ADHD Cleaning Checklist

Cleaning broken into steps short enough to start, for anyone who stalls at the size of the job rather than the work itself.



Before you start (two minutes)

- [ ] Pick ONE room and close the door on the rest
- [ ] Set a timer for 15 minutes
  The timer is permission to stop, not a target to beat. Stopping when it goes off is the point.
- [ ] Put on music or a podcast you already like
- [ ] Carry in one bin bag, one laundry basket, one box for things that live elsewhere
- [ ] Fill a glass of water and bring it with you
- [ ] Ask someone to sit in the room or stay on a video call
  Working alongside another person helps many people start. It does not matter what they are doing.

Round one: rubbish only

- [ ] Walk the room and put only rubbish in the bag
- [ ] Do not sort, do not decide, do not keep anything you are unsure about
- [ ] Take the bag out when it is full or when you have gone round once

Round two: dishes and cups

- [ ] Collect every cup, plate and bottle onto one tray
- [ ] Carry the tray to the kitchen
- [ ] Put them in the dishwasher or leave them in the sink in water
  Washing up is a separate job. Moving them out of the room is the win here.

Round three: laundry

- [ ] Put every piece of dirty clothing in the basket
- [ ] Put clean clothes in one pile on the bed, unfolded
- [ ] Start a wash if the machine is empty

Round four: things that live elsewhere

- [ ] Put everything that belongs in another room into the box
- [ ] Do not leave the room to deliver them yet
  Leaving mid-task is where the session usually ends.
- [ ] Deliver the box at the very end, in one trip

Round five: one surface

- [ ] Pick the surface you see first when you walk in
- [ ] Clear it completely
- [ ] Wipe it
- [ ] Put back only what belongs there
  One clear surface changes how the whole room reads, which is why it beats cleaning three things halfway.

If it is too much today

- [ ] Do the five-minute version: rubbish and dishes only
- [ ] Clear one square metre of floor and stop
- [ ] Make the bed and count that as done
- [ ] Set the timer for five minutes instead of fifteen
- [ ] Leave the list where you can see it and come back tomorrow
  A half-done room is not a failed attempt. It is a room with less in it than yesterday.

Making it easier next time

- [ ] Keep a bin in every room
- [ ] Put a laundry basket where clothes actually land
- [ ] Keep cleaning supplies in the room that needs them, not in one cupboard
- [ ] Use open baskets rather than lidded boxes
  A lid is an extra step, and extra steps are where things get put down instead of away.
- [ ] Pick one daily reset: clear the kitchen counter, or the floor, or the bed
- [ ] Attach the reset to something you already do, like after dinner