

How to Get Rid of Tobacco Smoke Residual and Smell

Once smoking has stopped, the earlier you can attack the problem, the better your chances of eliminating the lingering odor, carcinogens and damages. Depending on the size of the room or building you are trying to clean, you may want to consider hiring a professional cleaner. They have specialized training and equipment to remove smoke residual.

For do-it-yourselfers, try:

T.S.P. (trisodium phosphate) This comes in a liquid or powder form that you mix with water. It's not real expensive and it's what a lot of painters recommend you use to clean walls before painting. It does a good job removing stains and plain old dirt.

Vinegar Next to Italian salad dressings, this may be vinegar's most important job. In a large bowl or bucket mix one cup of white vinegar for every two cups of warm water, then add a scoop of baking soda - it should fizz. Use a sponge mop or brush to wash down your walls and ceilings with it. This solution will make residue much easier to remove and should be easy on your paint too.

Deep Cleaning:

*** Floors /walls/furniture-** Most non porous surfaces respond well to wiping and mopping with a vinegar/water combination or T.S.P solution. Wash all walls, floors, baseboards, ceilings, fans, vents covers, doors, hand rails, wall fixtures, chairs, and other surfaces that have been exposed to tobacco smoke. Even if you are going to paint the walls, you need to clean them first or the heavy smoke residual will penetrate through the new paint. You'll notice that the smoke stains get darker as the smoke travels up the wall, eventually landing on the ceiling. Pay special attention to corners and crevices.

*** Curtains/carpets** - Your bet is to throw away all fabric material that have heavy tobacco smoke damage or discoloration. Carpets that can't be replaced need to be vacuumed with baking soda until smells go away. If you want to add fragrance without the expense of a commercial product, mix a drop or two of your favorite essential oil into the baking soda before sprinkling. For stubborn odors, leave the baking soda on the carpet overnight before vacuuming. Curtains can be washed with some vinegar.

*** Central air systems** - Change filters once indoor smoking has stopped. Otherwise, you're circulating the very contaminant that you want to eliminate.

How to Remove Smoke Film from Drinking Glasses

***Soak:** Make a solution of 1/2 cup lemon juice and 1/5 cup gentle dish-washing detergent in 3 gallons of hot water in a sink or large tub. It's best to use a non-ionic neutral detergent such as Orvus Wa paste. Soak the glasses to be washed in the solution of lemon juice and mild detergent for 15 minutes.

***Wash:** Place a bristled glass washer in the center at the bottom of the sink. Small glass washers can be purchased at most retail stores while larger industrial washers can be found at bar and restaurant supply stores. After soaking, scrub the glasses on the bristled glass washer. Twisting and rotating the glasses on the washer will produce the best results.

***Rinse:** Make another sink full of hot water to rinse the glasses. Rinse the glasses thoroughly to ensure no soapy residue remains on the glasses.

***Sanitize:** Make another sink full of sanitizing water using the proper amount, water temp and time.

***Air Dry:** Then inspect for smoke film. Repeat if film remains. DO NOT use towels to dry. DO NOT put wet/damp glasses in a freezer, refrigerator or chiller.