Washing dishes and utensils
Keep germs and flies away by washing dirty dishes every day. Either use a dishwasher or wash them by hand.

Washing by hand

1 Fill a sink with hot, soapy water.
2 Use a clean dishcloth.
3 Wash glasses, cups, and silverware first. Wash pans last.
4 Rinse dishes under hot, running water or in a pan of clean, hot water.
5 Sanitize cups and silverware for extra protection against germs. (This is important if someone in your family is sick.) Soak for 5 to 10 minutes in water with 1 Tablespoon (1 capful) of chlorine bleach in 1 gallon of water.
6 Drain dishes and let them dry in the air. This is better than using a towel. Dirty towels can spread germs.
7 Change the wash water and rinse water if they cool down or get greasy.
8 Put dishes away after they’re dry.
Cleaning dishcloths and sponges

Clean dishcloths and sponges every day to kill germs. (If they start to smell, you’ve waited too long!)

There are several ways to clean dishcloths and sponges.

**In the microwave**
Heat wet sponges and dishcloths for 1 minute on the “high” cycle in a microwave. They will be very hot, so remove them with care.

**In bleach water**
Soak sponges or dishcloths in water with chlorine bleach.

1. Mix ¾ cup chlorine bleach with 1 gallon of water in the sink (or 3 Tablespoons of bleach in 1 quart of water in a glass bowl). Warning: If you use too much bleach, your dishcloths might lose color and sponges can fall apart.

2. Soak sponges or dishcloths for 5 minutes.

3. Rinse in water and let them dry in the air.

**In the laundry**
Launder dishcloths in a washing machine. Using a hot dryer helps to kill germs.

**In the dishwasher**
Wash sponges in a dishwasher. Put them in the top rack when you run it.

**In the microwave**
Heat wet sponges and dishcloths for 1 minute on the “high” cycle in a microwave. They will be very hot, so remove them with care.

- Hang dishcloths to dry them.
- If you use sponges, buy new ones often.
Cleaning counters
Wash counters with soap and water before and after preparing food. This is especially important if cats climb on counters.

Wipe or spray sanitizer on the counter to help keep germs away.

Cleaning cutting boards
Wipe off meat, fish, and poultry juice with a wet paper towel before you clean cutting boards.

1. Wash wooden cutting boards with hot, soapy water. Wash plastic boards in the dishwasher.
2. Rinse with water.
3. Let water drain off.
4. Wipe or spray with sanitizer. (This extra protection is important if meat, fish, or poultry was on the cutting board.)
5. Wait 2 minutes.
6. Rinse with water.
7. Let dry in the air.

If your cutting board has deep scratches, where germs can hide, it’s time to get a new board.
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