



GUIDELINES FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTING THE CLASSROOM

Cleaning and disinfecting are part of a broad approach to preventing infectious diseases in schools. Below are tips on how to slow the spread of infectious diseases specifically through cleaning and disinfecting.

1. Know the difference between cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing

Cleaning removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces or objects. Disinfecting works by using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces or objects. By killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

Sanitizing lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a safe level, as judged by public health standards or requirements. This process **works by either cleaning or disinfecting** surfaces or objects to lower the risk of spreading infection.

2. Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are touched often

Follow your school's standard procedures for routine cleaning and disinfecting. Typically, this means cleaning visibly soiled areas with soap and water in your classroom. If surfaces or objects are soiled with body fluids or blood, use gloves and other standard precautions to avoid coming into contact with the fluid. Remove the spill, and then clean and disinfect the surface. You may also need to clean with soap and water, desks after eating, computer keyboards, hands on learning and shared items, phones and toys. Custodians can disinfect and sanitize when students are not in the classroom, generally at the end of the

school day. They will focus on frequently touched areas such as door handles, light switches, water fountains, faucets and bathrooms. Some students with asthma cannot be arounds fumes that may trigger their asthma. These disinfecting products may need to be used after school hours.

3. Clean and disinfect correctly

Always follow label directions on cleaning products and disinfectants. Wash surfaces with a general household cleaner to remove germs. Rinse with water, and follow with an EPA-registered disinfectant to kill germs. Read the label to make sure it states that EPA has approved the product for effectiveness against COVID-19. Disinfection usually requires the product to remain on the surface for a certain period of time (e.g., letting it stand for 3 to 5 minutes).

Use disinfecting wipes on electronic items that are touched often, such as phones and computers. Pay close attention to the directions for using disinfecting wipes. It may be necessary to use more than one wipe to keep the surface wet for the stated length of contact time. Make sure that the electronics can withstand the use of liquids for cleaning and disinfecting.

4. Use products safely

Pay close attention to hazard warnings and directions on product labels. Cleaning products and disinfectants often call for the use of gloves or eye protection. For example, gloves should always be worn to protect your hands when working with bleach solutions.

Do not mix cleaners and disinfectants unless the labels indicate it is safe to do so. Combining certain products (such as chlorine bleach and ammonia cleaners) can result in serious injury or death.

Ensure that custodial staff, teachers, and others who use cleaners and disinfectants read and understand all instruction labels and understand safe and appropriate use. This might require that instructional materials and training be provided in other languages.

5. Handle waste properly

Follow your school's standard procedures for handling waste, which may include wearing gloves. Place no-touch waste baskets where they are easy to use. Throw disposable items used to clean surfaces and items in the trash immediately after use. Avoid touching used tissues and other waste when emptying waste baskets. Wash your hands with soap and water after emptying waste baskets, touching used tissues and similar waste and after removing your gloves.