

CLEANING GUIDE

ergonomic cleaning



Colophon

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Hello,

I'm Sarah, your cleaning coach. I have many years' experience as a home help and consider myself an expert at brushing, polishing, scouring and scrubbing.

Cleaning is my passion and my profession! I enjoy teaching people how to brush and polish perfectly. Even if you already know a lot about cleaning techniques, read this brochure and you're sure to learn something new.

In this cleaning guide, I'll tell you all about ergonomic cleaning. As a home help, you can work ergonomically if your body and mind are as healthy as possible. Practise the correct postures and techniques during your training. This way, you can clean properly without burdening your body. Follow the directions and  **tips** in this guide. It will make cleaning ergonomically much easier.

Good luck, Sarah



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What is **working ergonomically**?

As a home help, you often do heavy physical work. You lift, you bend down, you bend forwards. So to avoid suffering all kinds of complaints, you have to 'work ergonomically'.

Working ergonomically means that you make sure that you don't get any physical and mental complaints due to your work. You try to work as healthily and safely as possible.

A healthy, safe workplace is very important.

You can work on that yourself:

- wear good work and safety shoes;
- always wear gloves
- use good equipment.
E.g. a sturdy, safe stepladder (not a wobbly stool) when you clean the windows;
- use cleaning equipment safely.
First read the instructions for use of the products and the amounts needed;
- take a break at the agreed time;
- alternate light and heavy work as much as possible.
Prepare a weekly schedule so that you can divide up light and heavier tasks at the clients'.



Cleaning ergonomically with the correct posture

To work ergonomically, you have to move the right way and adopt the correct posture.

The main basic principles are set out below.

1. Working standing up

- Be sure to adopt a good basic posture for all the tasks that you do standing up.
- Alternate work that you have to do standing up.
For example, when washing up: alternate drying and putting away.
- Support your body against a wall or table edge.
- Stand with your feet apart and support yourself with your free hand. This puts less pressure on your back.
- Clean at the correct working height.
- Do you have to work above the ideal working height?
Then use cleaning equipment with a long handle (e.g. a wiper with a telescopic handle).



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Cleaning ergonomically with the correct postures

To work ergonomically, you have to move the right way and adopt the correct posture. The main basic principles are set out below.

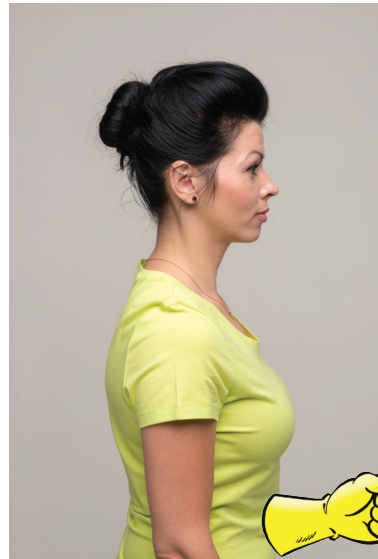
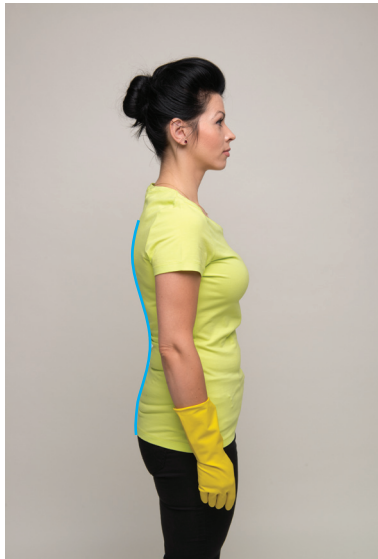
2. Lifting, bending and picking up

- Avoid lifting: push, pull and slide the object.
- If you have to lift something (e.g. a bucket or a laundry basket), always bend your knees and keep your back straight.
- Put your knee on the ground for support if you have to pick something up.
- Hold the objects that you pick up as close as possible to your body.
- Put objects that you use often (e.g. a bucket) in a place that you can reach easily (e.g. on a small table).
- Use as many tools as much as possible so that you don't have to bend down. For example, turn the wiper when you wrap the floorcloth round it. This way, you work at the correct height.
- Use a long handle (at shoulder height).

Good basic posture

The way we sit, stand and work has a big impact on our body. The incorrect posture puts pressure on the back, shoulders and knees. This often results in pain. A good basic posture can remedy this.

- Standing posture - Shoulders and neck



✓ A good standing posture: the back in a clear *S-shape*, shoulders slightly back.

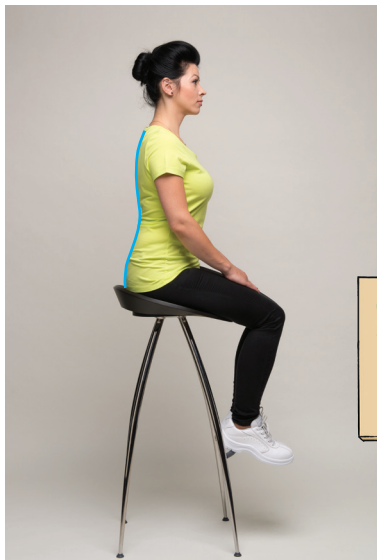
Sarah

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Good basic posture

- **Seated posture**

Sit straight, but maintain the natural **S-shape** of your back. Your lower back is then slightly concave.



✓ Household tasks should preferably be done standing up. This puts less pressure on your back.

Sarah



- **Standing posture with brush**

The length of the handle is important. The tip of the handle must reach your shoulder. This way, you can sweep properly without putting pressure on your back.



9.

Mopping

• Wringing out the floorcloth

1. Put the bucket on a table. Hold the floorcloth above the bucket with one hand. With the

other hand, squeeze the water out of the cloth from top to bottom.

2. Fold the cloth in two. Hold the upper part of the cloth firmly with two hands.



- ✓ Practice this wringing technique during your training
- ✓ Always use this wringing technique when cleaning. This will put less pressure on your wrists and elbows.
- ✓ Place a towel or floorcloth under your bucket to protect the surface.
- ✓ There are other techniques. Ask your teacher for more explanation.

Sarah



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Mopping

- **Wringing out the floorcloth**

3. Move your elbows forward.



4. Repeat this with the bottom of the floorcloth.



- **Floorcloth on the wiper**

Turn the wiper upside down and place the floorcloth on the rubber. This way, you do not have to bend down and you do not put pressure on your back.



Lifting and picking up

- **Lifting the bucket**

Place your feet as close as possible to the bucket. Use the other hand as a support on your knee.

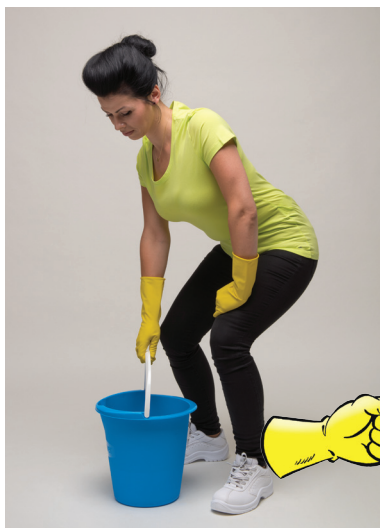
This will put less pressure on your back.

- **Picking up microfibre cloth**

Swing your leg back. Move forward, keeping your back in the S-shape.

If this does not work, try the following posture.

Support yourself with your knee on the ground. Support your upper arm on the other knee. Then pick up the cloth.



- ✓ Put less water in your bucket. Then it will not be so heavy.
- ✓ By supporting yourself with your hand on your knee, you can reduce the pressure on your back by half.

Sarah



12.

Washing

- **Taking laundry out of the washing machine or the tumble dryer**

Support yourself with your knee on the ground. Place your hand on washing machine or tumble dryer. Take the laundry out of the washing machine or the tumble dryer with your other hand.



- **Hanging up laundry**

Put the laundry basket on a table or raised surface. Then you do not have to bend down.

The washing line should preferably be level with your head. You should not lift your elbow higher than your shoulder when hanging up the washing. Make sure you maintain a good basic posture.



✓ If the washing line is not at the right height, discuss this with the client. Or hang the washing on a clothes horse.

Sarah

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Washing

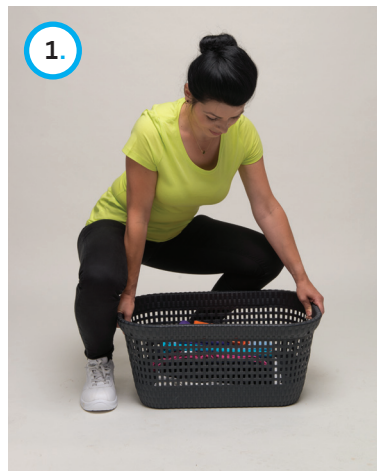
- **Folding laundry**

Put the laundry basket on a table next to you. This way, you will not have to bend down to take the clothes out of the basket. Make sure you maintain a good basic posture.

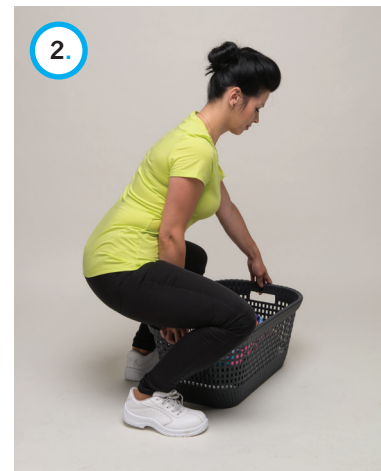


- **Lifting the laundry basket**

1. Bend your knees. Keeping your back straight, lean forward and pick up the laundry basket.



2. Make sure the corner of the basket is between your legs.

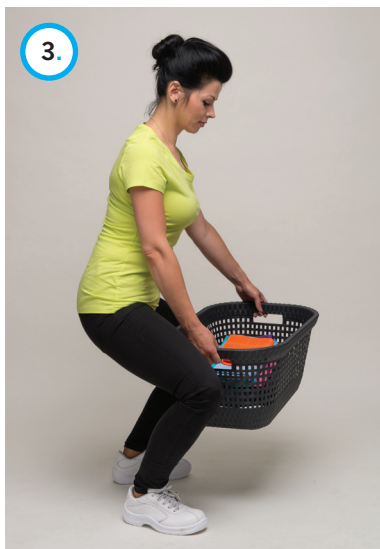


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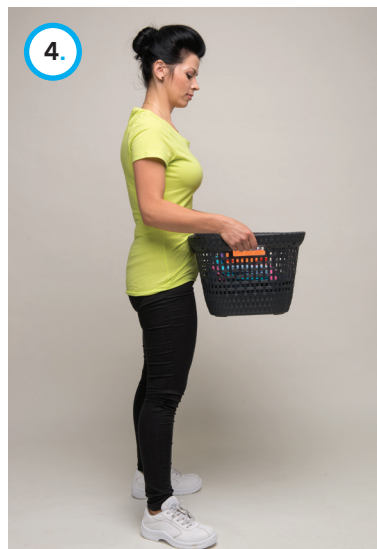
Washing

- **Lifting the laundry basket**

3. Lift the laundry basket.



4. Hold the laundry basket against your body. And position your arms at a 90° angle. Make sure you maintain a good basic posture.



Sweeping and dusting

- **Two ways to vacuum**

Make sure you maintain a good basic posture. The handle must be long enough to allow this. Do not reach too far towards the place where you have to vacuum.

There are various ways of vacuuming.

1. Here you hold the handle in both hands. It is best to use this method if you have to exert pressure (e.g. when vacuuming a carpet).

2. Here you hold the handle with one hand, while keeping the hose behind your back with the other.

This way, you exert less pressure. (e.g. when vacuuming laminate or parquet).



✓ Make sure the vacuum cleaner stays close to you.
Put the plug in another socket if necessary.

Sarah

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Sweeping and dusting

- **Vacuuming under the bed**

1. Support yourself with one knee on the ground and your hand on the other knee. Vacuum under the bed like this.



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Sweeping and dusting

- **Checking under the bed**

2. Place both hands and knees on the ground. This is how to check whether you have vacuumed properly.



18.



Sweeping and dusting

• Dusting skirting boards

You can do this in two different ways.

1. Use a brush to clean the skirting board. That way, you do not have to bend down.



2. Or go over the skirting board with a duster. Kneel on the ground to do this.



And support yourself with your arm on your thigh. Clean the skirting board with your other hand.

- ✓ You can alternate these two methods to spare your back. One week use the brush, the next a cloth.
- ✓ If the client's brush is not clean, use a duster.

Sarah



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Sweeping and dusting

- **Sweep the floor with a dustpan and brush**

It is best to do this with your knee on the ground.



20.

Sweeping and dusting

- **Dusting at heights**

Always use a stepladder. Hold the rail all the time.

Try not to raise your elbow above your shoulder when dusting.



✓ *Make sure your stepladder is stable!*

Sarah

21.

Sweeping and dusting

- **Dusting at table height**

Try to put objects that are lower (or higher) on a table so that you can dust them easily. This way, you have a good basic posture.



✓ Put the object back in its place.

Sarah

22.

Sweeping and dusting

- **Cleaning a table with a cloth**

Support yourself with one hand on the surface and clean with the other hand (e.g. to dust a coffee table).



- **Cleaning windows**

Use a stepladder. Hold the rail all the time. Try not to raise your elbow above your shoulder when cleaning.



✓ Use a wiper with a telescopic handle to clean high windows.

Sarah



23.

