

Health and Safety Executive

Cleaning - make your workplace and Vehicles COVID-secure

Cleaning the workplace

You may need to increase how often and how thoroughly you normally clean your workplace, as well as cleaning surfaces that you do not normally clean.

If you are cleaning because of a known or suspected case of COVID-19 in your workplace you should follow the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) guidance.

Before you can decide what cleaning is suitable for your situation, you'll need to do a risk assessment to help you manage risk and decide how best to work safely and protect people during coronavirus.

Your risk assessment will help you to identify what your cleaning regime will look like, but there are some general things that you should consider.

Clean frequently

- Keep surfaces clear so that cleaning can be carried out more effectively
- Areas should be regularly cleaned in line with your cleaning plan
- Set clear guidance for the use and cleaning of toilets, showers and changing facilities to make sure they are kept clean and social distancing is achieved as much as possible
- Clean work areas and equipment between uses
- Frequently clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are touched regularly
- If equipment like tools or vehicles are shared, then clean them after each use

Identify frequently touched surfaces

Doors, bannisters, buttons and anything that is frequently touched, especially if it's touched by lots of people, will need more regular cleaning than normal. Examples of frequently touched objects include:

- work surfaces like desks, platforms and workstations
- handles on doors, windows, rails, dispensers and water coolers
- common areas like toilets, reception, changing rooms, corridors and lifts
- vehicle handles, steering wheels, seat belts and internal surfaces
- control panels for machinery, control pads and switches
- computer keyboards, printers, touch screens, monitors and phones
- taps, kettles, water heaters, fridges, microwaves and cupboards
- shared equipment like tools, machines, vehicles, pallet trucks and delivery boxes
- post and goods coming in or being shipped out

Put in place measures to clean surfaces and objects after each use where possible, for example phones and conferencing facilities in a meeting room. If it's not practical to clean after each use, such as lift buttons that are used continuously throughout the day, make sure they are cleaned often.

Any adequate cleaning regime should involve deep and periodic cleaning.

Deep cleaning is a thorough clean of all frequently touched surfaces at least once a day.

Periodic cleaning is cleaning at different times throughout the day. It can include cleaning items immediately after use as well as cleaning surfaces on a regular basis throughout a single day.

Workstations

Make sure that workstations are cleared at the end of the day or shift so that they can be properly cleaned. Ensure that all workstations are regularly cleaned in accordance with your cleaning plan.

Accommodation

Employers who provide accommodation for their workers should make sure it is properly and regularly cleaned. Consider following cleaning regimes:

- to ensure accommodation units stay clean
- for shared communal areas
- cleaning regimes for toilets and showers

Reduce the need for cleaning

Reducing people's contact with surfaces and objects is better than relying on cleaning once contact has taken place. Think about how you can change the way you work to:

- limit movement of people around your workplace as far as possible
- reduce people's need to touch surfaces or objects

Ways you could limit movement or reduce people's need to touch objects that you can consider include:

- allocating specific work areas or vehicles to specific people
- creating small groups that can work independently on tasks
- closing off spare workstations and putting away items that you don't need
- propping open doors to avoid the need to touch handles (excluding fire doors or other doors that must be kept closed)
- fitting automatic sensor operated doors or foot plates to doors so they can be opened with feet rather than hands
- issuing door hooks to workers so they don't have to touch handles
- reducing equipment available to reduce the amount that needs to be cleaned

Find out more about what you can do to [work safely and protect people during coronavirus](#).

Cleaning products

Your usual cleaning products should be effective. If you change your usual regime then check that products are suitable for the surface and environment. Clean cloths and other reusable cleaning products in soap and water after use.

Store cleaning products safely and always use them at the concentration as recommended by the manufacturer.

Disinfecting premises using fog, mist, vapour or ultraviolet (UV) systems

Fog, mist, vapour or UV treatments may be suitable options to help control the spread of the virus, by cleaning and disinfecting a larger space or room.

Vehicle cleaning

Ensure vehicles are cleaned regularly, particularly between different users. Clean commonly touched areas in vehicles including:

- handles (inside and out)
- steering wheel and starter button
- centre touchscreen and stereo
- handbrake and gearstick
- keys and key fob
- indicators and wiper stalks
- windows, mirrors and mirror switches, seat adjusters and any other controls

Ensure that people practice good hygiene before and after using the vehicle. Provide hand sanitiser where necessary.

Page last reviewed: 5 October 2020

Next review due: 2 November 2020