

# Daily Herald

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## A clear view of how to clean windows

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What could be more wonderful than the great view through your new family room windows? That great view through clean windows.

Clean windows let in more light than dirty ones and sparkle a welcome to your visitors.

**Apply the cleaning solution to the whole window, says Juan Saavedra, a senior foreman with Corporate Cleaning Services, a leading window cleaning company in Chicago.**

### Make your new house a home

*Next week: Are you game?*

There will be no easier time to clean your windows than as you move in, before you have curtains or blinds to move aside.

While we admire the streak-free work of professional window washers, the truly remarkable fact is they use just a few basic tools. These tools are easy to find, inexpensive and will

help you, too, look like an expert window cleaner.

Juan Saavedra, a senior foreman at Corporate Cleaning Services, leads crews that clean windows on some of the most famous buildings in Chicago. It's all in a day's work for him to tackle the windows at the John Hancock Center downtown, sports arenas and more down-to-earth townhouses.

His most important advice:

"Invest in a good squeegee," says Saavedra, whose boss, Neal Zucker agrees. Purchase a quality tool at a hardware store and

you'll have it for a lifetime. You simply replace the business part, the rubber edge, when it wears out.

"We do this all the time," Saavedra says.

Don't scrimp on your squeegee purchase; pass right by that \$4 throwaway model. Buy a squeegee with a replaceable blade for \$10 to \$13. They range in size from 8 to 16 inches across, with the 10-inch models a good choice for home use. Replacement blades are \$3 to \$4. Grab a few of those to have

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## Windows: Dishwashing liquid used as a cleaner

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on hand.

There's no wadded up newspaper for these pros. There's also no spray glass cleaner.

Their cleaning solution of choice is dishwashing detergent. They prefer Joy brand in particular. And you don't need a bucket full of suds, they say.

"A teaspoon in 2 gallons of water," Saavedra says. That's a small splash in a household bucket.

Dawn dishwashing liquid and shampoo are popular alternatives. A simple recipe for a homemade window-cleaning solution is a half cup of household ammonia to a gallon of water. Be sure to read the safety precautions on the chemical label.

To prepare the windows, remove the screens and wipe away any dust on the windows and the frames. This includes any stray crawling creatures who have made a home on your house.

"Brush away the spiders and spider webs," Saavedra says. "In the summer lady bugs are also a problem." Yes, even 90 stories off the ground.

To get the best results from your squeegee, you want the sheeting action you get from a fully wet window. If your window has paint drips, dirt smudges or other visible grime, you need to get that off first.

To clean and to wet the win-

dows, Saavedra and his crews use a cleaning wand. It looks like folded towel on a stick. You can also use a soft-bristled brush. Both are available at your local hardware store.

Saavedra says you can also wrap a cloth around your squeegee.

After cleaning, apply a clean wipe of solution. To keep the liquid under control, keep a supply of rags or lint-free paper towels to catch drips and help out cleaning the corners.

"We use Viva towels," says Saavedra. They are commonly known as the brand that doesn't leave lint behind. A chamois is an alternative.

Professional window cleaners wield their squeegees in a

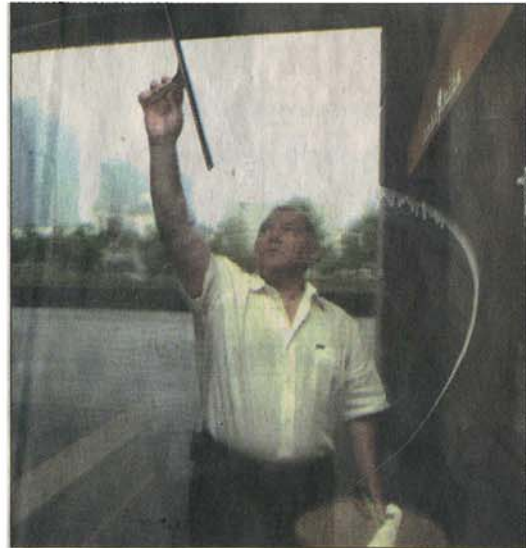
swooping, graceful figure-eight motion that's nearly impossible to describe in words.

"It takes a lot of practice to get the knack of using the squeegee," Saavedra says.

We nonprofessionals are probably better off taking baby steps in perfecting our technique.

One swipe across the top of the window followed by vertical swipes gets the job done. Wipe the squeegee dry after each stroke, then clean up any drips at the bottom of the window with a towel.

The best part about window cleaning is you don't have to waste a sunny day doing it. Cloudy days are best for sparkling streak-free results.



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