



# Dishwashing



Clean dishes and utensils are important to family health. Bacteria grow on dishes or utensils that have not been thoroughly cleaned, rinsed and dried. Dirty dishes and utensils, or food scraps left sitting in the kitchen can attract cockroaches, mice, or other pests.

You can make dishwashing easier and faster if you organize your work. You will need: hot water, rubber mats too protect dishes from breaking, a rubber scraper for removing excess food, steel wool or scouring pad, wire dish rack, tray, dish washing detergent, clean dishcloths and towels—used only for dish washing. (Make sure they are absorbent and lint-free).

## Step 1—Getting organized

To be efficient, keep work surfaces as neat and as free of clutter as possible. Save steps by using a tray to carry dishes from the table to the sink. Always set dirty dishes in the cleanup area than setting them down somewhere else and then having to move them again. Usually it is easier to sort and stack similar dishes in piles.



Store detergents and cleaning agents near the sink to save steps. However, for safety's sake, make sure they are not accessible to small children. Store plastic wrap, aluminum foil, and refrigerator containers near the cleanup area so they will be handy when storing leftovers.

If you are right handed, move the dishes from the right to the left as you wash them. If you are left handed, move them from left to right. If you are right handed, stack the dirty dishes on your right, wash them in the sink in front of you, rinse them and stack the clean dishes on a draining rack to your left.

Make sure the clean dishes are placed in a clean area where it will be convenient to put them away. A double sink is ideal because it allows one side for soapy water and the other for rinsing dishes.

## Step 2—Preparing the Dishes

Dishwater will stay clean longer if you scrape dishes first with a rubber spatula. Scrape the excess grease out of pots with a paper towel. Soak extra dirty dishes in hot water right after use. Cold water should be used to soak high protein foods such as egg, milk, and cheese and very starchy foods such as rice or oatmeal. Hot water tends to harden these foods on the dishes. Also, do not soak wooden salad bowls or knives; they may crack or warp. Cast-iron skillets should not be soaked very long because they may rust. Burned-on food should be soaked as soon as possible.



## Step 3—Wash in Order

Add a measured amount of soap (to prevent waste) and fill the sink about one-third full. Wash dishes in the order that will leave the dishwater clean as long as possible. Make sure you use hot, soapy water. If you have a very large batch of dishes to wash, you may need to fill the sink with hot soapy water more than once.

Do not plunge ice-cold glassware into very hot water because it might break. Be careful with abrasive cleansers or scouring pads. They can permanently scar the finish on plastics and laminated counter tops. Pots

and pans are easy to clean if they have been pre-soaked. Burned pans clean more easily by filling them with water, adding a dish washing detergent and boiling gently.

Wash dishes in this order:

1. Glassware
2. Flatware (knives, spoons, forks)
3. Tableware (plates, cups, saucers)
4. Serving dishes
5. Pots, pans, other utensils



#### Step 4—Rinse

Make sure you use the hottest water available for rinsing dishes. This helps the dishes dry without spots. It is more sanitary to rinse dishes under hot, running water than in a basin. Leave silverware handles up in the dish drainer. It keeps it more sanitary while being put away, and it is not safe to have dangerous knife blades pointing up. Be sure to rinse both the inside and outside of the cups, glasses, and bowls, and both sides of plates.



#### Step 5—Dry

Save yourself some time and let the dishes air dry; it is more sanitary than using a cloth. If you have used very hot water, glasses should dry without spotting. In the lab, you will need to use a cloth because there is not time to let them air dry.

To save steps, store china, silverware and glassware closest to where they will first be used. When putting dishes away, place glasses upside down on the shelf. Plates, dishes, and saucers may be stacked. Never stack crystal or glassware. Stacking will cause chipping or breaking. If stacked glasses stick together, place the bottom glass in hot water and some ice cubes in the top glass. They will come easily apart.



#### Step 6—Clean up

You are not finished until you use a damp cloth and clean the counter, range top, and refrigerator. Empty the wastebasket. Sweep floor and use a dustpan to pick up bits and pieces. Close cupboard doors and drawers. Check the range to make sure it is turned off. Wipe out the sink and leave it clean and dry (especially stainless steel sinks which will water spot).

