

Tiles, vinyl, laminate or hardwood – whether you love or hate them, almost all of us have hard floor surfaces in our home. In fact with issues like allergies, asthma and ease of cleaning, there is a growing trend towards having no carpet at all in the home, which can only mean one thing – mopping!

5 WAYS TO SMARTER MOPPING



Even if you sweep or vacuum the floor regularly, mopping is the best way to clean hard floors. Researchers have found up to 6 million different types of bacteria on the average sized kitchen floor, and even more than that has been found in homes with children and pets!

One concern that some people have with mopping is just how effective it really is in cleaning or whether it only moves the germs and dirt from one part of the floor to another, possibly creating a larger problem. For many of us just the word 'mop' can conjure up images of a soiled, smelly and sopping wet mess that is not at all compatible with how we think 'clean' should be.

The most alarming issue researchers have found is that many floors actually became more infested with bacteria after the floor was mopped. The culprit? The mop heads, some of which were found to contain more than 8 million bacteria per 100cm².

Once you think about the direct and indirect contact we have with the floor every day – every time we pick up something that has fallen to the floor – you can almost picture dirt from a mop spreading throughout your house. The effect is multiplied if you have children, who spend much more time in contact with the floor and are more vulnerable to 'the nasties'.

Top 5 tips for smarter, cleaner mopping that will make sure your mop heads are both more hygienic and last longer:

1. Mop With 2 Buckets

With one bucket for rinsing and one for detergent, you can dip the dirty mop into the rinse bucket, squeeze it out and not worry about contaminating

the detergent water and the next section of your floor. Don't be afraid to change the rinse water and detergent solution as soon as they become too soiled (hint – black water is not a good sign!).

2. Clean and Dry Your Mop

This step is essential in making sure your mop is ready for use next time. Leaving your mop unwashed until the next time you clean can create a breeding ground for bacteria. If your mop is machine washable. Throw it in on a gentle cycle up to the hottest temperature recommended (usually 60 degrees centigrade). If it isn't machine washable or if you aren't sure, rinse it out and soak in a mixture of water and bleach for 15 minutes, then rinse until clear.

Whether you machine wash or soak your mop, it needs to completely dry before re-use to avoid growth of bacteria and mildew. Once mildew has taken hold, you may as well throw your mop head away as the smell will follow your mop all over your house and lead to bigger problems.

Don't leave your mop in the bucket or sitting on the floor to dry – it needs to be upright in a well ventilated space. In 8 hours, just one bacterium on a damp cloth has been found to multiply to 6 million – imagine what's lurking in your mop! Drying it in the sunshine can further prevent bacteria or mould growth.

A clean and dry mop will last you much longer as it will be less prone to the disintegration that can happen when your mop has been left to sit wet and dirty until its next use.

3. Replace Your Mop Heads Regularly

Even if you clean your mop head with every use, after a while it will be less able to absorb water and

lift dirt effectively, which means it will need to be replaced. And if it is leaving bits of broken down mop all over your floor, it definitely needs replacing! Nobody wants to have to sweep again to pick up the tiny particles left behind after mopping.

Experts recommend you replace your mop heads every 2-3 months, depending on how often you mop and how large your mopping area is. The best rule of thumb is the old saying, 'if in doubt, throw it out!'

4. Wring Your Mop Thoroughly

As we have pointed out, dampness is the perfect breeding ground for bacteria, so the faster your floors dry the less opportunity germs will have to multiply. Wring out your mop thoroughly so that it is as dry as you can get it.

5. Mop Bathrooms Last

With many potential nasties on the bathroom floor, like e.Coli from the toilet, do not mop your bathroom and then move on to another area without changing the water and disinfecting the mop head. Alternatively, you can minimise the potential spread of germs by mopping the bathroom last. Cross contamination with your mop is a quick way to spread an illness throughout your home.

You may even want to get a separate mop and bucket for your bathrooms and disinfect these more thoroughly than you would for your main mop.

With reference:

<http://www.helpmeclean.com.au/5-ways-to-smarter-mopping/>