

HealthyCleaning101 Presents:

## SAFE CLEANING CHEAT SHEET – DISH CARE

**SAFETY FIRST!** Always read and follow the label on any product you use. More safety info for dishwashing:

Due to the contact with foods, it's important to select a detergent that specifically intended for use on dishes.

- Like all household cleaning products, store dishwashing detergent in a secure location that is out of the reach of small children and pets.
- Don't mix dishwashing detergents with other cleaning products – irritating (or potentially toxic) fumes could result.
- Keep detergent in its original container with the label intact.
- Keep your local Poison Control Centre phone number handy: <http://www.capcc.ca/>

**HOLD UP:** Should that item go in the dishwasher or be washed by hand? Some items can be damaged, even beyond repair, if they are exposed to the intensity of an automatic dishwasher! These items generally include:

- |                                   |                         |  |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| • aluminum utensils               | • decorated glassware   | • plastics   |
| • cast iron                       | • hand-painted          | • silver   |
| • china (hand painted or antique) | • ceramics/stoneware    | • wooden items   |
| • crystal                         | • hollow-handled knives | • anything containing a precious metal (e.g., gold trim) |
| • cutlery                         | • milk glass            |  |
|                                   | • pewter                |  |

### What **ingredients** can I expect to see?

Here are some ingredients commonly found in household dish detergents:

- **Surfactants** or surface-active agents are the primary ingredients in a liquid hand dishwashing detergent. Often a combination of surfactants is used to produce good grease cutting capability and soil suspension
- **Stability and Dispensing Aids** are added to keep the product homogeneous under varying storage conditions, and to provide desirable dispensing characteristics
- **Enzymes** help break down tough stains and burned-on soils.
- **Fragrance and Colour Additives** are what give a product its “personality,” and are important, though present in extremely small amounts.
- **Processing Aids** are generally inert materials that allow the active ingredients to be combined into a usable form.
- **Mildness Additives** may include moisturizing agents, certain oils and emollients, certain protein compounds, or other neutralizing or beneficial ingredients.

## What kind of **product** should I use?

**Automatic dishwasher detergents:** Provide the chemical energy to help remove food soil from all types of cooking and serving items. Unlike hand dishwashing products, these must be very low to non-sudsing.

**Liquid hand dishwashing detergents:** Have higher sudsing than automatic detergents and are specially formulated to be used by hand and **NOT** in the dishwasher.

## What's the best **method** for washing my dishes?

### Hand Dishwashing:

First fill the dishpan or sink with water as hot as can be comfortably used, and add enough detergent as the water is running to produce a thick, rich layer of suds. Read the label for the right amount. If rinsing in a separate sink or dishpan, fill it with very hot water.

There are several ways to wash dishes. Some people prefer to lift each piece out of the suds to wipe it with a cloth or sponge, others like to keep dishes beneath the suds surface so soil floats away. Some stack dishes in the sink or dishpan, others like to take each piece from the counter, wash it and take another.

Air drying is easier than towel drying, and may be more sanitary than drying with a soiled towel. However, wiping with a clean towel is particularly useful when glassware or flatware is spotted or filmed.

### Automatic dishwashing:

Load the dishwasher

- Place the dirtiest side of the item facing the source of the water spray.
- Don't let large items cover small items, like cups or upside-down flatware.
- Avoid stacking items together. If they are too tight, water can't get to them.
- Place sharp items with points down (safety first!)
- Make sure delicate items are firmly secured on the rack to avoid toppling.

Run the dishwasher – check the user manual for detailed instructions.

## What steps should I take to **save energy**?

### For dishwashing in general:

- Use the recommended amount of detergent.
- Scrape away food residues and heavy grease prior to washing.
- Recycle dishwashing detergent containers when empty.

### For automatic dishwashing:

- Skip the drying cycle whenever possible. It can save about 15% on your total operating cost.
- Don't overload the dishwasher.
- Clean the filter regularly according to manufacturer's recommendations.
- Operate dishwasher only when a full load is accumulated.