



CLEANLINESS FACTS

TIPS AND TRENDS FROM THE SOAP AND DETERGENT ASSOCIATION

1500 K Street NW, Suite 300 Washington, DC 20005

CLEANING YOUR VACATION HOME New Products Make It a Breeze

www.cleaning101.com

GermS never take a vacation. They're all around us all the time. Who wants to spend valuable vacation time cleaning up germS? And, who wants to vacation in a germ-filled environment that could make them sick? The solution to cleaning up your vacation home is focusing on easy, fuss-free ways to keep dirt and germS at bay, says The Soap and Detergent Association.

Start with the new, easy-to-use, disposable cleaning cloths. They come in all types for a variety of cleaning needs — *disinfecting wipes* for killing germS on surfaces, *dry, electrostatic cloths* for easy pick-up of dust, dirt, hair and other common allergens and new *floor mops* for cleaning floors.

These products allow for convenience cleaning that eliminates the need for cleaning rags — a convenience factor that's particularly suited to vacation time! Read the product label for information about how to use these products and the surfaces and soils they are designed to clean.

Disinfecting Wipes

Disinfecting or antibacterial wipes are designed to clean and disinfect common-touch surfaces, such as refrigerator and faucet handles, microwave handles, light switch covers, door handles and telephone receivers. Place containers of pop-up wipes in bathrooms, bedrooms and kitchens so that using them becomes a regular habit for everyone!

(Continued on page 2)

TABLE OF CONTENTS


July/August 2003

CLEANING YOUR VACATION HOME New Products Make It a Breeze	1
SUMMER GRILLING Tips for Cleaning the Outdoor Grill	2
SENDING GERMS ON THE RUN Hot Spots Around the Home	3
COMBAT MOLD AND MILDEW The Bathroom is a Prime Target	3
COME CLEAN FOR BABY Keeping the Nursery Clean	4
MISCELLANY Getting Rid of Vacation Stains	4
Cleaning Kit for Campers and Hikers	4
Dust Mites Be Gone!	5
Clutter Beware	5
Getting Sweaters Ready for Fall	5
Q & A SDA Answers Your Questions	5
"KEEP IT CLEAN" BRIEFS	6



Attention Readers!

We want to hear about your toughest stain!
Send your stain story to: nbock@cleaning101.com



(Continued from page 1)

Dusting Cloths/Mitts

Electrostatic wipes are dry, disposable cloths that are designed to attract soil without leaving any residue. They eliminate the need for separate dusting products and dusting cloths. Other easy-dusting products include throw-away dust cloth mitts. One version is embedded with a dusting product; another has a textured surface that uses electrostatic action to attract and trap the dust particles.

For those who prefer a more traditional dusting method, there are wipes with cleansing conditioners that enhance product performance. Reusable mitts and cloths made from microfibers and are easy to use. Use them dry to trap and remove dust and dirt. Use them wet to remove grease, grime and stubborn soils. They can be washed and reused up to 300 times — much longer than the average vacation!

Floor Mops

New floor mops are part of the easy-clean revolution, too. One system consists of a cartridge that contains the cleaning solution. Squeeze the trigger and the solution is dispensed through the disposable pad and onto the floor. Other systems employ disposable sheets that are similar to the electrostatic dusting cloths.

Add Fragrance

Add a touch of fragrance. Look for cleaning products with fragrances. Crisp lemon scents — a long time consumer favorite — have been joined by orange oils that emit a delicious fragrance. Herbal fragrances that combine eucalyptus, rosemary and mint enhance many all-purpose spray cleaners. These products will create an inviting environment for your fun vacation activities!

Remember Safety First

Remember, too, that while vacation is a time to relax from many things, safety is not one of them. Keep all cleaning products safely out of the reach of toddlers and pets. ■

SUMMER GRILLING

Tips for Cleaning the Outdoor Grill

Outdoor grilling is one of summertime's delights. Even basic foods seem to taste better when cooked outdoors. Whether the grill of choice is charcoal or gas, The Soap and Detergent Association offers some tips for peak performance all summer long. Begin by checking the grill manufacturer's instructions for specific cleaning requirements.

Rust is the major enemy of charcoal grills — and the major cause of rust is failing to clean out the ashes regularly. To do this, turn off the grill, make sure it's completely cool. Then, remove the grates from inside the grill. If there's no ash catcher underneath the bowl, use a garden trowel to scoop out the ashes.

If the grill has an ash catcher, be sure to clean it, too, once the ashes are removed. Carefully discard ashes in a plastic trash bag. Otherwise, they will fly all over, covering everything (including yourself) with soot.

Clean the grate and the inside of the grill with a spray-on oven cleaner. Check the label to make sure the cleaning product is safe for both these surfaces, and follow the grill manufacturer's use instructions. Let the cleaner sit long enough to soften the accumulated grease and grime. Then, wipe the cleaner off with paper towels. Follow by washing with a hand dishwashing detergent and water. Clean the outside of the grill, too, using a warm detergent and water solution and a non-abrasive cloth. Rinse and wipe dry.

Gas grills should be checked to make sure there are no leaks or blockages. Make sure the grill is turned off and completely cool. Then, inspect the burner and gas supply tubes for spider webs, grease build-up, rusted areas — anything that would slow down the gas flow. Clean these areas following the grill manufacturer's cleaning instructions.

Clean a gas grill after every use by turning the grill on "high" and letting it "cook" for 10 to 15 minutes with the lid closed. Turn off the grill and let it cool slightly. Then, loosen the residue with a brass bristle brush. Once the grill is completely cool, wipe the inside and outside surfaces with a soft cloth and warm, soapy water. Rinse and wipe dry. ■

SENDING GERMS ON THE RUN Hot Spots Around the Home

Germs have their favorite nesting places in the home. Some are obvious; others may be surprising. However, The Soap and Detergent Association offers some ways to send those germs packing!

Keep rooms well-ventilated to reduce mold and mildew. This is particularly important in bathrooms (because baths and showers produce so much additional moisture) and in bedrooms (because so much time is spent here). If there's a humidifier in the bedroom, clean it regularly so that you don't inhale dirt and germs.

If there are pets in the household, focus cleaning efforts on their "high traffic" patterns. This will protect the rest of the family from pet hair, dander, fleas, food, etc. Steam clean or shampoo upholstery, carpet and window treatments. Pay close attention to high-traffic areas (e.g., bedrooms and the family room).

Water attracts germs, mold and mildew. Check and repair any plumbing leaks in kitchen, bathroom, basement and laundry room. Poor laundry habits can encourage germs. Don't leave wet clothes in the washer. After removing them, leave the door slightly ajar, so excess moisture evaporates. When possible, dry the clothes in an automatic dryer or outside on a clothesline.

For tubs, showers and toilets, consider using a non-abrasive, disinfectant cleaner so that germs and soil are eliminated in one cleaning process. Use a toilet bowl cleaner for the *inside* of the bowl. Don't use it to clean any external surfaces.

Food spills, dirt and crumbs accumulate in the kitchen, particularly on floors and countertops. Disposable floor cleaning systems offer a rinse-free way to remove dirt from the floors. Pop-up wipes are great for quick clean ups on common-touch surfaces, such as refrigerator and faucet handles, light switch covers, door handles, and telephone receivers. Use a kitchen cleaner or disinfectant cleaner for countertops. Check the product label to make sure it can be used on these surfaces.

Check the stove, including cooktop, controls and backsplash, for stains and spills. Allow cooking surfaces to cool before cleaning. As always, follow the appliance manufacturer's cleaning recommendations. If they are no longer available, use a non-abrasive all-purpose cleaner. ■

COMBAT MOLD AND MILDEW The Bathroom is a Prime Target

Steamy summer days create a welcoming environment for mold and mildew. Any place where moisture collects is a prime growth area for mold and mildew. Thus, the bathroom is always a major target for these unwelcome guests because of its moisture level, especially during the hot summer months when people may be taking more showers.

Mold can cause allergies in some people, with symptoms that can range from respiratory to skin problems. Keeping surfaces clean and dry will help eliminate mold and mildew growth areas, says The Soap and Detergent Association.

Tile grout and shower curtains are the obvious repositories for mold and mildew, but other collection points include under sinks, around window frames and sills, and where tub and shower meet the floor. Hazardous situations, such as plumbing leaks and rotting windowsills, should be repaired.

Wipe down the shower walls after showering using a sponge or squeegee or treat the walls with a shower spray cleaning product that's specially formulated to remove mold/mildew and soap scum. During and after each shower, arrange shower curtains so that water doesn't leak on the floor. Self-stick shower clips and water guards will help keep the water *inside* the tub where it belongs.

Laundry shower curtains frequently as they're especially susceptible to mildew. Read and follow the care labels for the curtains. Most can be laundered using detergent and liquid household bleach. If the label is missing, test on an inconspicuous corner of the curtain to be sure that the bleach is safe for the fabric. If the curtain is vinyl, don't dry it in the dryer. Instead, hang it on the shower rod to drip dry. Any remaining wrinkles will be steamed away after a few hot showers. Use an exhaust fan when showering or bathing to dry up excess moisture.

Blot up moisture that accumulates on countertops around faucets and sinks. Keep a container of disposable wipes within easy reach so clean up becomes automatic. For general cleaning, choose a disinfectant cleaner that's formulated to control or prevent mold/mildew growth. Check the label to determine where and how to use the product. ■





COME CLEAN FOR BABY

Keeping the Nursery Clean

Because their immune systems are not fully developed, babies are vulnerable to illnesses. The Soap and Detergent Association has identified three significant hot spots in the nursery where germs hide: changing tables, diaper pails and toys. Simple preventative measures, including handwashing and general disinfecting techniques, are important for a baby's good health.

Diapering requires special attention to avoid the spread of germs — to or from the baby. Practice the following handwashing tips to keep baby safe:

- Wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds *before* and *after* handling food and *after* using the bathroom, changing diapers, or handling pets;
- Thoroughly scrub hands, wrists, fingernails, and in between fingers.
- Rinse and dry hands with a clean cloth towel or consider using durable disposable paper towels for drying hands, so germs are thrown away.
- When soap and water are not available, use hand gel sanitizers to clean your hands (and the baby's hands, too!). The alcohol in the gel *kills* germs on the hands.

Place the diaper changing table away from where children play; and keep it clean. Use disposable table covers or clean and disinfect the top after each use. Discard soiled diapers and disposable table covers immediately after each changing. Put them in a covered, lined container, preferably a step-on type, so germs don't touch hands. Clean the diaper pail regularly with a disinfectant cleaner or liquid household bleach.

There are a variety of products that help keep toys and other baby surfaces clean. Be sure to choose the right cleaning product. The product type will always be identified on the label. Always follow the product label instructions. And, for safety's sake, always store cleaning products on a high shelf or in a locked cabinet, so they're out of reach of crawling infants and curious toddlers. ■

MISCELLANY

Getting Rid of Vacation Stains

Unpacking after a vacation is no picnic if spots and stains tag along in the suitcase. The Soap and Detergent Association offers tips for getting rid of some common summer vacation stains.

Sunscreen is a challenge, particularly because most of them contain oils to make them moisture-resistant. Pretreat these stains with a pre-wash product and launder in the hottest water that's safe for the fabric. To prevent these stains in the future, allow the sunscreen to dry before it touches a garment.

For **grass stains**, pretreat with a pre-wash product. Then launder. If the stain persists, launder using chlorine bleach, if it's safe for the fabric. For **mud stains**, let the mud dry, then brush off as much as possible. Pretreat or presoak with a laundry detergent. Then launder.

For **ice cream** and other **dairy product stains**, pretreat or soak stains for at least 30 minutes using a pre-wash product, then launder. For **fruit juice stains**, wash with a bleach that's safe for the fabric. For most other beverages, including **coffee, tea, soft drinks, wine** and **alcohol**, sponge or soak the stain in cool water. Pretreat with a prewash stain remover or liquid laundry detergent. Then launder using chlorine bleach, if it's safe for fabric.

Cleaning Kit for Campers and Hikers

Many favorite camping or hiking spots are far from a warm water source or any running water at all. The Soap and Detergent Association recommends a few lightweight additions to the backpack that can forestall some heavy duty problems during your trip.

While soap and warm water are great for handwashing, there are other solutions if these items aren't available. Hand gel sanitizers are designed to *kill* germs on hands without water.

A stain removal stick or gel can come to the rescue for stains on clothing. These products are especially effective on polyester fibers and oil-based stains, such as body soils, cosmetics and cooking oils. You can usually leave it on the fabric for up to a week. Be sure to follow the product label directions. When you return home, immediately clean the garment according to the care label.

Dust Mites Be Gone!

When the summer sneezes hit, not all the culprits are outdoor triggers. Household dust mites are one of the most common causes of year-round allergies, reports The Soap and Detergent Association. They hide in bedding, mattresses, upholstered furniture, carpets and curtains.

Washing bedding (including blankets, comforters, and sleeping bags) in hot water (130°-140° F) once a week, kills mites. However, not all bedding is alike. First, be sure to read and follow the bedding manufacturer’s care instructions for proper washing temperatures and procedures.

Consider dust-proof or allergen-impermeable covers for mattresses and pillows. Replace wool or feather bedding with synthetic materials. Choose a dusting method that will capture the dust rather than disperse it into the air — for example, use electrostatic wipes or wipes embedded with a dusting product.

When vacuuming, use a cleaner with either a double-layer microfilter bag or a HEPA vacuum filter to trap allergens that pass through a vacuum’s exhaust. If possible, replace wall-to-wall carpets that trap in hard-to-clean dust with washable area rugs.

To keep mites from breeding, dehumidifiers or air conditioners should be set to maintain a relative humidity of about 50 percent.

Clutter Beware

Summer seems to spawn a more casual attitude about everything, which means that clutter can quickly take the upper hand *unless* you take control, reports The Soap and Detergent Association.

In summer, baskets can be a collecting point for a variety of items. During this season, when people tend to kick off their shoes, use baskets for those sandals and flip-flops left laying around the house or by the pool.

A small basket on the back of the toilet tank is a great place to keep extra rolls of toilet tissue. Summer visitors will never have to search for a new roll. Add another basket to collect magazines, newspapers and other reading materials that find their way to the bathroom.

Also, use baskets to collect the mail. This not only keeps the pile under control, but also makes it portable — to the porch, to the patio or under a shady tree where reading and sorting will seem like less of a chore.

Getting Sweaters Ready for Fall

Sweaters that are properly packed away will be “ready to wear” when that first chilly fall day unexpectedly arrives.

First, clean sweaters before storing them. Otherwise, warns The Soap and Detergent Association, food stains can attract critters that will harm the fabric. Plus, “invisible” stains can oxidize over the summer, ruining a sweater’s appearance. Before cleaning, check and repair snags and split seams. Then, clean them, following the sweaters’ care label recommendations.

The best method for storing sweaters is flat in an air-tight container. This protects them from dampness and artificial light. Keep the container away from fumes, which can harm some fibers. Never store sweaters by hanging them in a closet. This will stretch and distort their shape.

When it’s time to reclaim the sweaters, take them out of the storage container and air tumble dry them with a dryer sheet. This will remove any wrinkles and fluff them back to life! ■

Q & A

SDA Answers Your Questions

Q: Is a well-cleaned surface free of germs?

A: Proper cleaning and drying remove most of the germs and usually make a surface safe, but proper cleaning *followed by* proper use of a disinfectant or a disinfectant cleaner is much safer.

Q: Do I need to wipe off surfaces after disinfecting?

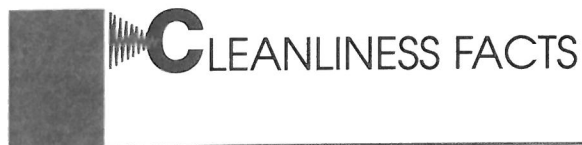
A: No, rinse the surface, then allow it to air dry. After the surface is thoroughly dry, no active residue remains.

Q: My daughter likes to help with cleaning, do you have any tips?

A: Allow children to help *only* when you’re using a multi-purpose cleaner and *only* with proper adult supervision. Don’t allow children to use disinfectants, disinfectant cleaners, chlorine bleach, or any product that has a warning on the label, such as “Keep out of reach of children.” ■



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



CLEANLINESS FACTS



"KEEP IT CLEAN" BRIEFS

Look Toward a Clean Summer!

Here are some quick cleaning tips for summer:

- 1. Hit the Spot.** Clean and dry your outside windows in one direction and the inside windows in the opposite direction. This way, you can clearly see if and where you missed an area.
- 2. Stains Be-Gone.** To remove dirt build-up or grass stains on clothing, wet the area with cold water. Apply a laundry stain remover. Then, gently scrub the area with a brush.
- 3. Like New.** To keep outdoor plastic lawn furniture looking like new, a bathroom cleaner with bleach can do the trick. Be sure to check the furniture manufacturer's cleaning instructions beforehand.
- 4. Quick Clean.** Clean plastic plants with disposable surface wipes or spray a glass cleaner on a clean cloth or paper towel, then clean the plant.
- 5. Scrub Away.** To clean up mold and mildew, use a cleaner that's specially-formulated to remove these stains. Read the label.
- 6. Spill-Free.** Regularly wipe up spills in your refrigerator and throw out perishable food that should no longer be eaten.
- 7. Freshen Up!** Freshen your kitchen trash can by spraying your favorite all-purpose cleaner inside. Let it sit for two minutes, then wipe dry.
- 8. Wipes to the Rescue!** Use disinfectant wipes to clean and disinfect outside surfaces of the toilet.
- 9. Summer Scents.** Freshen your home with scented candles or spray air fresheners. ■

~Happy Summer!~

For more information, visit:
www.cleaning101.com