HOW TO CLEAN TILES:

- For most types of tile (i.e., porcelain and ceramic), a combination of warm water and dish soap will do the trick for a grout cleaner. Although diluted vinegar is a common recommendation, it is very acidic. If your solution happens to be too strong, you'll weaken and damage the grout. Instead, you should spray a gentler solution (water and dish soap), then wipe with a damp microfiber towel or cloth. No matter what stains you're facing, water and patience are your best tools. Start by spraying the grout with hot water and scrubbing with a stiff bristle/grout brush, to lift any dirt or grime on the surface. Using a steam cleaner would help this process be a lot more effective. Proceed to apply steam directly to the grout, then use your brush to scrub in a circular motion. With a rag, blot any moisture away, and once the grout dries it should look good as new.
- When cleaning the tiles in your bathroom, remember that you're not dealing only with surface dirt and debris, but also soap residue, which can be harder to remove. To make it easy on yourself, spray the tiled floors and shower walls with surface cleaner, then crank the hot water for five minutes until steam builds. Wait 20 minutes and the tiles will be noticeably easier to wipe clean with a cloth.

HOW TO GROUT TILES

- Looking for your next weekend project? Master these simple professional grouting skills for durable, good-looking grout lines and a more attractive tiling job. Tools you will need for this activity: (1) Bucket, (2) Caulk gun, (3) Grout float, (4) Margin trowel, (5) Microfiber towel, (6) Putty knife, (7) Shop vacuum, (8) Tiling sponge, and (9) Utility knife. Materials required for this project: (1) Caulk, (2) Grout, and (3) Masking Tape

I. Clean the joints

- Sweep and/or vacuum the grout lines, then scrape any damaged grout using a putty knife and vacuum again. Try not to scrape too hard or you may chip your tile.

II. Apply tape to trim of tile
- For easier cleanup after grouting, tape near the painted walls to protect them. Also, tape the trim or inset tiles that feature imprinted patterns with crevices.

III. Mix grout
- Mix the grout with a small trowel until all the powder is dissolved. Roll the bucket frequently while mixing. Scrape the bottom to make sure all the grout is mixed. Pour some grout out of the bag into a mixing bucket. Pour water in a little at a time and start mixing by hand using a margin trowel. Tip the bucket toward you and roll it in a "cement mixer" style as you mix. Be sure to scrape any dry, unmixed grout from the bottom of the bucket with your margin trowel. Keep mixing until all the powder has been absorbed and it has the consistency of peanut butter. When you're getting close, dribble in water from a sponge. It only takes a little too much to create soup

IV. Put grout on your float
- Tip the bucket toward you and drag some grout with your float up the side of the bucket toward you. This makes it easier to scrape up a decent amount of grout onto your float. Push the float tight against the side of the bucket and scrape off a dollop of grout. This helps to make sure any excess that falls off will only fall into the bucket and not off the edge and onto the floor.

V. Spread the grout
- Smear the grout diagonally across the tile to force it deep into the joints and prevent it from being sucked back out as your float slides along. Always grout the walls first, and after they're finished, the floor. That'll keep you from messing up a finished floor. Apply the grout diagonally across the tile joints to squish the grout into the joints. Use whichever side or corner of the float is necessary to fully compress grout into the entire joint. On vertical surfaces, apply grout upward. That way you won't drop so much on the floor

VI. Clean excess grout
- Remove the bulk of the grout by wiping in a serpentine motion. This helps evenly distribute the grout and prevents the grout float edge from digging into grout lines. After you've filled all the joints, make your first "cleanup" passes with the float. Your goal is merely to get as much excess grout as possible off the face of the tile. Hold the float at a sharp angle to the tile and scrape excess grout from the surface.

VII. Sponge the surface of tile
- Sweep a damp sponge diagonally across the tile. Rinse your sponge often and repeat until you're left with a thin haze. Once the grout has started to harden (20-30 minutes), begin sponging. Don't use any sponge, especially one from the kitchen; choose a hydrophilic (water-loving) sponge. Make sure it's damp (not wet) and sweep diagonally across the face of the tile and wipe the grout off the tile surface. On your first few passes, the grout will smear all over the tile and look like a mess. Rinse out your sponge often in a bucket of clean water and keep wiping until most of the smeared-on grout is gone.

VIII. Smooth out grout lines
- Depress the sponge with your index finger and smooth out high or uneven grout lines. Don't push too hard. The goal is to keep all the joints the same shape and depth. When the surface has been cleaned, begin smoothing and leveling the grout lines with the sponge. Hold the sponge in your palm and, gently pressing down with your index finger, run the sponge over any grout joints that look too high or uneven. You want consistent, even-depth grout joints. Don't push too hard and let the sponge do the work

IX. Remove the grout haze
- After the grout film has dried, polish away the haze with a cotton towel or a microfiber towel. After all the joints have been dressed, step away for about a half hour to let the surface dry and form a haze. Then wipe away the haze with a towel. Microfiber towels remove grout haze much quicker and cleaner than a regular towel.

X. Caulk the inside corners
- Don't grout inside corners. Use a grouting caulk on inside corners after grouting and cleaning. Don't overfill the void; you'll just make it harder to tool and clean. Inside corners that are grouted will always crack over time. Choose a matching color caulk designed to coordinate with the grout you've used