

An illustration of various cleaning supplies including a yellow spray bottle, a green bottle, a yellow bucket, and a blue sponge, set against a background of blue splashes and bubbles.

CLEANING SANITIZING DISINFECTING

Consistent cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting are the best defense against the spread of infection, viruses and disease. It is important to understand the variations of cleansing. Learn about the differences and when to put them into practice.

Caution:

While cleansing, be sure to wear gloves and always change them when switching surfaces to avoid cross contamination.

Cleaning

Completed by using soap/cleanser, water and a cleaning cloth to remove dirt and visible impurities from surfaces. The process does not generally kill germs but instead lowers the numbers and reduces the risk of spreading infection. This can apply to objects, surfaces and hands.

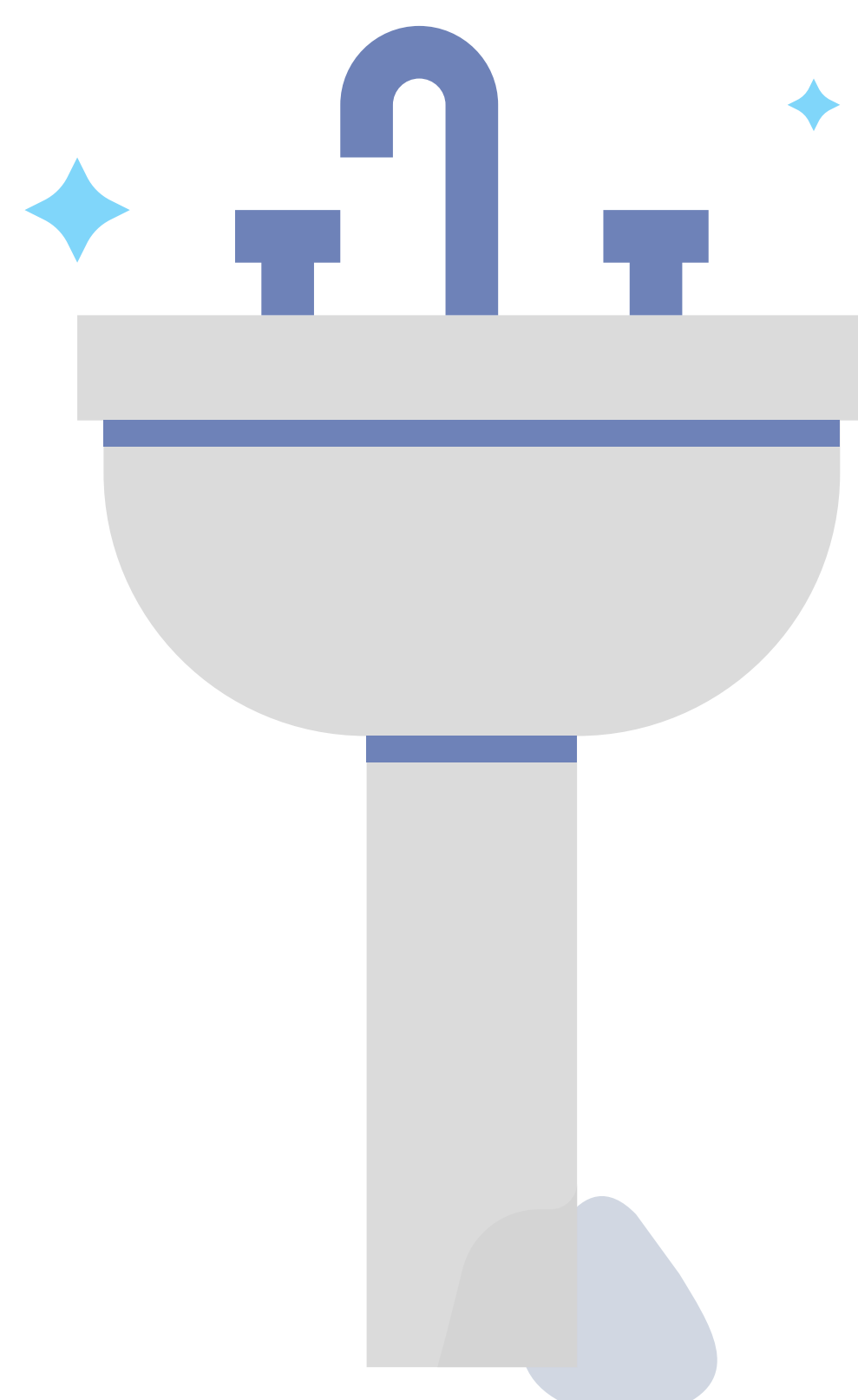


Sanitizing

An umbrella term for lowering the number of germs on a surface to a safe level. The CDC requires that sanitization solutions kill 99.999% of bacteria in under 30 seconds. This limits the growth of harmful bacteria but is not known for killing viruses. This is an important practice in shared spaces such as restaurants, schools, hospitals and businesses. Sanitation should be conducted several times a day.

Disinfecting

This process kills germs on surfaces with the use of EPA registered disinfectant chemicals that are designed and appropriate for specific surfaces. The CDC requires that these agents kill 99.999% of infectious bacteria, viruses and fungi within a 5-10 minute period. This is best performed after cleaning and is recommended for high-touch surfaces, especially bathrooms. Because this method is more powerful than sanitizing, it is widely practiced in healthcare, childcare and fitness facilities. With the spread of the COVID-19 virus, all places where people work, travel, visit and patron should be using disinfectants.

A red brush with a curved handle and orange bristles, set against a blue background with bubbles.

Read More

- CDC How to Clean & Disinfect Schools
- CDC How to Protect Yourself
- CDC Clean & Disinfect