



Creating routines for a better-prepared home

What do you see in your house when you wake up in the morning? Laundry? Old mail? Dirty dishes and messy countertops? A bathroom counter covered with bottles and jars?

How about what you see last thing at night? When you go to bed is it with a sense of well-being and closure? Do you feel satisfied about your day and the next morning or do you go to bed with a million things on your mind that have been left undone?

When you think about a prepared home, part of the magic in creating that home is establishing routines and today your Action Steps are about doing just that. We'll start out, though, with just 2 routines to begin with – a morning routine and an evening routine.

Action Step 1 – The Morning Routine

Think about a typical morning at your home and list everything you normally do before leaving for work, before getting the kids off to school, etc. Some of those items might be making coffee, packing lunches, getting dressed, finding the kids' backpacks, and so on. List what YOUR morning tasks are in the space below.

Now, put that list in an organized order, one that makes sense as a sequence of actions. For example:

1. Make the bed
2. Pray for the day
3. Get personally ready for the day (shower, hair, makeup, get dressed)
4. Make breakfast and clean up (maybe delegate)
5. Go over your To Do list
6. Do stretches for 10 minutes

Here are a few more possibilities for your morning routine:

- Read emails
- Morning devotional time
- Decide on evening meal and make sure ingredients are on hand
- Make a grocery list
- Make a list of errands to run
- Start a load of laundry
- Unload dishwasher
- Recite affirmations

Now, make a schedule for your morning routine.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

If you followed this routine each morning, how might that change your day?

Your action step is to post this morning routine where you'll see it each evening and each morning, and then begin making it a part of your day. Don't worry if you sometimes forget or not everything gets done, and over time, you'll tweak your routine as needed. An organized and prepared home is always a work in progress!

Action Step 2 – The evening routine

The benefits of an evening routine are as important as the routine in the morning that gets your day off to a good start because nighttime is when your brain wants to rest but if it's surrounded by chaos (at least as far as your brain is concerned!), then it's hard to relax and get to sleep.

A possible evening routine might look like this.

1. Turn off all electronics at 7 p.m.
2. Make a To Do list for the morning
3. Clean counters in kitchen and start dishwasher

4. Wash any pots and pans remaining (delegate)
5. Read for 30 minutes
6. Wash face, brush teeth, and any other personal grooming
7. Get personally ready for bed and go to sleep

The evening routine will begin to allow you a better night's sleep since you have that since of no loose ends, you have written down what you need to do so your brain isn't occupied with trying to remember it. And, it will be a cue to your body and your mind that it's now time to sleep.

A few evening possibilities to give you more ideas:

- Listen to music
- Journal
- Pray/devotions/meditation
- Tidy up the living room and other areas
- Wipe down bathroom countertops
- Walk the dog/go for a walk

Now, make a schedule for your evening routine.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

If you followed this routine each evening, what difference would it make to your evenings?

Your Action Step is to post this evening routine somewhere visible and begin putting into action each evening starting tonight!