

## ORGANIZING

# Is cleaning with microfiber really better than using a regular cloth?

Microfiber's a favorite for chemical-free cleaning. But do you really know the right way to use it and clean it?



— Photo Taken In Spoltore, Italy Getty Images stock

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**By Karen B. Gibbs**

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You don't have to look far to find recommendations to clean with microfiber cloths.

From windows to bathtubs to floors, cleaning experts continue to recommend this specific cleaning tool. So, why is it better? And how does it work? We asked Green Cleaning Coach Leslie Reichert, a longtime fan of microfiber, to tell us all about it.

## Why use microfiber?

- It saves money and outlasts other cleaning cloths.
- It's safe for the environment and cleans with water, not harmful chemicals.
- It removes 99 percent of bacteria on surfaces.

## All microfiber is not equal

“With microfiber, you get what you pay for,” Reichert said. “Bargain microfiber has fewer fibers, around 50,000 per square inch. Since it’s the fibers that do the work, bargain cloths do not clean as well as quality cloths, nor do they last as long – only about 50 washings. I use quality microfiber cloths like e-cloth. To me, it’s the gold standard in microfiber. It has 3.1 million fibers per square inch and lasts for 300 washings!”

## How does microfiber work?

With millions of fibers, microfiber lifts and holds dirt, grease, grime, liquids and bacteria. These fibers include both positive-charged polyester fibers and negative-charged nylon fibers that actually attract and pull up whatever is on the surface you’re cleaning.

## Types of microfiber products

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Some microfiber manufacturers have developed products with fibers specifically designed for each task—scrubbing floors, dusting and cleaning hard surfaces throughout the house, from


wood floors to tile to glass to stainless steel.

CleanGreen Microfiber  
Cleaning and Dusting Gloves

\$10	 AMAZON
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Use these for dusting items like the television or picture frames.

Zwipes Microfiber Cleaning  
Cloths

\$10	 AMAZON
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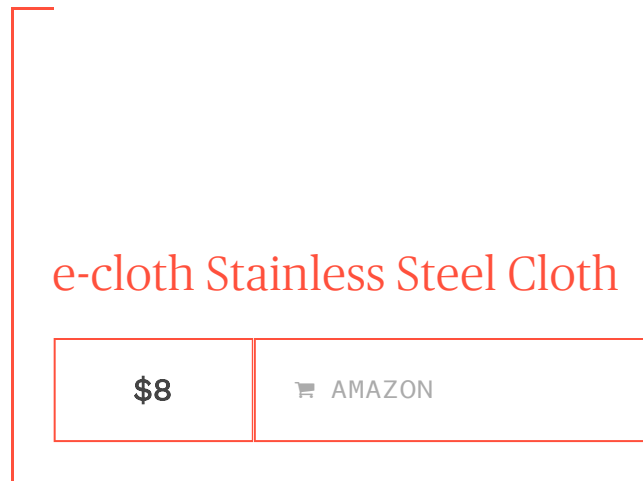
Use these for cleaning hard surfaces like kitchen cabinets and counter tops.

Markee Commercial Grade  
Microber Floor Mop

\$37

 AMAZON

Use this to clean hardwood floors as well as tile and glass.



Use this to clean stainless objects like the outside of the refrigerator.

### How to use microfiber

- To make the most of microfiber cleaning cloths, use only one section of the cloth at a time. So, fold the cloth into half, then in half again. This will give you eight surfaces for cleaning – four on each side.
- For dusting, leave the cloth dry. For other chores, dampen the cloth, then wipe surfaces clean.
- When the cloth starts to leave behind dirt or lint, or if you've used it a few minutes, re-fold to a fresh section. Continue until the entire cloth has been used or the cleaning chore is complete.

### How to clean it

- After each use: Rinse the microfiber cloth with warm to hot water (or whichever water temperature is recommended on the care label) for 10-15 seconds to flush out dirt. If

microfiber is especially grimy, you may want to rinse it until the water runs clear. Once rinsed, the cloth is ready to use again.

- Once a week: Microfiber cloths that are used daily should be machine-washed every week. Rinse them first to flush dirt from the fibers, then toss them into the washer with your regular wash. Do not use bleach (it will damage fibers) or fabric softener (it will clog fibers). (For cloths that aren't used that often, wash them when they look dirty or leave behind traces of lint or dust.)
- Follow care instructions for drying. Some items, such as floor and wall duster heads, have specific care instructions, so always check the care label first.
- If cloths become ineffective or if they start to smell, boil them in water and one-fourth cup of baking soda for 10-15 minutes.

For an interesting interview on microfiber with industry expert Allan Covecchio, CEO of TADGreen, check out [Reichert's podcast](#).

For more cleaning items we love, check out [this mop and read why we love it](#) and [read our round-up of the best vacuums HGTV stars can't live without](#).

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