

Best Practices for Defending Against Viral Pathogens

Cleaning and disinfecting practices for public spaces are an essential part of maintaining healthy environments. By researching published care and maintenance protocols for various interior finishes and cross referencing them to current CDC guidelines and EPA approved disinfectants, we recommend the following considerations for a more effective long-term cleaning strategy. By quickly assessing your space, the following sections suggest general best practices for each area of your facility.

1 THE BASICS

Consider having all employees or regular visitors to your site review the following basics to optimize effective disinfecting practices:

- **Not all surfaces** need to be disinfected prior to occupancy in the occasion that the area in question has been unoccupied for at least 7 days¹. Consider avoiding difficult or dangerous to clean areas that are not interacted with on a weekly bases such as ceilings.
- **Antimicrobial finishes** are great for your facility but they do not eliminate germs. These finishes are designed to protect the material from becoming damaged and they still need to be cleaned and disinfected.
- **Clean all surfaces** prior to disinfecting. Although cleaning alone will not eliminate germs and bacteria, it can remove a large portion. In addition, this can aid in the removal of substances from the surface that could prevent disinfection solutions from working effectively and could damage the surface.
- **Wear protective equipment** as needed when using disinfecting products to help protect the body and lower the chance of cross contamination. If your facility has flooring types that may react poorly to disinfectants, consider providing shoe coverings.
- **Discard your bleach solution** after 24 hours.
- **Let your disinfectant rest** on the surface for the proper “contact time” as recommended on the product instructions or as detailed on the EPA’s List N. Immediately removing product may render it ineffective.

- **Rinse, rinse, rinse.** Typically overlooked, rinsing is essential to lengthening the life of your finishes and ensuring they continue to stand up to rigorous cleaning. Spray the surface or saturate a clean rag with water, rinse thoroughly, and dry with a clean dry towel.
- **Always confirm compatibility** of cleaning solutions with your specific product / surfaces before use by checking the manufacturer’s cleaning guidelines to minimize the risk of inappropriate use.

2 THE SOLUTIONS - BASIC TERMS

Before cleaning and disinfecting your space, it is crucial to refer to CDC guidelines for COVID-19. Additionally, you should frequently reference the EPA’s “List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2” as both of these resources are regularly updated with new research. Below is a list of basic terms and what their solutions mean:

- **Diluted bleach solution** - This solution is a 1:48 ratio (1 gallon of water to 1/3 cup of 5.25%–8.25% bleach²). Not all household bleach products are disinfecting.
- **Diluted alcohol solution** - This is a 70% isopropyl alcohol solution.
- **Quat product** - This is a solution with active quaternary ammonium as an ingredient, often found in non-bleach wipes and cleaners.

3 APPLIANCES & EQUIPMENT

For appliances that have plastic or stainless steel covers:

- **Consider using quat-based** “Disinfecting” wipes.
- **Do not use bleach** as most metals and some plastics can be damaged on the surface by bleach-based product application.
- **Alcohol-based wipes** are also great for digital screens of appliances to protect the screen and clean for ultimate visibility.

1 “Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes.” *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, 7 May 2020, www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html.

2 “Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility.” *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, 28 July 2020, www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html.

Best Practices for Defending Against Viral Pathogens

4 HANDLES, HARDWARE, & FIXTURES

- **Assess the material** of the item prior to disinfecting.
- **Use quat-based disinfecting wipes** that can gently disinfect for stainless steel, brass, and plastics without bleach to avoid damage like corrosion or disintegration.
- **Alcohol-based wipes** for digital screens.

5 COUNTERS & CABINETS

- **Plastic laminate:** Fantastik® All Purpose Cleaner or Clorox Healthcare® VersaSure® Wipes. Avoid bleach.
- **Wood:** Clorox Healthcare® VersaSure® Wipes. Avoid bleach. If painted, use Clorox® Disinfecting Wipes without bleach.
- **Ultracompact or Solid Surface:** Diluted bleach solution.
- **Quartz or granite:** alcohol solution or Clorox® Disinfecting Wipes without bleach.

6 FURNITURE

Horizontal surfaces:

- Reference Counters & Cabinets section above.

Vertical surfaces:

- **Glass:** any disinfection solution.
- **Metal:** Clorox® Disinfecting Wipes without bleach.
- **Fabric panels:** non-bleach disinfecting wipes.

Fabrics:

- **Woven fabric:** Most woven fabrics consist of a blend of fibers which can withstand various products. We suggest a diluted solvent solution without harsh disinfectants. Contact your furniture dealer for specific instructions.
- **Non-woven:** most non-woven fabrics are vinyl, silicone, or polyurethane and can withstand diluted bleach or solvents.
- **Specialty:** For delicate fabrics such as cotton, wool, and rayon, limited cleaning should be performed. Consider moving pieces upholstered in delicate fabrics to a rarely used area or into storage if disinfecting is a concern.
- Always consult with your furniture dealer or manufacturer to avoid damaging fabrics. Many manufacturers offer matrix sheets to guide users on what to use.

Plastics:

- **Polycarbonate:** Often used for stacking or side chairs, poly products can be cleaned with diluted bleach solutions, but alcohol, acid, and solvent-based cleaners should be avoided.
- **Acrylics:** Greater care should be taken for acrylics as they are more susceptible to surface scratches. Avoid glass cleaners, ammonia solutions, alcohols, etc. As necessary use Clorox® Disinfecting Wipes without bleach.

7 WALL FINISHES & DOORS

- **Paint:** Most standard interior paint cannot withstand the harsh chemicals in cleaners and should only be cleaned with water and on some occasions mild detergent. Consider posting signs asking users to avoid touching walls and painted surfaces. For door frames or painted metal doors, test a small area against a quat-based solution or bleach free disinfecting wipes.
- **Wallcoverings:** Most commercial wallcoverings are made of vinyl and can be disinfected with an alcohol solution. Natural fiber coverings should be avoided and cannot withstand most harsh chemicals. If your facility has a fiberglass panel or laminate surface these can usually stand up against diluted bleach or quat-based cleaners.
- **Tile:** For ceramic and porcelain stone with epoxy grouts, diluted bleach solutions work well. Avoid these if a cement grout has been used as they can cause discoloration. For natural stones or quarry tiles use specialty tile cleaners as recommended by the EPA.
- **Laminate:** For plastic laminate or wood doors, reference the Counters & Cabinets section.

8 FLOORS

Although tough against abrasion, many flooring products are not impervious to bleach and alcohol solutions. Consider cleaning your floors frequently and disinfecting only when the presence of a virus is known.

Below is a list of flooring types that can be disinfected with diluted bleach or alcohol solutions:

- LVT
- Epoxy
- Linoleum
- Ceramic Tile