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# CLEANING AND DISINFECTING HARD SURFACES



## *What You Need to Know*

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### **What should be used to clean and disinfect hard surfaces?**

When a surface is visibly dirty, wash with a general household cleaner (soap or detergent). Rinse with water and follow with a disinfectant. When a surface is not visibly dirty, clean with a commercial product that is both a detergent (cleans) and a disinfectant (kills germs). Wear disposable gloves. Make sure the disinfectant product you choose is registered with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and includes an EPA registration number on it. For a list of EPA-registered disinfectants visit: [www.epa.gov/oppad001/chemregindex/html](http://www.epa.gov/oppad001/chemregindex/html).

### **What surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected?**

Hard surfaces that are touched often or by more than one person need to be cleaned and disinfected as explained above. Examples of hard surfaces include:

- Countertops
- Tabletops
- Doorknobs/door handles
- Microwaves
- Bathroom surfaces
- Desktops

Use sanitizer cloths on electronic items that are touched often. These items include computers, keyboards, computer mice, telephones, remote controls, light switches, door knobs and hand-held video games. Also use sanitizer cloths on car door handles, steering wheels, and gear shifts in vehicles.

### **What if disinfectants are not available?**

If disinfectants are not available, use a chlorine bleach solution made by adding one ounce of fresh bleach to nine ounces of water. Spray or use a cloth to apply to surfaces and let stand for 10 minutes if possible.

Rinse with clear water.

#### **NOTE:**

Minimum disinfectant concentrations are needed for different infectious agents and surfaces. In general, a bleach concentration of 10% is effective against most infectious agents for most surfaces. For more detailed information visit the EPA disinfectant web page at: [www.epa.gov/oppad001/chemregindex.html](http://www.epa.gov/oppad001/chemregindex.html).

When using chlorine bleach to disinfect surfaces, use an unopened bottle. Chlorine bleach loses its effectiveness 30 days after opening. A fresh bleach/water solution should be made daily.

**REMEMBER:**

Always follow label instructions carefully when using cleaners and disinfectants. Pay attention to any hazard warnings and instructions on labels for using personal protective items such as household gloves.

**DO NOT MIX DISINFECTANTS AND CLEANERS**

**HAND WASHING INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Use soap and running water
- Rub your hands vigorously for 20 seconds
- Wash all surfaces, including:
  - Backs of hands
  - Wrists
  - Between fingers
  - Under fingernails
- Rinse well
- Dry hands with a paper towel
- Turn off the water using a paper towel instead of bare hands



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