

## How to Transform Daily Non-negotiables into Habits: Putting Your Kitchen to Bed

Let's talk about routines and non-negotiables—two simple tools that can bring more peace and order into your home.

In my book and course, I go deep into routines, exploring how they help build healthy, helpful habits.

The goal? To create habits that feel so natural they practically happen on autopilot. But not every task needs to be done every day. That's where non-negotiables come in!

### **Routines vs. non-negotiables**

So, what's the difference?

**Routines** are groups of actions you do regularly to keep things running smoothly. Think of them as the pattern of your day. A morning routine might look like making your bed, tidying the bathroom, throwing in a load of laundry, loading the dishwasher, brushing teeth, davening, and drinking coffee.

**Non-negotiables**, though, are specific things you've decided to do every day, no matter what. They're like promises you make to yourself. For example, if brushing your teeth and saying Modeh Ani and Brochos are non-negotiables, you do them every day, even if the rest of the morning is a rush. These are simple, steady actions that keep you grounded.

### **Why Non-Negotiables Matter**

Non-negotiables are small but powerful. Even on the busiest days, sticking to them gives you a sense of control. If life feels chaotic, doing these small actions helps you feel steady and gives you a little boost, knowing you didn't skip what matters most.

For example, let's say two of your non-negotiables are saying Brochos and making your bed. Even if your morning routine gets

cut short because things are a bit crazy, at least you've done those two things!

You've fulfilled those small, important promises to yourself, and that alone can make a difference in how you feel.

And if one of your evening non-negotiables is "putting the kitchen to bed," then maybe that means washing the dishes and clearing the counters. It doesn't take long, but even on hectic nights, you wake up to a clean, welcoming kitchen.

### **Building a Routine Around Your Non-Negotiables**

A good routine includes both your non-negotiables and the "extra" things you do when you have more time.

For example, your *evening routine* for the kitchen might include:

- Washing dishes
- Wiping counters
- Taking out the trash
- Sweeping the floor
- Setting out breakfast for the morning

But if washing the dishes and wiping the counters are your *non-negotiables*, then even on busy nights, you still do those two essentials. That way, you're staying consistent and getting the basics done, no matter what.

### **Choosing Your Non-Negotiables**

Start small. Choose just one or two tasks that you know you can do every day. They should be actions that give you a sense of peace or prepare you for the next day—like making your bed or washing the dishes.

Once you've got those down, they'll start to feel like brushing your teeth—almost automatic! Over time, you can build up to bigger routines, using your non-negotiables as the foundation.

### **Putting Your Kitchen to Bed**

Let's put this idea into practice with a nightly kitchen routine. Here are some simple tasks you can turn into non-negotiables:

#### **1. Wash the Dishes**

After dinner, make it a habit to either wash the dishes or load them into the dishwasher. If you're busy, even just rinsing them quickly can make a difference! Having a clean sink feels amazing in the morning.

## **2. Clear the Countertops**

Take a quick minute to put things back in their places. Clear counters give a peaceful vibe to the whole kitchen and make breakfast prep a breeze.

## **3. Take Out the Trash**

Dumping the trash at night keeps your kitchen smelling fresh and is one less thing to deal with in the morning. Make it a simple part of wrapping up your night.

## **4. Set Up Breakfast Basics**

If you like coffee, set out your mug and coffee supplies. Or lay out a couple of breakfast items. This tiny step sets the tone for an easier, calmer morning!

## **5. Wipe Down the Table or Counters**

A quick wipe takes just seconds but leaves things looking neat and ready for the next day. Try to do this right after clearing the table or counter to make it a quick one-two punch!

## **6. Close Pantry and Cabinet Doors**

Double-check that all the cabinets are closed and things are tucked away. This gives the kitchen a tidy, polished feel, even if it was a busy day.

## **7. Put Leftovers Away**

Don't let your food sit out overnight. Quickly store any leftovers to keep them fresh and ready to eat. This little task helps prevent food waste, too!

## **8. Check Appliances**

It takes only a second to check that all your appliances are off, but it brings peace of mind knowing everything is safe for the night.

## **9. Sweep and Wipe the Floor**

A quick sweep and wipe, even if just around the main areas, helps you avoid waking up to crumbs and keeps things looking neat and fresh.

## **10. Dim the Lights**

Finish up by dimming the kitchen lights or switching to a softer light. It's a simple way to signal the end of the day and create a cozy, calm atmosphere.

By committing to even just one or two of these tasks every night, you'll set yourself up for an organized, stress-free morning. And over time, these little actions- daily nonnegotiable- will become habits that feel natural and routine.

Building routines and sticking to non-negotiables helps you create a calm, organized home. With a little consistency, even small actions can have a big impact!