



AD IT YOURSELF

9 Pet Cleaning Hacks for Every Critter in Your House

Here's how experts want you to clean up after pets

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For those with pets, you may update your home with the [latest pet accommodations](#) (chic toy storage and [pet-friendly fabrics](#)), but that doesn't mean you can skip pet cleaning. Even with all the amazing benefits of pet ownership, from cuddles to a [mental health a boost](#), the chore of pet cleaning can be daunting. Fur babies, no matter how adorable, are still animals—albeit slightly more domesticated than the squirrels at the park—meaning they're hardly going to handle a vacuum.

Exotic birds, for one, may be known for constantly cleaning and preening themselves, but they sure aren't as neat with their cages. "I don't know if [people] realize how messy birds are in general: How they throw stuff everywhere around their cage, how destructive they are, how they'll go eat your window sills, or walls, or cabinets, or furniture," says Anna Osofsky, president of the [Association of Avian Veterinarians](#) and the owner of Quigley, a 30-year-old sulfur-crested cockatoo.

Cats and dogs aren't much better. "Your cat may throw up occasionally or have a little bit of upset, but they're probably never going to have the volume of accidents, fleas, ticks—anything from outside, really—mud, and dirt that a dog would," says Kate Karam, a Chewy pet expert and the editor in chief of [Be Chewy](#), a pet-centric advice and lifestyle site.

Even fish and turtles can add to the chore list with their algae-filled abodes. Still, all of this doesn't mean that you're destined to live with your pets' messes. Knowing the tried-and-true methods for cleaning up after your aquatic, feathery, or furry friends will [keep your home clean](#), so you have more time to play with your little critters.

Invest in pet-friendly cleaning supplies

You might not think [kitchen countertops](#) need pet cleaning, but let's be honest: The minute you're out of sight, your pets are hopping up there. That means you should be wiping down prep surfaces before cooking, but you also need to use products that won't harm your pet. "Avoid bleach wipes, because [your pet is] gonna walk across or sit on the counter, and then they're gonna lick themselves," Karam says. "And you don't want them to be getting a mouthful of bleach." [Koala Eco Natural Multi-Purpose cleaner](#) not only gets rid of paw prints, but it will also freshen your kitchen with a blend of lemon myrtle and mandarin essential oils.

You can find more information about best care practices for your bird—whether an exotic bird or a domestic poultry species—on [the AAV's website](#), including a list of household toxins.