

# General cleaning and disinfection

Cleaning is the removal of 'soil' (which may include blood, body fluids or excreta) and the reduction of the number of germs from a surface. Disinfection is the inactivation of bacteria, viruses and fungi and can be achieved by heat or chemical means.

Cleaning prior to disinfection is critical for effective disinfection, and so all items should be thoroughly cleaned with warm water and detergent prior to disinfection, if disinfection is required.

The following cleaning and disinfection materials and equipment should be readily available in the workplace, particularly in food preparation, first aid, special and physical education areas:

- sweeping equipment/microfiber cloths
- detergent for general cleaning
- a sanitiser in areas where there are larger amounts of food preparation e.g. home economics, tuckshops etc.
- alcohol wipes (isopropanol) for disinfection of smooth surfaces (including first aid training mannequins)
- household bleach\* \*\* (5% sodium hypochlorite) in a 1:50 dilution for disinfection.

NB. Regional facilities staff or TAFE cleaning supervisors may be able to assist in recommending appropriate cleaning products.

Item	Frequency	Method
<b>Items containing potentially infectious waste</b>		
Utensils used for handling and disposal of potentially infectious waste.	Immediately after use.	Clean with warm water and detergent, and then disinfect with a solution of 1:50 diluted 5% household bleach* ** or alcohol wipes if appropriate.
<b>Clothes, bedding and linen</b>		
Dramatic-play clothes.	Preferably every 2 weeks but at least once per term and as soon as possible if soiled.	Warm water and detergent. Air dry.
Pillows and cushions (should be protected by waterproof pillowslips).	Establish according to use.	Warm water and detergent. Air dry.
Soiled clothing.	Immediately upon discovery of soiling.	If not disposable, place in bag, seal well and give to parents at end of day.
Mattresses and canvas stretchers.	At least once per semester.	Warm water and detergent. Air dry.
Towels and other linen☞.	Establish according to use.	Warm water and detergent. Air dry.
<b>Curriculum</b>		
Classroom items such as manipulative equipment, puzzles and blocks.	Preferably once per term, but at least once per semester. More frequent cleaning may be required depending on the likelihood of contact with blood or body substances, such as in preschools, special schools, SEPs and SEUs.	Warm water and detergent. Plastic items may be washed in a dishwasher. Air dry or use paper towels.

Mouthpieces of musical instruments.	As soon as possible and before re-use.	Clean inside with a brush, warm water and detergent. Air dry or use paper towels. Use alcohol wipes to disinfect.
<b>Sport and play</b>		
Sandpits and long jump pits where potentially infectious waste may be found.	Immediately upon discovery of waste.	Where there is contamination (e.g. faecal spill) the soiled sand should be removed with a shovel; chemical treatment e.g. bleaching is not always necessary. For large contamination, the sand should be replaced. For maintenance, the sand pit should be raked over daily and the sand exposed to the sun. Sandpits should be covered at the end of the day to prevent contamination over night.
Snorkels and regulators for scuba diving.	As soon as possible and before re-use.	Warm water and detergent. Air dry or use paper towels.
Sports water bottles.	As soon as possible and before re-use.	Warm water and detergent or dishwasher. Air dry.
<b>Areas, equipment and utensils</b>		
Plinths or change mats and tables.	Immediately after use.	Warm water and detergent. Air dry or use paper towels.
Toilets and bathrooms.	Daily.	Warm water and detergent. Air dry.
Benches, cutlery and crockery.	Immediately after use.	Warm water and detergent or dish washer for cutlery and crockery. Air dry.

\* *Household bleach* is generally only needed for managing gastroenteritis outbreaks (vomit and diarrhoea spills) and for some blood spills i.e. it is recommended that bleach be used to clean blood spills on hard to clean surfaces e.g. between tiles or where there will be bare skin contact. The department advises that cleaners are not to use bleach in regular cleaning unless directed by their supervisor. Bleach should only be used for hygiene purposes. *The department trains cleaners in the use of approved cleaning chemicals.*

\*\* The safety data sheet (SDS) for the bleach product should always be available, read and instructions for use followed to prevent misuse or injury.

⌘ *Regularly used linen, such as in preschools and some special education facilities, should not be shared by students. If the family provides linen it is regarded as personal property and is not for use by others. If clothes, linen and bedding is soiled with blood or body substances, disinfect the item (e.g. soak in a nappy treatment solution) and then wash in warm water and detergent.*