



Learning at Your Fingertips

Life Hacks 1.0



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Overview

Life hacks are quick, relatively easy, and fun things that make your life easier. However, simply looking at a photo with a small "Use a dustpan to..." doesn't make your life much easier! In this module are some detailed descriptions of several different life hacks and how to use them.



Kitchen Life Hacks

1. Balance a wooden spoon over the top of a boiling pot to stop the bubbles from foaming over. It works because bubbles and foam created from boiling water are filled with steam. If the bubble touches something that has a temperature below 100°C, the steam will condense (change back into a liquid) and break the surface of the bubble.



Kitchen Life Hacks

2. Use a pants hanger as an inexpensive cookbook holder. Everyone's been there: they're trying to cook the ultimate Thanksgiving dinner, but have to keep running across the room to look at the cook book and end up burning the food. To avoid that, simply clip the book into the pants hanger, and hang it from any open cupboard handle.



Kitchen Life Hacks

3. Cover a beverage with wet paper towels and place it in the freezer. Wring the paper towels out slightly, so the water does not drip all over your freezer. Leave the drinks there for fifteen minutes, and by then, it will be ice-cold. Good if you are using a bottle, or have no ice in the freezer.



Kitchen Life Hacks

4. Put pancake batter in an old ketchup bottle. With the batter stored safely, you not only provide a mess-free counter, but can use it later without having to go through all the trouble of covering a bowl, then cleaning the drips from the counter and range. Use a funnel to get the pancake batter into the small opening. Bonus life hack: make the funnel from a bottle!



Kitchen Life Hacks

5. Use muffin tins to serve condiments at a BBQ. These small muffin bakers will keep condiments separated from each other, so no gross mustard-relish mayonnaise messes will occur. It also makes for an easy cleanup.



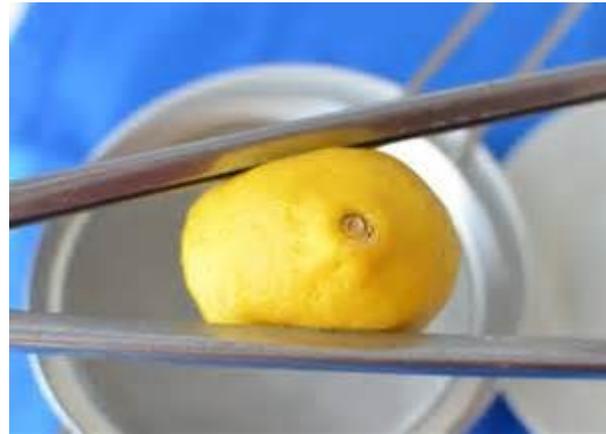
Kitchen Life Hacks

6. Use a straw to quickly and fully remove stems from strawberries. Not only is this method quicker and more efficient, it keeps all the extra strawberry you usually cut off intact. Start from the bottom, and push up until the stem pops out.



Kitchen Life Hacks

7. When making lemonade, use tongs to squeeze the lemon fully. Place half a lemon in between the two sides. Pull down on the sides usually meant for picking up meat. This will get almost all the juice out of a lemon. Clean fully afterwards.



Kitchen Life Hacks

8. Use dental floss to cut slices of soft things, such as cake, cheese, rolls, and fondant. The flexible string is thin enough to cut. Hold it tightly with two hands, and pull it through. This uses the same principle as using a wire to cut clay.



Kitchen Life Hacks

9. Use the top of a water bottle to keep bread from going stale. Cut the top off any water bottle, or juice bottle. Next, pull the top of the bag through the loop made from the top of the water bottle you've just cut. Fold the bag over the top of the bottle, then screw on the lid to make an airtight seal.



Kitchen Life Hacks

10. When dieting, use a smaller plate to eat less. It helps your mind to think there's more food, and limits what you can pile on.



Kitchen Life Hacks

11. Make noodles in a coffee maker. The water will come near to boiling, softening the noodles and allowing you to cook them. Cook them the normal time you would in a pan. Do not cook sauce in the coffee maker, however. This also works for hot dogs.



Kitchen Life Hacks

12. Use plastic lids as coasters. Don't have a coaster on hand? A plain lid can do wonders! Just place your drink on top and you've got a neat coaster. Make sure to clean before using.



Kitchen Life Hacks

13. Warm up leftover pizza in a frying pan or skillet. This helps keep the pizza crust from becoming soft and dry. If desired, add a tiny bit of oil.



Kitchen Life Hacks

14. When pouring milk in cereal, place your spoon upside down in the bowl. This will prevent the milk from splashing all over the table and turning into a mess.



Kitchen Life Hacks

15. To remove the yolk from the egg, use a water bottle. Crack the egg, and squeeze the bottle slightly. Place the opening over the yolk, and the yolk will suddenly be sucked in.



Bed and Bath Hacks

1. Screw a magazine holder onto the back of a cabinet door to store the hair dryer. This is the perfect size, and will stay on. As an alternative, use Command Strips, or other sticky hooks that hold well.



Bed and Bath Hacks

2. Use coat hooks instead of towel rods to hang shared towels. These take up much less space, and actually hold large towels much better. It also helps them to dry faster.



Bed and Bath Hacks

3. Apply magnetic strips behind cabinet doors to hold tweezers, bobby pins, and other magnetic objects, like cosmetic brushes. Use sticky magnetic so as to not damage your walls. Make sure all your clips are magnetic before attempting this.



Bed and Bath Hacks

4. Place your reader in a ziplock bag so you can read without worrying. Before you try this in the bathtub, put a piece of paper inside the bag, then completely submerge it. If the paper is wet, then the bag is not completely waterproof, and should not be used. Ziplock bags work the best.



Bed and Bath Hacks

5. Avoid elbow grease, and fit a scrub brush to a drill and use your favorite cleaner. This will scrub everything very well, and as the Scrubbing Bubbles say, "We work hard so you don't have to!"



Bed and Bath Hacks

6. Hang your lamp, if you have a tiny bedroom. This will save the space of having a bedside table, and will give off much more light. To make a DIY one:

- Buy some craft wire
- Twist it using pliers
- Attach Christmas lights to it



Bed and Bath Hacks

7. Make a low-profile hanging hamper.

Instead of buying an ugly beige one, use colorful fabric and sew one using an embroidery hoop. Find a sack/sew a sack, then wrap the top around the embroidery hoop and sew.



Bed and Bath Hacks

8. When painting a room, pour in a tablespoon of vanilla extract to the paint. Stir it around and start painting. For every half a liter of paint, add one teaspoon of vanilla essence or extract and mix with a paint mixer. In the end, the room won't smell like that terrible paint odor, but instead smell like pure vanilla.



Fashion Hacks

1. Waterproof your Toms (or any shoes). Take beeswax (the lubricating type), and rub it over your shoes. Make sure you cover every part on the outside, and regularly touch up if the beeswax is coming off. Use a blow dryer or any type of heat to melt the surface of the wax, therefore making it invisible.



Fashion Hacks

2. Use a hair straightener as a collar iron. This method is much easier and effective than taking out the full iron, waiting for it to heat, then putting everything away. Borrow your girlfriend's/sister's/wife's/daughter's straightener, or simply buy a cheap one from your nearby pharmacy.



Fashion Hacks

3. Try white wine to get out red wine stains. Gently blot with a cloth soaked in white wine to remove the stains. Test first on a piece of scrap fabric, in case it stains your clothes more.



Fashion Hacks

4. Use Windex to restore patent leather shoes. Windex can be used to safely restore the sheen to patent shoes. Spray the affected area, then wipe gently until the stain/mark comes off.



Fashion Hacks

5. Pair socks before washing and safety pin them together in the wash to avoid having to re-pair them. This will help avoid the single sock search around the house. Use a safety pin, or other device that is water safe and will stay on when tossed around.



Organizing and Cleaning Hacks

1. Use a clean dustpan to fill a container that doesn't fit in the sink. Place the bucket or other large container on the floor directly in front of the sink. Place the larger end of the dustpan inside the sink, so that water can easily flow onto it. Place the handle sticking out of the sink, so that the water will fall into the bucket.



Organizing and Cleaning Hacks

2. Use nail polish to paint your keys different colors to tell them apart. Instead of going to the locksmith and purchasing colored copies of the keys, why not make brighter, more colorful, personalized, and 'free' ones at home? Nail polish works better than other types of paint. Gel nail polish works the best, but any type will do.



Organizing and Cleaning Hacks

3. Use a scarf/shoe hanger to organize your cleaning supplies, and keep them out of hungry little hands. The bottles fit perfectly, and if you get a mesh or clear pocketed one, you can even see the labels easily. Best of all, it takes up no floor space whatsoever.



Organizing and Cleaning Hacks

4. Use toothpaste to clear hazy headlights on car. Start by putting a little toothpaste on a rag, and rubbing in circular motions, until headlight is covered. With toothpaste, you may get 2-4 months out of it, unless you apply a wax, or something like Opti-coat, clear coat, or other sealant to your headlights to block the UV rays and keep them from getting hazy again.



Organizing and Cleaning Hacks

Toothpaste is a mild abrasive, so it naturally works well to polish things, and fill small scratches. Just don't use any kind of toothpaste with cooling crystals or anything like that, as they will scratch the surface badly. Regular whitening toothpaste works fine.



Organizing and Cleaning Hacks

5. Remove Sharpie. Use different removers for each type of object:

- **For fabric:** Use hand sanitizer.
- **For skin:** Use rubbing alcohol
- **For walls:** Use hairspray or toothpaste



Organizing and Cleaning Hacks

- **For wood:** Use rubbing alcohol
- **For carpet:** Use white vinegar
- **For dry erase boards:** Cover with white board marker.
- **For furniture:** Use milk
- **For ceramic or glass:** Use 1 part toothpaste, and 1 part baking soda.



Organizing and Cleaning Hacks

6. Use a tennis ball to make an easy key holder. Cut a slit in a tennis ball. Add eyes, then attach a hook velcro to the wall to attach the tennis ball. You can also use this as a towel holder, or a pen holder, or a letter holder.



Organizing and Cleaning Hacks

7. At the end of your toothpaste, place a binder clip to get every bit. This can be useful to prevent excess from going down the drain and being wasted.



Organizing and Cleaning Hacks

8. Soak crusty paint brushes in vinegar for half an hour. The chemicals cause the bristles to release and soften.



Organizing and Cleaning Hacks

9. Make a dustpan from a plastic gallon milk jug. First, the bottom off of the jug. Then cut a long slit across the straight ridge just under the handle of the jug, then cut down the jug from each end of the slit in the shape of a scoop. This can be useful if you lost your dustpan or need an (almost) free one.



Summary

By tweaking things a little, we can make life much easier. Some may seem like common sense, and others may be pure genius. The goal is to use what works for you. Enjoy!

