

Protect Your Home From the Coronavirus

Recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), these steps for cleaning and disinfecting can help protect against the spread of COVID-19 in your home.

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Clean & Disinfect: Know the Difference — and Do Both

Cleaning



WHAT IT DOES:

Removes germs, dirt and impurities from surfaces.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

Cleaning helps reduce the number and spread of germs, but it **does not kill them.**

Disinfecting



WHAT IT DOES:

Uses chemicals to kill germs on surfaces.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

Disinfecting is most effective on clean surfaces that are free of dirt or grime.

What supplies do I need?



Household cleaners, such as soap and water or all-purpose cleaning sprays.



Chemical disinfectants, including sprays and wipes, that specify they kill germs.



Gloves, either disposable or reusable.



Other protective gear as needed — especially when working with bleach — including protective eyewear, facemasks, and nonporous (e.g., rubber) boots.



Sponges



Towels, either paper or cloth.

What do I do after using them?

Store safely, away from areas you often touch.

After putting away all other supplies, remove and immediately throw away disposable products.

Laundry washable products before using them again.

If using reusable gloves, do not use gloves again for purposes other than treating surfaces for the coronavirus.

Wash in the dishwasher with a heated dry cycle, or wet sponge and heat in the microwave for one minute.

Throw away paper towels.

Laundry cloth towels before using them again.

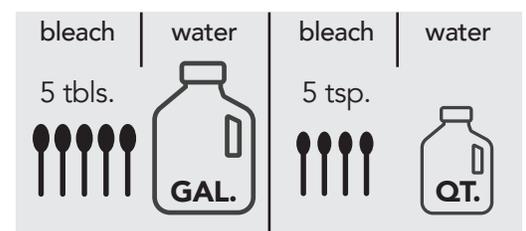
Will my household products be effective against the coronavirus?

- To find out, visit www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2.
- Scroll down until you locate the search box.
- Find the EPA registration number on your product.
- Enter the first two sets of numbers into the search box. These are the **company number** and **product number**, respectively.
- Scroll down the list of products in the grid. If your product is listed, it is effective against the virus.
- If your product doesn't match the full number, but matches the company number and the product number, it is still effective. The first two sets of numbers are what count.



What if my products aren't on the EPA list?

- Use products that have an EPA number — even if they can't be found on the list — as long as human coronavirus is listed as a target pathogen on the label.
- Consider making your own diluted bleach solution.
 - Mix **5 tablespoons** (1/3 cup) of bleach **per gallon** of water, **OR 4 teaspoons** of bleach **per quart** of water.
 - Stay safe!**
 - ✓ Never mix bleach with ammonia or any other household cleaner.
 - ✓ Open windows to get ventilation when handling.
 - ✓ Protect your eyes and skin from contact with bleach.



How to Clean and Disinfect

| <p>What to do:</p> | <p>Hard Surfaces Light switches, Doorknobs, Cabinet handles, Countertops, Desks, Tables, Hard-backed chairs, Toilets, Sinks</p>  | <p>Porous/Soft Surfaces Towels, Bed linens, Carpets/rugs, Drapes</p>  | <p>Electronics Phones, Tablets, Touch screens, Remote controls, Keyboards</p>  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p>Prepare</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Put on protective gear and gather supplies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Put on protective gear and gather supplies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Put on protective gear and gather supplies. |
| <p>Clean</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Apply cleaner to surfaces. Wipe away immediately with sponge, cloth or paper towels. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Remove any visible dirt or spills with appropriate cleaners (like carpet cleaner). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Read manufacturer instructions for cleaning each device. ✓ Apply cleaner approved for use on electronics. ✓ Wipe away immediately with sponge, cloth or paper towels. |
| <p>Disinfect</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Apply disinfectant to surfaces, following label instructions. ✓ Leave disinfectant on for some time to allow it to kill germs. Read label instructions to determine for how long. ✓ If using a bleach solution, allow to sit wet for at least 1 minute. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Apply disinfectant approved for soft/porous surfaces to things you can't remove, like carpets. ✓ Leave disinfectant on surface for some time to allow it to kill germs. Read label instructions to determine how long. ✓ Launder removable items, such as bed linens, using highest possible heat settings. Read product labels for guidance. Dry items completely. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Apply disinfectant approved for use on electronics. ✓ Leave disinfectant on surface for some time to allow it to kill germs. Read label instructions to determine how long. ✓ Dry surfaces thoroughly. |
| <p>Wrap Up</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Return supplies to storage, and throw away disposable products. ✓ Remove gloves. ✓ Wash hands immediately for 20 seconds with soap and water. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Return supplies to storage, and throw away disposable products. ✓ Remove gloves. ✓ Wash hands immediately for 20 seconds with soap and water. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Return supplies to storage, and throw away disposable products. ✓ Remove gloves. ✓ Wash hands immediately for 20 seconds with soap and water. |

What if someone in my home has or might have COVID-19?

If someone in your home has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or is showing symptoms, follow CDC special guidelines for cleaning and staying safe while caring for someone who is ill: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html).

Stay in the know.

Check the CDC website regularly for the most accurate and up-to-date coronavirus guidance: [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus). Learn more about how older adults can prepare on AARP's website: [aarp.org/coronavirus](https://www.aarp.org/coronavirus).

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References

1. "Cleaning and Disinfection for Households: Interim Recommendations for U.S. Households with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (April 2020): [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html)
2. "Best Ways to Clean Kitchen Sponges," USDA (2007): ars.usda.gov/news-events/news/research-news/2007/best-ways-to-clean-kitchen-sponges/.
See also: "So Your Kitchen Sponge Is A Bacteria Hotbed. Here's What To Do," NPR (2017): [npr.org/sections/thesalt/2017/09/11/548926054/can-you-really-not-clean-your-kitchen-sponge](https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2017/09/11/548926054/can-you-really-not-clean-your-kitchen-sponge).
Note that while cleaning a sponge in these ways can be effective on many types germs, experts still recommend replacing sponges often, as certain bacteria and viruses continue to live in them after cleaning.
3. Label Review Training: Module 2: Parts of the Label, Page 14," Environmental Protection Agency (Retrieved April 2020): [epa.gov/pesticide-labels/label-review-training-module-2-parts-label-page-14](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-labels/label-review-training-module-2-parts-label-page-14).