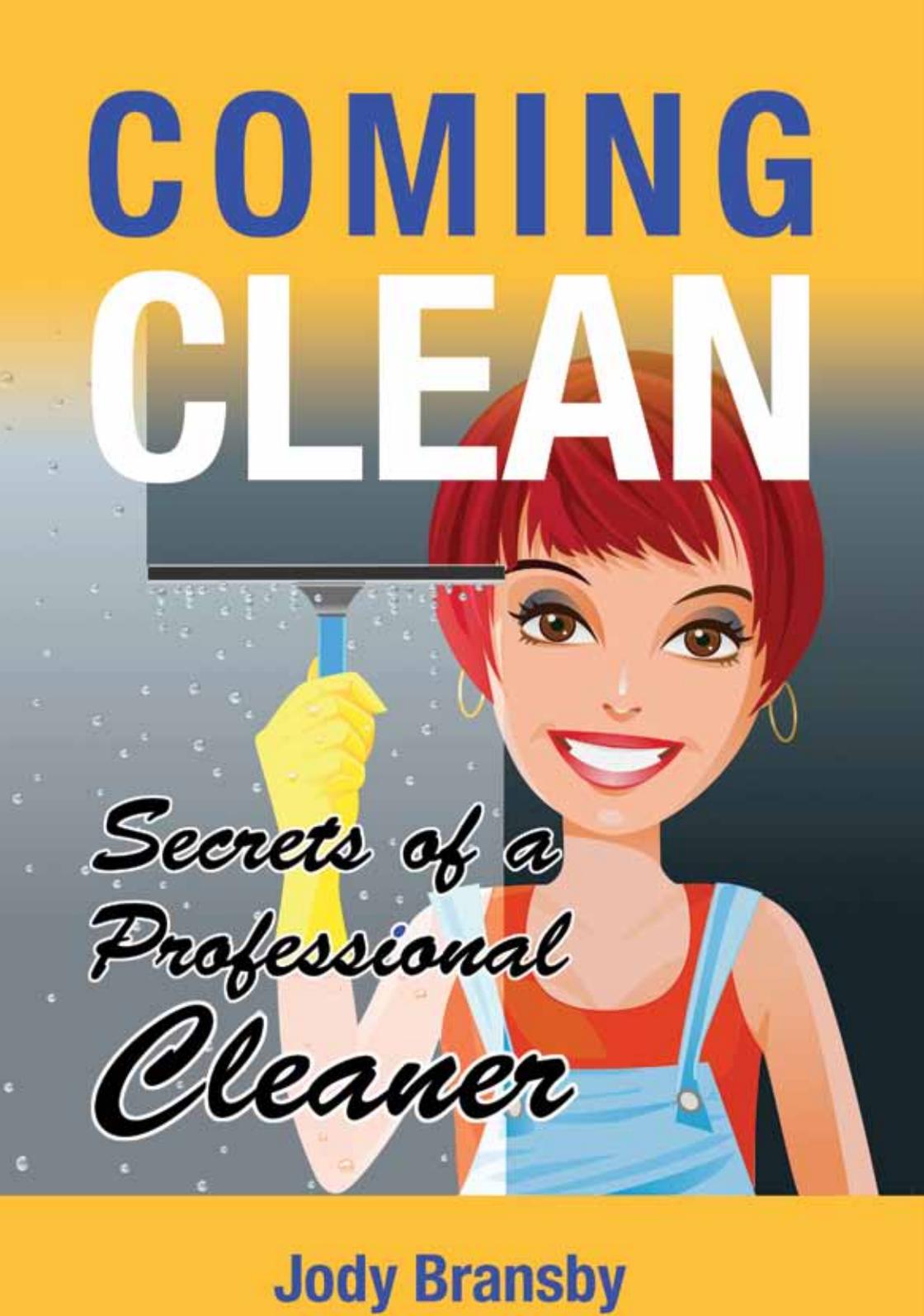


COMING CLEAN



*Secrets of a
Professional
Cleaner*

Jody Bransby

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Coming Clean: secrets of a professional cleaner

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Dedicated to:

Heather, my beautiful, talented, wise mother;
Tiffany, my sister, for her advice;

and

my clients, for their knowledge and ideas.

Introduction

When my mother gave birth to me, I must have been holding a cleaning cloth in my tiny little hand. I've always been extremely pedantic about cleaning and organising my home, as well as everybody else's! I was brought up in a three bedroom house, with four hell-raising brothers and a younger sister. Our bedrooms were quite small, so four boys in one room was a catastrophe. You couldn't see the carpet for clothes and toys. The kitchen bench tops were usually covered with all kinds of clutter, as was the rest of the house. The washing and ironing baskets always seemed to be overflowing.

Mum was a dressmaker who worked a lot from home, and could sometimes be up all night finishing a garment to send to the city the next day. With working and raising six little monsters (and believe me we were), some things around the house were naturally neglected. As a consequence, from a very early age I learned to clean and organise a home.

Antonia an Italian neighbor had the cleanest house I've ever seen. She even ironed her rags. The knowledge I gained from Antonia over the years was so beneficial to me and

I will be eternally grateful for all the wonderful things she taught me.

After thirty years of family and friends nagging me, I decided to start my own cleaning business, which to my delight has been very successful and extremely rewarding. What I've discovered is the many mistakes people make when designing their homes, or doing renovations. There are so many things that could be done differently to make a home more functional, and so much easier to clean and maintain.

Whether you clean your own home, or have a cleaner do it for you, designing your home in a practical way can save you a lot of time and money. I've included in this book all sorts of ideas, from furniture types to wall paint, bathroom fittings, tiling, flooring, windows, doors, and a lot more.

So, let's begin.

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Bathrooms

Bathrooms today are so luxurious compared to when I was a child growing up in the 1950s. Our bathroom was located on the back verandah, which was really cold in winter, and I can remember running inside, wrapped in a towel to dry off in front of the fire. The bathroom consisted of a gas water heater, a basin with rusty water stains from years of dripping faucets, and the bath was one of those big enamel tubs on claw feet. The enamel had worn away down the centre, and I used to try to avoid sitting on that section, which was difficult to do when I shared the bath with my three brothers! The house was on a huge block of land, and of course the toilet was way down the back yard. We had to resort to potties at night, which I disliked intensely.

Bathroom fittings

My preference is for chrome fittings, because nothing else will suffice in the bathroom. Brass discolours and tarnishes, and tends to go green. Enamel-coated fittings discolour, peel, crack and chip. Buy good quality chrome tap wear, and if it's cleaned properly, it will last and look good for years to come.

Tapware

If you are replacing your bathroom tapware, always ask the sales assistant about the potential water pressure. Many homeowners think they have a problem with their water pipes and poor water pressure, when the problem is actually the tapware creating the low water pressure.

Shower recess



Glass shower splashback

Avoid installing stainless steel or chrome shower caddies or soap dishes in your shower, as I've found these can corrode and rust (even though stainless steel is supposed to be rust-proof). The rungs on the caddy/soap dish can get a build-up of soap scum, which tends to turn green and can be quite difficult to remove when affixed to a wall. Porcelain soap dishes and shelving are easy to clean.

Acrylic soap dishes and caddies tend to go milky and don't clean up well. Glass shelving is ok, but can show soap scum. Purpose built shower niches are becoming popular today and give homeowners the opportunity to determine the niche length to accommodate their different products, e.g. shampoos, conditioners, soap and razors, etc.



Shower niche

Shower screens



Doorless shower

The new trend is to not install a shower door, I personally don't understand this. For one thing it just doesn't look right, and while showering water sprays onto the outside of the recess, causing mats and flooring to become soaked, and in cold weather the shower area becomes colder.

However, an even newer trend is the use of floor to ceiling glass splashbacks as the shower wall. So basically when you walk into the shower you see a floor to ceiling main feature wall rather than tiles and grout.

If you are using shower screens, keep them at a reasonable height so that it's easy to reach the top to clean. Avoid installing the retractable screens, as I've found they can jump out of the tracks and can be difficult to put back in. Also these doors don't last very long, and are harder to clean around the tracks.

Frameless screens are much easier to maintain. I've had brass and stainless steel frames, and both metals have corroded. White metal seems to clean up well and lasts longer.

Shower heads

Avoid placing shower heads too high, as they need to be cleaned. Hand-held shower heads are the only way to go – I just love them. They make it extraordinarily easy to hose down a shower recess after cleaning. Hand-held shower heads also come in handy for medical reasons, such as when a member of the household has a cast, is in a wheelchair, or has a surgical dressing that needs to be kept dry.



Hand held shower head

Bath, basin and toilet colours

White! White! White! It's the only colour to use in your bathroom. It's fresh, never looks out of date and really brightens up a bathroom. Coloured baths and basins do date when trends change, and this can make a bathroom look dull and tired.

Bathroom vanities



Wall vanities allow for easy underneath cleaning

Vanities are better on legs so that water doesn't damage the base of the cabinet. Doors should be smooth for easy cleaning. The height of the vanity is also something to consider. You need to feel comfortable when using the basin – too low is awkward,



Room to clean

especially if there are tall people in the house. Too high just doesn't look right, and once again, can be awkward if you are a little shorty like me. No stools please – only for the kiddies!

Allow room at either end of the vanity to enable you to reach in and clean between the wall or shower recess, as dust, mould and water can collect between these two surfaces and in some cases can be impossible to clean.

Basins

Oval or round basins are the only way to go, as they are easy to clean, unlike the square basins, which tend to get built-up dirt in the corners, which is difficult to remove. I prefer porcelain in the bathroom, as it always looks brilliant, especially when it's just been cleaned. Acrylic basins can scratch and discolour if not properly maintained.

Plugs

I would not recommend pop up (screw on) plugs, as hair and other objects can gather around the top of the drain. The plug needs to be removed and cleaned on a regular basis to keep the water flowing smoothly down the drain.

Baths and spa baths

Spa baths are one of my pet hates. With water being such a precious resource, spa baths are not practical, as it takes a lot of water to fill them.

Forget the romantic fantasies you may entertain about spa baths because they just don't happen! I have found that the majority of my clients regret installing them, as they don't get used. Spa baths are huge dust collectors, and a pain in the butt to clean, as you need to



Too hard to clean

climb in to reach every surface. Depending on who does the cleaning, you or your cleaner will be forever grateful.

With regular bath tubs, depending on the size of your bathroom, find a bath that's long enough and wide enough to sit in comfortably. My bathroom is only small so when we renovated we had to take this into consideration.



Hands free over bath tub

I also installed a hands-free shower head in my bath, which I have connected to the spout. It's great for washing children's hair, and also comes in handy for rinsing out hair dyes or treatments when you don't need to shower. Best of all, it's really convenient for cleaning the bath.

Toilets

Make sure that your toilet is the right height. We spend a lot of time sitting on the loo, so you don't want your knees up around your chin, and you most definitely want your feet to reach the floor! Plan wisely. It's also a good idea to choose a toilet that fits flush against the wall so that you don't have to worry about dust and urine accumulating down the back of the loo.



Easy cleaning

The base of the toilet bowl needs to be wide enough so that it flushes effectively without clogging up. The front of the bowl shouldn't be too curvy, so that waste falls directly into the water, rather than on the sides of the bowl.

Toilet seats need to be comfortable, not too narrow or heavy to lift (I'm thinking of the little ones here). Timber looks great but can discolour and split after a while. The design of the seat needs to be easy to clean. Porcelain toilet cisterns look much more attractive than plastic and porcelain cleans up well, unlike the plastic which can discolour and deteriorate over time



Elegant

Thanks for reading the complimentary ebook download from *Coming Clean – Secrets of a Professional Cleaner*.

Great news – the book has a total of 136 pages filled with cleaning tips for every room in your home PLUS stacks of tips for do-it-yourself renovators, residential builders and anyone who is wanting to improve the look and feel of their bathroom, blinds, floors, kitchen and furniture – without breaking the budget. That is another 120 pages of tips and ideas.

Click here www.comingclean.com.au to order your copy of *Coming Clean* for only \$25.00 incl gst,

or phone Jody B. on 0407 111 956

Every home needs a copy of *Coming Clean*.