



September/October 2006

Calendar of Clean

September is ...

- **National Food Safety Education Month**
[See The A-B-C's of Safe Lunch Preparation article](http://www.foodsafety.gov/~fsg/september.html)
<http://www.foodsafety.gov/~fsg/september.html>
- **Labor Day: Sept. 4**
- **National Clean Hands Week: Sept. 18-24**
[See News Flash! Hand Hygiene: It's Ladies Day! article](#)

October is ...

- **National Child Health Day: Oct. 2**
[See Germ in the Classroom article](#)
- **National School Lunch Week: Oct. 9-13**
[See The A-B-C's of Safe Lunch Preparation article](http://www.schoolnutrition.org/)
<http://www.schoolnutrition.org/>
- **Halloween: Oct. 31**
[See Safety Tips for Halloween article](#)

Features

- [Keep Your Home Surfaces Sparkling](#)
Easy solutions for everyday cleaning
- [News Flash! Hand Hygiene: It's Ladies Day!](#)
Study shows women better than men at washing hands
- [The A-B-C's of Safe Lunch Preparation](#)
Follow these rules to pack a safe lunch for your child
- [Safety Tips for Halloween](#)
Be on guard for tricks in those treats
- [Germ in the Classroom](#)
Tips to avoid bringing them home
- [A Laundry Care Kit for the College-bound](#)
How to make laundry day a little easier
- [Highlights: SDA's History, Then and Now](#)
Spotlight: The Evolution of Clean
- [Cleaning Questions? Ask Nancy!](#)
- [Clean Ideas: Making Housecleaning Fun for Kids](#)
Ideas for turning chores into games

Keep Your Home Surfaces Sparkling Easy solutions for everyday cleaning

Busy lifestyles, active families and dual-income households with no one person solely responsible for keeping things scrubbed and sparkling, all add up to an increasing consumer demand for convenience in cleaning products.

And, with everyone pressed for time, one of the most effective ways to get your house to look and feel clean is to get those surfaces gleaming. Nancy Bock, Vice President of Education and Meetings at The Soap and Detergent Association, offers some suggestions, complete with cleaning supplies that are

convenient and easy to use.

Clear the Clutter

Surfaces that are free of "stuff" are easier to clean. Here are a few ways to accomplish this:

- Keep collections under control. Consider glass-enclosed display cases. The less you have out in the open, the easier it is to clean.
- Use baskets in varying sizes as repositories for magazines, keys, iPods, cell phones, unopened mail and other everyday items that tend to take over countertops and tabletops.
- Remove anything from the kitchen countertop that you don't use at least once a day.
- Make a nightly sweep before bedtime. Put newspapers in the recycle bin, toss out the junk mail, return food to the cupboards, put dirty dishes in the dishwasher, hang up jackets, put away towels, etc. In short, put things back where they belong so you'll have a clean start for the new day.

Court Convenience

Stock up on cleaning supplies that are effective and easy to use. Keep them in a plastic carry caddy so it's easy to tote them from room to room. A complete set of cleaning products on every floor means the tools are always at hand whenever the mood – or the necessity – strikes.

- Septic-safe, **flushable toilet scrubbing pads**: The cleaning agent is embedded in the textured pad. When you're done cleaning, push a button to release the pad and flush it away.
- **Flushable bathroom wipes**: Good for touching up surfaces between deeper cleanings.
- **Multi-purpose surface cleaners**: Those that do double or triple duty minimize what you have to carry around.
- A **duster with a disposable head and a flexible wand**: This modern version of a feather duster has "fiber fingers" that are designed to trap the dust rather than release it into the air.
- A special **cleaning pad that rubs grime away**: It's designed to work on dried food on the countertop, scuff marks on the floor and crayon marks on the wall.
- **Disinfectant wipes**: These are convenient for killing germs and cleaning hard surfaces, such as countertops, sinks, windows and toilets. For quick cleanups, keep **pop-up versions** right next to bathroom and kitchen sinks.
- **Floor wipes**: "Mop-pad" styles for use with specifically-designed mops are available in wet or dry formulations.

Prepare a Plan

Develop a surface-cleaning plan, following a route that takes you efficiently from room to room. Heavily trafficked rooms, such as kitchens, bathrooms and family rooms, will probably require twice-a-week attention to maintain a sparkling appearance. For other spaces in the home, once a week will probably do the trick.

News Flash

News Flash! Hand Hygiene: It's Ladies Day!

Study shows women better than men at washing hands

Ask average adult Americans if they always or usually wash their hands after using public restrooms and 97 percent of the women and 96 percent of the men will say "yes." At least, that was the response to a phone survey sponsored by The Soap and Detergent Association (SDA) and the American Society for Microbiology (ASM). But when these same two organizations sponsored an observational study, the results were a bit different.

When more than 6,000 individuals at six public attractions in four major cities (Atlanta, Chicago, New York City and San Francisco) were observed, only 83 percent washed their hands before leaving the restroom. For men, the percentage was 75. Women, however, took their hand hygiene more seriously – 90 percent washed their hands.

Men Strike Out

If the results at Atlanta's Turner Field are any indication, sports fans, especially the men, need to clean up their act. When using the restroom at the baseball park, 37 percent of the guys and 16 percent of the gals failed to wash their hands. Travelers don't fare much better. At New York City's Penn Station, 92 percent of the women washed their hands, compared to only 64 percent of the men.

Based on the phone survey, when it comes to washing hands after coughing or sneezing, women did better, but both sexes failed dismally. Only 24 percent of men and 39 percent of women responded affirmatively.

Hit a Home Run for Handwashing

The single most important way to keep from getting sick and spreading illness to others is to clean our hands, reports Nancy Bock, Vice President of Education and Meetings at The Soap and Detergent Association. And, despite what many people believe, cold and influenza viruses are spread much more often by hands than through airborne transmission from sneezing or coughing. Here's how to wash your hands properly:

- Wet hands with warm water and apply liquid, bar or powder soap.
- Rub hands together vigorously for the amount of time it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice.
- Dry hands with a paper towel or air dryer.
- When soap and water aren't available, hand sanitizers and antibacterial wipes are highly recommended for maintaining good hygiene.

For more information on the ASM/SDA Hand Hygiene Survey, go to http://www.cleaning101.com/newsroom/2005_survey/handhygiene/.

The A-B-C's of Safe Lunch Preparation

Follow these rules to pack a safe lunch for your child

Whether you're packing lunch or an after-school munch, you don't want bacteria that cause foodborne illnesses to be your child's dining companions. Nancy Bock, Vice President of Education and Meetings at The Soap and Detergent Association, offers some guidelines for packing a safe lunch.

A Clean Slate

- Make sure your hands, food preparation surfaces and utensils are clean. Use hot water and soap to effectively get rid of bacteria.
- Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly and paper-towel them dry before packing.

Chill Out

Because bacteria grow more slowly on cold items, anything you can do to make cold foods colder longer is a good thing.

- Make sandwiches the night before and refrigerate until morning.
- Sandwiches (minus lettuce, tomatoes or mayonnaise) can be frozen overnight. Choose coarse-textured bread, such as whole wheat, so the bread won't get soggy when it thaws.
- If morning assembly is more your style, pre-chill sandwich fixings like bread and canned tuna in the refrigerator until you're ready to fix lunch.

- If lunches are made the night before, keep them in the refrigerator until it's time to pack up and go. Foods should never be left unrefrigerated for more than two hours.
- A single-size juice pack can double as a cold pack if left in the freezer overnight. The juice will thaw by lunchtime, but will still be cold.

Choose Safe

Peanut butter and jelly is popular with kids because they like the taste. It's popular with moms because it's easy to make and doesn't require refrigeration. But it's not the only food choice that doesn't require refrigeration. Other choices include uncut fresh fruits and vegetables, hard cheese, unopened canned meat and fish, chips, bread, crackers, mustard, pickles, packaged pudding, juice packs, canned fruits and juices, granola, dry cereal, raisins and cookies.

Pack Safe

- An insulated lunch box is the best container.
- If you're packing the lunch in a brown bag, double-bag it for better insulation and add a cold source, such as a cold pack or frozen juice pack.
- Pack hot foods in an insulated thermos so they stay hot until lunchtime. Pre-warm the thermos by filling it with boiling water. Let it stand for a few minutes, then empty out the water and put in the food. Keep the thermos closed until lunchtime.

Safety Tips for Halloween

Be on guard for tricks in those treats

Trick-or-treat bags full of goodies pose an almost irresistible temptation for kids. Nancy Bock, Vice President of Education and Meetings at The Soap and Detergent Association, cautions parents to make sure kids understand that until those treat bags get home, the rule is "no munching allowed!"

Out and About

- To help kids resist temptation, don't send them out trick-or-treating on an empty stomach. Make sure they have a meal or a light snack before leaving home.
- Instruct children not to accept anything that isn't commercially wrapped. This includes items like apples and homemade baked goods.

Back at Home

- Discard any homemade candy or baked goods and anything that isn't commercially wrapped.
- For young children, check the treat bag and remove any choking hazards, such as gum, peanuts, hard candies or small toys.
- Inspect commercially wrapped treats for signs of tampering, such as an unusual appearance or discoloration, tiny pinholes, or tears in wrappers. If it looks at all suspicious, throw it away.

Germ in the Classroom

Tips to avoid bringing them home

The bell rings. School is over for the day. Home comes: coats, backpacks, textbooks, homework assignments . . . and lots of germs!

Children are notorious for poor hygiene habits. They constantly touch their eyes, noses and mouths, forget to cover their mouths when they cough or sneeze, and they may not have the mindset – or the opportunity – to wash their hands frequently. Add to this the fact that germs that cause colds and flu can survive on common classroom surfaces for up to 72 hours, and it's no wonder that kids and their families

get sick more often during the school year, observes Nancy Bock, Vice President of Education and Meetings at The Soap and Detergent Association.

How to Guard Against Germs

- Keep your child at home when he or she is ill. The Perfect Attendance Award shouldn't be earned at the expense of anyone's health!
- Teach your child to wash his or her hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, especially before eating lunch, after using the bathroom and after coming home from school.
- Remind your child to cover her nose and mouth with her sleeve instead of her hands when coughing or sneezing.
- Be sure your child's flu vaccinations are up-to-date.
- Tuck small packs of tissues into backpacks, with an extra one for your child to store in his or her locker or desk. Teach your children to deposit used tissues in the wastebasket.
- Pack hand wipes or a hand sanitizer in the lunchbox and book bag.

A Laundry Care Kit for the College-bound **How to make laundry day a little easier**

Looking for a little something to make your favorite college student's life easier? How about a laundry care kit? asks Nancy Bock, Vice President of Education and Meetings at The Soap and Detergent Association?

Since space in most dorm rooms is limited, gather the supplies first and then select a plastic carry caddy that will house them conveniently and efficiently.

- **Detergent:** Look for small packages that take up less storage space than nonconcentrated products.
- **Bleach:** Nonchlorine (oxygen) bleach will help keep your student's colored garments bright and white garments white.
- **Pre-wash stain remover:** Available in convenient stick or spray formulas, these are useful for treating spots and stains before dropping items into the washing machine.
- **Stain stick, pen or gel:** Stains can be treated and laundered anytime within a week.
- **Stain removal wipes:** Designed to treat stains on contact, these wipes can be applied while wearing garments and are safe for most dry-cleanable fabrics.
- **Information on fabric care symbols:** Go to <http://www.cleaning101.com/laundry/fabricsymbols2.cfm> and print out "Your Guide to Fabric Care Symbols" and "Fabric Care Language Made Easy." Insert them back-to-back in a plastic sheet protector and tuck them into the carry caddy so your college student will have a convenient reference guide.
- **Laundry care Web site:** Have your student bookmark <http://www.cleaning101.com/laundry> on his/her computer for tips about laundry care.

Highlights

SDA'S HISTORY, THEN AND NOW...

Spotlight: The Evolution of Clean: A Visual Journey Through the History of Soaps and Detergents

The Evolution of Clean: A Visual Journey Through the History of Soaps and Detergents, was produced this year to commemorate the 80th anniversary of The Soap and Detergent Association. This

commemorative book contains photographs from the private collection of Fortuna and Lewis Sptiz and is a journey through more than a century's worth of soap and detergent history. Its pages are filled with information about the oldest living soaps, laundry products, historic timelines, international information and the art of selling soap. For more information about the book, contact SDA at info@cleaning101.com.

Cleaning Questions? *Ask Nancy!*

Q: What's the best way to kill germs on objects that everybody in the family touches, such as doorknobs, telephones and remote controls?

A: Disinfectant cleaners are the best way to kill germs on surfaces throughout the home. A disinfectant spray or disinfectant wipe will work well on any of these surfaces. It's a matter of personal preference. Be aware that although germs can't live long on clean, dry surfaces, they love moisture. So avoid reusing damp, dirty items such as cleaning cloths and sponges.

Q: Does washing my hands with soap and water kill bacteria on my hands?

A: No. Water that would be hot enough to kill bacteria would burn your hands. However, since the bacteria actually reside in the soil in the body oils on your hands, the key is to use soap and warm water to remove the body oil soils and the bacteria in them. Here's how to do it properly:

- Wet your hands with warm, running water and then apply soap.
- Move your hands away from the water and rub them together to make lather.
- Wash the front and back of your hands, between the fingers and around and under the nails for 20 seconds.
- Rinse hands well under warm, running water.
- Dry hands thoroughly with a clean paper or cloth towel or an air dryer.

– Nancy Bock is Vice President of Education and Meetings for The Soap and Detergent Association

Clean Ideas: Making Housecleaning Fun for Kids

Ideas for turning chores into games

When it comes to household chores, it's hard to get kids motivated. Why not take your cue from some TV game shows – past and present – and turn household chores into a fun-filled challenge?

1. **Wheel of Fortune:** Draw a circle on a large piece of cardboard, and then divide the circle into sections, like a pizza. Write a cleaning task in each section. Cut out a cardboard arrow and use a brad fastener to attach it to the middle of the wheel. Let each child spin the arrow to choose his/her chore of the day.
2. **Beat The Clock:** Set the timer and have a race to see who can put their toys away the fastest or hang up all their coats and sweaters in record time.
3. **Let's Make A Deal:** Have your child choose a chore, such as doing the dishes or sorting the laundry. After he's done it a few times, let him take complete ownership with equipment that belongs to him. For example, take him to the store and let him pick out his own watering can or an apron and rubber gloves that are suited to his size.
4. **Treasure Hunt:** Hide slips of paper with small amounts of money (3 cents, 5 cents, 10 cents – you decide how much and how many) written on them. Put them in places where you want the children to be sure to dust. Once the dusting passes inspection, let them redeem their prize.
5. **The Price Is Right:** When there's a big job to be done that involves the whole family, such as weeding the garden or cleaning the porch, let everyone know that there is a reward for finishing. It might be dinner at a favorite restaurant, a movie, a trip to the zoo or a family game night at home.