

Disinfection Chart *



This chart is not intended to be inclusive of all approved high, intermediate and low-level disinfectants.

Level of Disinfection	When to Use	Disinfectant Active Ingredients	Contact Times (Approximately)	Advantages	Disadvantages
HIGH Kills all micro-organisms (bacteria, fungi and viruses) except bacterial spores	Use on semi-critical items Items that come into contact with non-intact skin or mucous membranes but do not penetrate them	1:50 chlorine bleach [†] solution (1 part bleach and 49 parts water) 1,000 ppm (parts per million)	20 minutes	Inexpensive; fast acting	Corrodes metal, may destroy adhesives with prolonged soaking
		2% glutaraldehyde (not recommended for personal service settings)	45 minutes Follow manufacturer's instructions	Non-corrosive to metal, rubber or plastics; reusable	Toxic fumes; expensive (not recommended for PS settings)
		6% hydrogen peroxide	45 minutes Follow manufacturer's instructions	Environmentally friendly; no residue	Oxidizing properties may be destructive to some equipment (brass, zinc, copper and nickel / silver)
		7% stabilized hydrogen peroxide	30 minutes Follow manufacturer's instructions	Environmentally friendly; no residual irritant to skin or to respiratory tract	Oxidizing properties may be destructive to some equipment (brass, zinc, copper and nickel / silver)
		0.55% ortho-phthalaldehyde (OPA)	10 minutes Follow manufacturer's instructions	Fast acting; no mixing needed	Stains proteins; expensive
INTERMEDIATE Kills most bacteria, fungi and viruses	Use on semi-critical items As above	70-90% isopropyl alcohol	10 minutes	Fast acting; leaves no residue	Can damage rubber and plastics
		70-90% Ethyl alcohol	10 minutes	Fast acting; leaves no residue	Can damage rubber and plastics; flammable
		1:50 chlorine bleach [†] (1 part bleach and 49 parts water) 1000ppm	10 minutes	Inexpensive; fast acting	Corrodes metal; may destroy adhesives with prolonged soaking
LOW Kills some bacteria, fungi and viruses	Use on non-critical items. Items that contact intact skin and not mucous membranes, or items that do not ordinarily touch the client.	Quaternary ammonium	Follow manufacturer's instructions	Good cleaning agent for environmental surfaces	Cannot be used on instruments; not recommended as an antiseptic
		1:500 chlorine bleach [†] solution (1 part bleach and 499 parts water) 100 ppm	< 10 minutes	Inexpensive; fast acting	Corrodes metal; may destroy adhesives with prolonged soaking
		3% hydrogen peroxide	10 minutes	Environmentally safe	Oxidizing properties may be destructive to some equipment (brass, zinc, copper and nickel / silver)
	May be used for routine housekeeping	Phenols	Follow manufacturer's instructions	Easy to obtain; cleans and disinfects	Residual phenols on porous materials may cause tissue irritation even when thoroughly rinsed; for environmental surfaces only

* Please adhere to manufacturer's instructions for use; some disinfectants may require rinsing

[†] Based on 5.25% chlorine bleach

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-888-777-9613