

Cleaning the Bathroom 101

Intended for the novice bathroom cleaner, these instructions will take you step by step through the process of cleaning the basic fixtures (i.e. toilet, tub/shower, sink, etc.) of your bathroom. Anyone can do it! So let us get started with a list of the necessary supplies:

What you will need:

- A sturdy container with handle that can hold most, if not all, of your bathroom cleaning supplies
- A sturdy 1 gallon bucket with handle, preferably plastic
- A mop; microfiber is the best (try Libman Wonder Mop)
- A broom (try OXO Good Grips Upright Sweep Set)
- 2-3 sponges of different colors
- A dozen cloth rags; microfiber is the best
- Toilet brush with holder
- Adjustable handled duster; microfiber is the best
- Rubber gloves (like you would use to clean the dishes)
- Old toothbrush
- Rubber band
- 2-3 plastic grocery bags; make sure they don't have holes
- A 2-cup wet measuring cup and a set of dry measuring cups
- Portable step-stool
- Vacuum with a crevice nozzle attachment
- Screwdriver
- White vinegar
- Bleach
- Baking soda
- Dish soap
- Laundry detergent
- Antibacterial wipes
- All-purpose cleaner (try Method All-Purpose Cleaner or Lysol Bathroom Cleaner)
- Glass cleaner (try Sprayway Glass Cleaner)
- Pumice stone (optional; try US Pumice Scouring Stick)
- Grout sealer (optional; try DuPont Advanced Grout Sealer)
- Car wax (optional; try Super Hard Shell Liquid Wax)

WARNING: To prevent irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat, always keep the bathroom well ventilated when using any type of cleaning product. This includes opening any and all windows and doors and keeping the bathroom fan on. The all-natural products suggested above will give off minimal to no fumes, but it is still advisable to ventilate the area.

very
considerate →

Wow!
your bathroom
must be sparkling clean!

Cleaning the Bathroom 101

Before you start cleaning:

1. Gather your cleaning tools together and place them just outside the bathroom door. That way they are on hand and you can grab what you need when you need it.
2. Make sure you are wearing clothes that can get dirty/wet, since you may be both by the time you finish.
3. If your hair is long enough to get in your face, make sure to tie it back before you start. This will prevent you from having to touch your hair once your hands are wet and soapy.
4. Put on the rubber gloves to protect your hands from the cleaning products you are about to use.

The rest of the instructions are broken up by bathroom fixture. In general, it is a good idea to work from the ceiling down to the floor, since this prevents dust or dirty water from falling down onto a clean surface. However, many fixtures are at the same level and can be cleaned in any order.

Ventilation Fan

WARNING: Flip the circuit breaker before doing any cleaning.

Ventilation Fan. The ventilation fan should be cleaned once every month. Fill a gallon bucket $\frac{3}{4}$ full with warm soapy water. After flipping the circuit breaker, use a screwdriver to remove the fan cover. Place the screws in a safe place and the cover in the bucket with the soapy water; let it soak. Use the vacuum's crevice nozzle attachment to vacuum up any dust or gunk in the fan; then wipe it down with a damp cloth rag. Scrub the fan cover with a sponge. Dry with a clean, cloth rag and screw back in over fan. Dump dirty water down the drain.

Light Fixtures

Light Fixtures. Light fixtures should be cleaned once every two weeks. Use duster to dust light bulbs. Wipe down fixtures with clean cloth rags sprayed with all-purpose cleaner.

Painted Walls and Ceiling

Walls and Ceiling. Walls and ceiling should be cleaned once a month to remove product build up and mildew. Using the all-purpose cleaner, spray a small section of wall or ceiling, let sit (if recommended) and then wipe down with a clean, cloth rag. Repeat on new sections until all walls and the ceiling have been wiped down. Replace the rag with a new one if it becomes soaked through or heavily soiled. For hard to reach areas, use a step stool and/or drape the rag on a long handled duster.

Prevention. If mildew is a consistent issue, there are mildew-resistant paints available that can help minimize the problem (try Benjamin Moore Aura bath and spa).

Tiles (on walls or ceiling, not on floor)

Tiles. Tiles should be cleaned every week if are next to the bathtub or inside the shower. Decorative wall tile can be cleaned once a month. Using the all-purpose cleaner, spray a small section, let sit (if recommended), and rub down with a sponge. Repeat with new sections until all tiles have been cleaned. Rinse tiles by wiping with a wet, clean, cloth rag. Rub dry with a second clean, cloth rag.

Prevention. To prevent watermarks, apply a coat of car wax once a year.

Cleaning the Bathroom 101

Grout

Grout. Grout should be cleaned every two weeks, or as needed. Fill wet measuring cup with ½ cup undiluted bleach. Dip an old toothbrush in bleach and scrub any areas of grout that are discolored. When done, rinse grout and toothbrush well with cold water.

Prevention. Reseal grout every six months to prevent infiltration from moisture and grime. To reseal, follow directions on grout sealer.

Mirrors

Mirrors. Mirrors should be cleaned every week. Spray a small section of mirror with glass cleaner, let sit (if recommended), and wipe down with a clean cloth rag. Rewet stubborn stains or water spots and wipe down again. Replace rag if soaked through.

Medicine Cabinet

Mirror. If there is a mirror on the front of the medicine cabinet, follows instructions under Mirrors.

Medicine Cabinet. The medicine cabinet should be cleaned every two weeks. Open medicine cabinet and remove all toiletries contained within. Throw out any expired or empty toiletries. Check remaining toiletries for leaks or cracks. Wipe down with a clean, damp cloth rag. If shelves are removable, take them out, place them in the sink, and wash them using a sponge and some dish soap. Dry them with a clean, cloth rag. Put aside. Wipe out the inside of the medicine cabinet using a clean, cloth rag sprayed with all-purpose cleaner. Don't forget the backside of the cabinet door. Rinse by wiping down with a clean, wet cloth rag and then dry using a second clean, cloth rag. Replace the shelves. Replace the toiletries.

Towels/Towel Bar

Towels. Replace dirty towels with clean towels every 3-4 days. Wash dirty towels in hot water with regular detergent so as to kill bacteria and mold.

Towel Bar. Wipe down once a week with antibacterial disinfectant wipes.

Shower/Bathtub

Showerhead. The showerhead should be cleaned once every two weeks to reduce the presence of bacteria and to remove any mineral build up. Fill a plastic grocery bag with undiluted white vinegar until the bag is half full. Submerge the showerhead in the bag of white vinegar, secure the bag in place using a rubber band, and leave submerged over night. In the morning, remove, empty the bag, and discard the bag. Scrub the showerhead with a toothbrush. Pour a cup of water over the showerhead and turn on the shower for 1-2 minutes to rinse.

Plastic or Cloth Shower Curtain. If you have a plastic shower curtain, it should be cleaned once a month to remove product residue, mildew, and soap scum. Take down the shower curtain and wash in the washing machine on regular cycle with a few dirty towels and regular detergent. The towels will act as scrubbers. Rehang shower curtain to dry. You can also take down the shower curtain, lay it in the tub, and scrub it section by section using a sponge and a 10-parts water to 1-part bleach cleaning solution. Mix the solution in your gallon bucket; discard what you don't use. Rehang shower curtain to dry. If you have a cloth shower curtain, check the care label for washing instructions.

Glass Shower Door. If you have a glass shower door, clean once a week to keep it sparkling. Measure 1 cup of baking soda and combine with a few drops of white vinegar in the

Cleaning the Bathroom 101

wet measuring cup. It should create a thick paste; add more white vinegar if baking soda is still dry. Coat the inside of the glass shower door with the paste. Let sit for 1 hour and then rub dry with a cloth rag. Rinse with cold water and then buff dry with a clean cloth rag.

Bathtub. The bathtub should be cleaned once a week. Spray down the tub using the all-purpose cleaner, let sit (if recommended), and then wipe down using a sponge. Rinse with cold water and then dry using a clean cloth rag. Replace rag if soaked through.

Bathtub Drain. The bathtub drain should be cleared once a week to prevent clogging. Pour ½ cup baking soda down drain, followed by ½ cup white vinegar. Let stand for a few minutes; add another ½ cup white vinegar. Boil 2-cups of water in wet measuring cup; pour down drain.

Prevention. To prevent soap scum and mildew, use a towel to wipe the shower/tub down after use. Pull the shower curtain closed after the shower so water can't sit in the folds. Also, make sure the bathroom is well ventilated to reduce the effects of humidity.

Toilet

Toilet. The toilet should be cleaned once a week. Identify one sponge as the toilet sponge. Cut off a corner of the sponge so you will remember which sponge it is. Spray the outside of the toilet (i.e. everywhere but in the toilet bowl) with all-purpose cleaner and wipe down using the toilet sponge. Rinse sponge as needed in the sink. Once toilet has been wiped down, dry it with a clean, cloth rag. The sponge can be wetted and microwaved for 15 seconds to kill bacteria. Then leave sponge out to dry. To clean the bowl, put in 1 cup of baking soda. Let it sit for a few minutes, brush the bowl using the toilet brush, and flush the toilet with the lid down. If you are still seeing residue or mineral deposits, you can gently rub the problem spots with a wet pumice stone. It will be abrasive enough to remove the deposits, but won't damage your toilet. After you have cleaned the bowl, you can disinfect the toilet brush by balancing it over the toilet bowl and pouring ½ cup of bleach over the bristles. Let it stand for a few minutes, and then pour 1 cup cold water over the bristles. Place it in sink for the moment. Clean the toilet brush holder by filling it with warm, soapy water and letting it sit for a few minutes. Dump out the soapy water, rinse with cold water, and dry using a clean cloth rag. Place the toilet brush back in the holder.

Prevention. Always close the toilet lid when flushing since water droplets get sent up into the air and will spread bacteria throughout your bathroom.

↳ good habit

Sink(s)

Sink(s). The sink should be cleaned once a week. Spray the sink and faucets with all-purpose cleaner and scrub with a sponge. Rinse with cold water. Wipe down faucets with an antibacterial wipe. Rub faucets dry with a clean, cloth rag.

Sink Drain. The sink drain should be cleared once a week to prevent clogging. Pour ½ cup baking soda down drain, followed by ½ cup white vinegar. Let stand for a few minutes; add another ½ cup white vinegar. Boil 2-cups of water in wet measuring cup; pour down drain.

Countertops

Countertops. Countertops should be cleaned once a week. Throw out any expired or empty toiletries kept on the countertops. Wipe down remaining toiletries with a damp cloth, check them for cracks or leaks, and move to a new, temporary location. Spray a small section of countertop with all-purpose cleaner and wipe down with a sponge. Repeat with new sections

Cleaning the Bathroom 101

until the countertops are clean. Rinse by wiping down with a wet, clean cloth rag. Rub dry with a new clean, cloth rag. Replace toiletries.

Inside Cabinets/Drawers

Inside Cabinet/Drawers. Remove all items from drawer or cabinet. Throw out any expired or empty toiletries. Wipe down remaining toiletries and their containers (e.g. baskets, boxes) with a damp, clean cloth rag, check them for cracks or leaks, and move to a new, temporary location. If cloth containers need washing, check their care label for directions. Put toiletries back into appropriate containers. Take out any removable shelving, spray with all-purpose cleaner, and wipe down with a clean, cloth rag. Put aside. Use the crevice nozzle on the vacuum to suck up large debris in drawers or cabinets, and then spray the inside of the cabinet or drawer with app-purpose cleaner and wipe down with a clean, cloth rag to remove dust and small debris. Replace shelves and toiletries.

Trash Can

Trash Can. Empty the trash weekly. Clean the actual trash can once every two weeks after emptying the trash. To clean the trash can, fill ¼ full with warm water and a few drops of dish soap. Scrub the inside and outside of the can in the sink using a sponge. Dump out the dirty water, rinse the can with cold water, and dry using a clean, cloth rag.

Prevention. Always line your trash can with a plastic bag of some sort (i.e. trash bag, plastic grocery bag) to make emptying the trash easier and to keep the can cleaner.

Bathroom Rug

Bathroom Rug. Vacuum the bathroom rug every week. To pick up the rug without spilling debris, fold the rug in half and pick up so that the two ends are in your hand. Take it out side and shake heartily to throw off debris. Bring it back inside, lay it flat, and vacuum it. Place it back in the bathroom once the floor has been cleaned. Some rugs are machine washable and small enough to fit in a washing machine. If you can, wash your rug once a month using the directions on the care label.

Floor

Floor. All movable items should be placed in another room temporarily. Use the broom to sweep the floor. Gather debris in the dustpan and throw debris in the trashcan. Fill the gallon bucket 1/3 full of water and add a tablespoon of dish soap. Starting at the back of the bathroom, mop the floor in sections, frequently rinsing and wringing out the mop in the bucket. Replace the water if it gets too dirty. Once the whole floor has been cleaned, let it dry completely before reentering the room. Dump dirty, soapy water down the drain. Scrub the bucket with cold water and a sponge. Rinse with cold water; refill 1/3 full with cold water. Re-mop the floor, starting at the back again, using just the cold water to remove any soap residue. Once the whole floor has been “rinsed”, let it dry again. Dump dirty water again and leave bucket to dry too before putting it away.

Once you are done cleaning the bathroom, all dirty sponges should be rinsed out and left to dry. Dirty rags should be left out to dry and can then be cleaned like regular laundry. The microfiber mop head can also be washed in the laundry. Any tool that is wet should be allowed to dry before being put away.