURTAINS, RUGS, AND THROWS FOR LIGHTWEIGHT ONES Clean items first. To store, roll material around an acid-free tube; wrap in a clean sheet of cotton, muslin, or polyethylene; secure with twill tape, and label each bundle so you'll know which is which.
BEDROOMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ROTATE BED AND CHANGE BLANKETS Turn over your mattress to distribute the wear evenly. Replace cool-weather bedding with warm-weather bedding. ● CLEAN PILLOWS Whether made of natural fibers (such as down) or synthetic (often polyester), most pillows can be machine-washed. This rids them of mold, bacteria, and odors.
BATHROOMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DISCARD EXPIRED COSMETICS AND BEAUTY PRODUCTS Secure these items in a plastic trash bag, and keep it out of reach of children and animals. ● UPDATE FIRST-AID KIT In addition to bandages and ointments, the kit should include a list of emergency numbers, especially the one for your nearest poison-control center.
HOME OFFICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ORGANIZE FILES Review insurance policies, contracts, and household inventories. ● CLEAN COMPUTERS Scrub casings with a solution of 1 drop mild dishwashing liquid per 1 quart of water and a lint-free cloth; dust crevices in keyboards with cotton swabs; wipe screens with a soft cloth or a dry screen-cleaning sponge.
CLOSETS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● REPLACE COOL-WEATHER CLOTHING WITH WARM-WEATHER CLOTHING Wash or dry-clean garments before storing them in a zippered sweater or blanket bag. ● DONATE APPAREL YOU NO LONGER USE Many charities are happy to accept old clothing and may send a truck to pick it up. They may also provide receipts for tax purposes.
UTILITY SPACES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CLEAN ATTIC AND BASEMENT, GIVING AWAY OR DISCARDING UNWANTED ITEMS Divide whatever is left into two zones: one for things you'll need to retrieve in the next six months, such as clothes, and the other for objects that may be there for years, such as furniture. ● PROTECT OBJECTS IN BASEMENT Use concrete blocks to keep storage boxes off the ground. Place washer and dryer on elevated pedestals (made by the appliances' manufacturers) to prevent electrical shock during flooding.
OUTDOOR SPACES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CLEAN PORCH CEILINGS AND WALLS Sweep up cobwebs and debris with a corn broom, and wash walls with a solution of all-purpose cleaner and water using a polyester sponge. ● SCRUB DECKS, PATIOS, DRIVEWAYS, AND WALKWAYS Treat mildew spots with a solution of 1 part oxygen bleach to 3 parts water using a deck brush. ● WASH OUTDOOR FURNITURE Most materials, including aluminum, plastic, wood, and wicker, can handle a solution of mild dishwashing liquid and water and a soft-bristle brush. ● INSPECT LIGHT FIXTURES Wash covers, and check for damaged wires and connections.

eight steps to perfectly clean windows

- 1. Schedule the project** Choose a time when the sun is not shining directly on windows. Its hot rays can cause the cleaning solution to dry, which will result in streaks.
- 2. Clean the surface** With a soft-bristle brush, dust away cobwebs and loose dirt from windows and frames. Don't forget hinges, sills, and tracks. Wear rubber gloves to protect your hands, especially if the frames are old and splintery.
- 3. Make the cleaning solution** Mix 1 part white vinegar and 1 part hot water.
- 4. Prevent a mess** Before cleaning the inside of each window, place an absorbent terry-cloth towel along the windowsill to catch drips.
- 5. Wet the glass** Using a sponge, wet (but don't drench) the windowpane with the vinegar-and-water solution, and rub away the dirt. As much as possible, keep the solution from coming into contact with the window frames.
- 6. Prime a squeegee** Wet the rubber blade; a dry one will skip.
- 7. Wipe the glass** Starting at an upper corner of the pane, draw the squeegee down in a straight, confident stroke. Wipe the rubber edge of the squeegee with a sponge or a lint-free cloth. Return to the top and repeat, slightly overlapping the first stroke. Finish by pulling the squeegee across the bottom of the window. Dry the sill.
- 8. Clean the frames** Wipe surfaces using a cloth dampened with a nonammoniated all-purpose cleaner and water. Rinse them thoroughly with a clean, damp cloth to remove cleaning solution, and dry immediately by wiping with a clean, dry cloth.

basic window-washing kit

Stash all of your supplies in a plastic or metal bucket. Mix and transport the vinegar-based solution in a second container.

- soft-bristle brush
- white vinegar (or mild dishwashing liquid)
- large polyester or natural sea sponges
- rubber gloves
- lint-free cloths (cloth diapers or huckaback cloth) that haven't been washed or dried with fabric softener (which can leave behind a residue that will streak glass)
- squeegees
- sturdy ladder (with a label indicating it is approved by Underwriters Laboratories)
- nonammoniated all-purpose cleaner

cleaning storm windows

After storm windows have been replaced with screens, they should be cleaned before being stored for summer. Start by vacuuming the glass and tracks. Clean glass following the instructions above. (It's easiest to do so outside, but you can clean them in place; allow windows that can't be removed to dry completely before closing them, as moisture trapped between panes can damage the frames.)

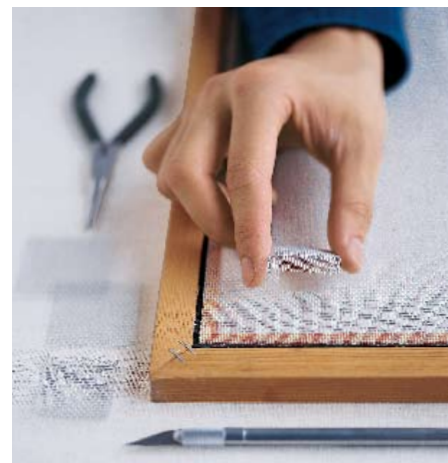
patching a screen

Tiny tears in nylon or fiberglass screens can be mended with a few drops of instant adhesive; small splits in metal screens can be fixed with epoxy. Larger rips, however, require slightly more attention. Here's how to make repairs:

NYLON OR FIBERGLASS SCREENS

Cut a patch just barely larger than the hole. Apply a thin layer of instant adhesive along edges of patch; press it in place. To hold screen together as glue dries, cut a piece of low-tack painters' tape larger than the patch, gently apply tape to patch, and leave until glue is dry.

METAL SCREENS Begin by trimming around the tear in the screen to create a small, clean-edged rectangular or square opening. Cut a piece of screen about ½ inch larger than the hole in length and width. Unravel a couple of strands of screen away from each of the piece's 4 sides until the central woven section is just large enough to cover the hole. Fold the resulting "fingers" away from you at 90 degrees to the patch's surface. Cover the hole with the patch, inserting the fingers into the mesh of the existing screen. Fold and carefully weave the fingers under and inward onto the patch or outward toward the screen frame, into the surrounding screen.



The information in this article was excerpted from *Martha Stewart's Homekeeping Handbook: The Essential Guide to Caring for Everything in Your Home*. ©2006 by Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, Inc. All rights reserved. Published by Clarkson Potter/Publishers, a division of Random House, Inc.

A top-down view of a table setting. In the center, a bouquet of six purple tulips with green leaves is held in a clear glass jar. To the left of the jar, a glass filled with red juice sits on a white lace table runner. A white lace-rimmed napkin is draped over the glass. To the right of the jar, a clear glass with a textured, possibly etched, design is visible. The table is set with white plates and woven placemats. In the background, a glass of water and another tulip are visible. The overall aesthetic is elegant and rustic.



artist's date

Julia Cameron, author of the life-changing book *The Artist's Way*, coined Artist's Dates—a one-hour weekly solo excursion to nurture your creative spark. The key is to spend time with your inner artist.

This adventure gives the mind the opportunity to rest, play, and uncover ideas that may not be heard in daily life.

I've been an avid fan of the idea for nearly two decades and strive to include it in my weekly routine. Spontaneously as I pass a bookstore, or planned as I sign up for a calligraphy workshop.

Sitting at home surrounded by reading materials (*Flow* and *Bella Grace* magazines are my current

favorites), my journal, markers, a lit candle, and a cuppa tea stirs my soul. If I'm feeling adventurous, I gather these tools and head to a *café*. A new setting offers a sense of spaciousness and change of scenery to muse and dream.

A few ideas for Artist's Date include:

- Sit at a *café* and pen your thoughts
- Visit a museum during your lunch hour
- Pick up supplies at a craft store
- Browse in a bookstore
- Wander the aisles of an art store
- Take a calligraphy class
- Visit an animal sanctuary or shelter
- Plant herbs in terracotta pots on your windowsill
- Picnic with a juicy book
- Try ice skating
- People-watch in a park
- Stroll with no intended destination
- Enjoy a matinee
- Pull out your journal and creativity tools
- Hit the library
- Start a blog
- Send a care package
- Write a letter to your future self
- Lose yourself in a thrift store
- Ride a train round-trip without a planned destination
- Read an old journal
- Play tourist in your town

You may think, "I don't have time for this, I can barely handle groceries, laundry, and pet care!" Make time for it, because this practice will fuel your soul. Try incorporating a stop at an art store while you're out running errands. Pause at a park while walking your dog to write in your journal. Carry a coloring book



and use it to de-stress when picking up your afternoon latte.

In *Tranquility du Jour* podcast #313, author Sam Bennett encouraged listeners to fill their teacup and share the overflow with others (versus giving all of ourselves and having nothing left). This visual has served as the perfect metaphor for self-care, personal development, and Artist's Dates.

This week, take one hour for yourself. Gather a few creative tools and go to a new spot you've wanted to try. Settle in and write about what unfolds. This tool is a sacred gift from you to you.

get active



manifesto

I believe in handwritten notes. I believe in using china at every meal. I believe in the healing power of bubble baths. I believe that animals are to be loved, not used. I believe that you're never too old to wear a tutu. I believe that Paris holds the key to my heart. I believe in stargazing around a campfire. I believe in lazy Sunday mornings. I believe that magic happens on the yoga mat. I believe in high tea at all times of the day. I believe in living life full out. I believe in sharing deep thoughts with my journal. I believe in donning noir and living pink. I believe that glitter and washi tape make life better. I believe in lighting candles every day. I believe that paint, collage, and markers make for hours of fun. I believe in pink and white twinkle lights. I believe in seeking balance between doing and being. I believe in the power of one person to make a difference. I believe that a home filled with books is a happy one. I believe in cat eyes and red lips à la Parisian chic. I believe in brunch and belly laughs with girlfriends.