

## Health and Wellness

# How to Clean and Disinfect Your Home Against COVID-19

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With the current outbreak of **COVID-19**, frequently cleaning and disinfecting your home is essential for keeping yourself and your family safe and healthy.

While person-to-person transmission of COVID-19 poses a much greater risk than transmission via surfaces, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces **at least once a day**, even if you're not leaving the house. That's because anytime items or people come in and out of your home, there's some possibility of exposure.

A recent **study** found that the novel coronavirus can remain in the air for up to three hours and live on surfaces such as cardboard for up to 24 hours, and plastic and stainless steel for up to three days.

Here are a few ways to make sure you are properly cleaning *and* disinfecting your home and keeping your household as germ-free as possible.

## The Difference Between Cleaning and Disinfecting

It's important to note that cleaning a surface – simply removing dirt and particles – is not the same thing as disinfecting it to kill viruses and bacteria.

There are many products you can use to clean hard surfaces, like soapy water and vinegar. And while cleaning high-traffic surfaces to remove contaminants, dust and debris is a necessary step of cleaning your home, you still need to disinfect those surfaces from the novel coronavirus.

## Which Cleaning Products Kill COVID-19?

Not all cleaning products are effective on all types of germs, so you should know exactly which products kill COVID-19.

The EPA provides a **full list of disinfectants** that kill the novel coronavirus. You might already have some of these effective products in your home, like:

- Disinfecting wipes, including Clorox, Lysol or store brand wipes

- Disinfectant sprays, such as Purell, Clorox or Lysol
- Isopropyl alcohol
- Hydrogen peroxide

And while using effective virus-killing products is key, it's also important to follow the proper techniques to thoroughly disinfect surfaces. The EPA advises letting the product sit and remain wet on surfaces or objects for 10 minutes, and that will kill 99.9 percent of germs.

If you don't have any disinfecting products on hand and are unable to find any in stores, the CDC offers [instructions](#) how to create a homemade bleach disinfectant spray. If you use this product, be sure to wear gloves, open your windows and be careful since bleach can damage or discolor sensitive surfaces.

## Disinfecting Against COVID-19

You don't need to clean your house from top to bottom each day, but you should focus on disinfecting the areas that are hot-spots for germs. These are the most important items to disinfect every day:

- Cupboard and drawer knobs/pulls
- Faucets
- Kitchen and bathroom counters
- Toilets, especially the seat and handle
- Refrigerator, dishwasher, oven and microwave handles
- Remote controls and game controllers
- Cell phones, tablets and other mobile devices
- Computer keyboards and mice

- Door knobs/handles
- Table surfaces
- Staircase railings
- Light switches/switch plates

If possible, wear disposable gloves and discard them after disinfecting. If you have reusable gloves, be sure to disinfect them after you're done. And always remember to wash your hands before and after you clean and disinfect your home.

## How to Clean and Disinfect If You Have a Sick Person In Your Home

If you have a sick person in your home, the CDC recommends taking **extra precautions** to clean and disinfect your household areas.

The person who is sick should stay separated from other people in the home and use a separate bedroom and bathroom, if possible. You should only clean and disinfect the area around the person who is sick when needed, such as when the area is soiled. This will help limit your contact with the person who is sick.

If possible, you can provide cleaning supplies to the person who is sick so they can clean their own space if they're able. If you are sharing a bathroom with a sick person, they should clean and disinfect the space after each use. If this is not possible, you should wait as long as possible before cleaning and disinfecting.

## Keep Washing Your Hands

It's been repeated countless times, but that's because it's true: no matter what you do, the best way to lower your risk of contracting COVID-19 or passing it to someone else is to **wash your hands**.

The CDC recommends a vigorous 20-second scrub with soap and water that extends beyond the hands to the wrists, between the fingers and under the fingernails.

Still have questions regarding COVID-19? Learn more on our [FAQ page](#).

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