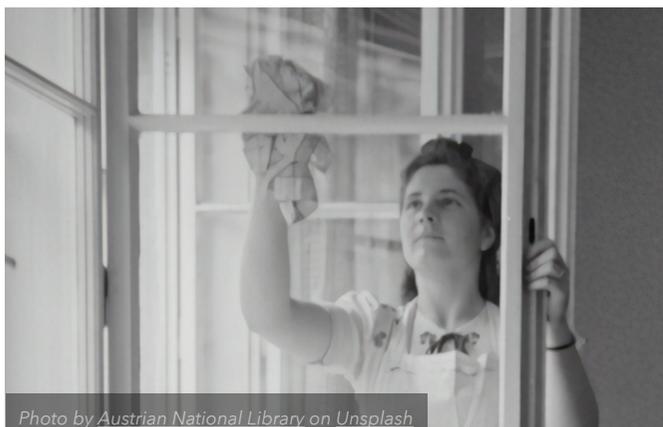


WEEKLY ENGLISH PRACTICE

How Clean Is Clean Enough?

27/01/22 / Keyword: clean

ECP coach Alison would like to get into the habit of keeping her home cleaner this year, but will a SMART approach to goal-setting be enough?



As someone who lives with three cats, my home isn't the cleanest—as soon as I've finished **hoovering**, the sofa is covered with hairs again—but keeping each space tidy is something I've got really good at over the years, since this prevents important items from getting lost or damaged should the cats decide to play with them.

For other people, tidiness isn't such a concern, but knowing all the surfaces in their home are dust-free and disinfected gives them peace of mind. This is especially important if someone in your home is immunocompromised or has asthma, for instance.

Whatever your personality type when it comes to house-keeping, **chances are** you begin each year with a desire to keep your home organised and **sparkling**, but then find other tasks or commitments may get in the way of your goal. It turns out that actually achieving a consistently clean and tidy home requires a significant amount of planning, preparation and honesty: are we really too busy to clean, or are we just lazy? And how clean is clean enough?

I happen to be one of those people that likes to do the washing-up after every meal, and I generally embrace **hoovering** as a welcome opportunity to listen to podcasts. However, I never seem to find the time or energy to clean all the areas and surfaces of my home as thoroughly as I would like. It's one thing to keep the bathroom mirror **spotless**, but what about the windows and the walls? How clean is the inside of the oven? What

happens to the dirt collected in the gap under the washing machine, the **grime** on top of the kitchen cupboards or the dust stuck behind the radiators? Cleaning these harder-to-reach areas is a task many people will put off endlessly, until the thought of even beginning to approach them becomes overwhelming. That's why, this year, I've decided that I'm going to start working on these areas that usually get forgotten, so as to create a healthier living space for me and my pets.

I know what you're thinking, reader! "She's going to fail in her **pursuit** of a cleaner home." And **who can blame you?** New Year's resolutions are made to be broken. But there is one thing I can do to increase my chances of fulfilling this goal, and that is to make it SMART. That is, it needs to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and **Time-bound**. Let's look at how this can be done:

To make this goal specific, I'll make a list of 12 things in my home that I intend to clean, then clearly define the limits of each task and assign it to a month on the calendar. I'll need to determine exactly what day and time to go out and buy the necessary products, **stick on** some **up-beat** music and get to work for at least one hour each month. This makes it both measurable and **time-bound**, since I know I'll have met my goal once I've cleaned 12 of those "less urgent" spaces in the course of a year. *Turn to page 2* 🗨️ 🗨️ 🗨️

Useful vocabulary

hoovering: vacuum-cleaning
chances are: probably / it is likely that...

sparkling/spotless: very clean

grime: a layer of dirt stuck to a surface

pursuit: the act of trying to achieve a plan

Who can blame you?: expression used to say that your reaction is understandable

time-bound: limited in time

to stick something on: a colloquial way to say "to put sth on"

up-beat: fast and motivating

to spare something: to give or lend something not needed

worthwhile: a good idea; something that is worth doing

Let's chat about cleaning!

1. Is having a clean and tidy home important to you?
2. Which areas of your home are most difficult to keep clean and why?
3. Do you sometimes find the cleaning overwhelming?
4. Have you ever used the SMART goal-setting technique? What do you think of it?
5. What advice would you give Alison to help her achieve her goal?

LIVE! English Events

Come and socialise in English!

ECP's Cinema Nights

FRIDAY, 28th Jan at 18:30

Send a WhatsApp to John on 657 73 13 54

Bette Davis and Joan Crawford



Sister, sister, oh so fair, why is there blood all over your hair?

Coffee Saturdays

2021-22

11:00-12:30

Panadería Bertiz C/Francia 10

2nd October	5th March
6th November	2nd April
4th December	7th May
5th February	4th June

You may have heard of **SMART** goals before, but experts Dr Edwin Locke and Dr Gary Latham have determined a whole new set of principles for goal-setting success. These are:

Clarity. Challenge.

Commitment. Feedback.

Task complexity.

What do you think of this list?

(Check out this [article and video](#) for more info.)

This week's article contains the structure "I'll **have met my goal...**", which is an example of the **FUTURE PERFECT**, used to predict a completed state in the future.

Can you transform these present perfect sentences into the future perfect?

Example:

I've met my goal → *I'll have met my goal*

He's finished university →

She's spoken to him →

They've fallen asleep →

We've had dinner →

It's been repaired →

This goal is already achievable, since the products I use will be inexpensive, and I know I can **spare** some of the time I currently spend staring at my phone. This means it's also relevant, since it aligns with my efforts to reduce screen time, not to mention I suspect it will give me a greater sense of calm at home, and may even boost my self-esteem, which certainly makes it seem **worthwhile**.

So, all that's left now is to see if my SMART goal is really that smart. I may see results in just a few months, or I may find a way to sabotage my own success... but whatever the outcome, I'll be glad if *something* gets cleaned in the process.

Written by ECP coach Alison Keable



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