## No-till housekeeping

Just because I wrote a column idea in the dust on a piece of furniture because I didn't have a pencil and paper handy, my wife thought I was making a critical comment about her housekeeping. "If you don't like the way I clean house," she said, "you can just start doing it yourself."

I don't know why women complain so much about cleaning the house. They get to work in comfortable mud-free conditions in which there are no snakes or flies, in most cases. Although it's true that we men don't routinely dust the furniture and wash the dishes, that doesn't necessarily mean we couldn't if we had to.

It's just that there'd have to be a few changes made. Take vacuuming for example, an activity in which men are much like dogs in that we run and hide whenever we see or hear one. All it would take to make men vacuum enthusiasts is for someone to make a riding vacuum. Of course, houses would have to be redesigned and bumper pads would have to be affixed to furniture, but if we had tractor-like vacuums our wives would soon be yelling, "You're vacuuming the floors again? That's the fourth time this week!"

Naturally, men would tinker with their vacuums to increase their horsepower and pretty soon we'd be racing them. And just think, with wider hallways we could use a Bobcat whenever you needed to flip a mattress or move the furniture!

Our house is hard to clean because it's big; when it's noon in the kitchen, it's three o'clock in the living room. There's a lot of furniture to dust, but I came up with another brilliant idea when I bought myself a 33-gallon portable air compressor for Christmas. Now I just blast the dust away. (Note to men: don't set the compressor at more than 90 psi or you may ruin the patina on your wife's heirloom furniture.)

If you don't have a compressor, a leaf blower will also work. The leaf blower actually blows the dust into your neighbor's home, no matter how far away.

Using shop tools men can clean anything. Dishes and clothes can be cleaned in your parts washer, but be careful not to agitate your delicates. And grinders, sanders or a jackhammer can be used to clean the dirt that builds up in bathrooms during a year's time. What, you don't have a jackhammer? That's the beauty of my idea: wives can never again question your tool purchases because it's for cleaning HER house.

A word about laundry. I'd recommend either getting a laundry hamper the size of a grain silo or leaving dirty clothes for the wife to do after coming home from work. After all, we still want her to feel a part of the home management team.

When my wife complains about housekeeping I remind her that her forefathers and foremothers had to live in sod houses in which tarantulas and big bugs might drop from the grass ceiling at any minute. This rarely happens in our home.

I also tell her that the pioneers often had to share their houses with cows and horses, but she reminds me of all the bummer lambs and orphaned calves who've shared our bathtub. Speaking of pioneers, did you know that when the homes of some tribes of Indians got real dirty they just burned them down and moved. Whenever I hear something like that it reinforces my inkling that I must have some Indian blood coursing through my veins.

With men taking over home management it means wives will be freed up to work more outside the home. Of course, such dramatic change will necessitate some changes in our society. Because real men don't watch soap operas or the Ellen Show, NFL games will henceforth have to be on weekdays so that weekends will be free for us to attend vacuum races, demolition vacuum derbies and tractor/vacuum/car shows. History will henceforth record that it was I who suggested the use of shop tools to clean house, and I will take my rightful place in housekeeping history.

Gentlemen, start your vacuums!

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