



SYRSorb and Mop Contamination

> Scot Young Research

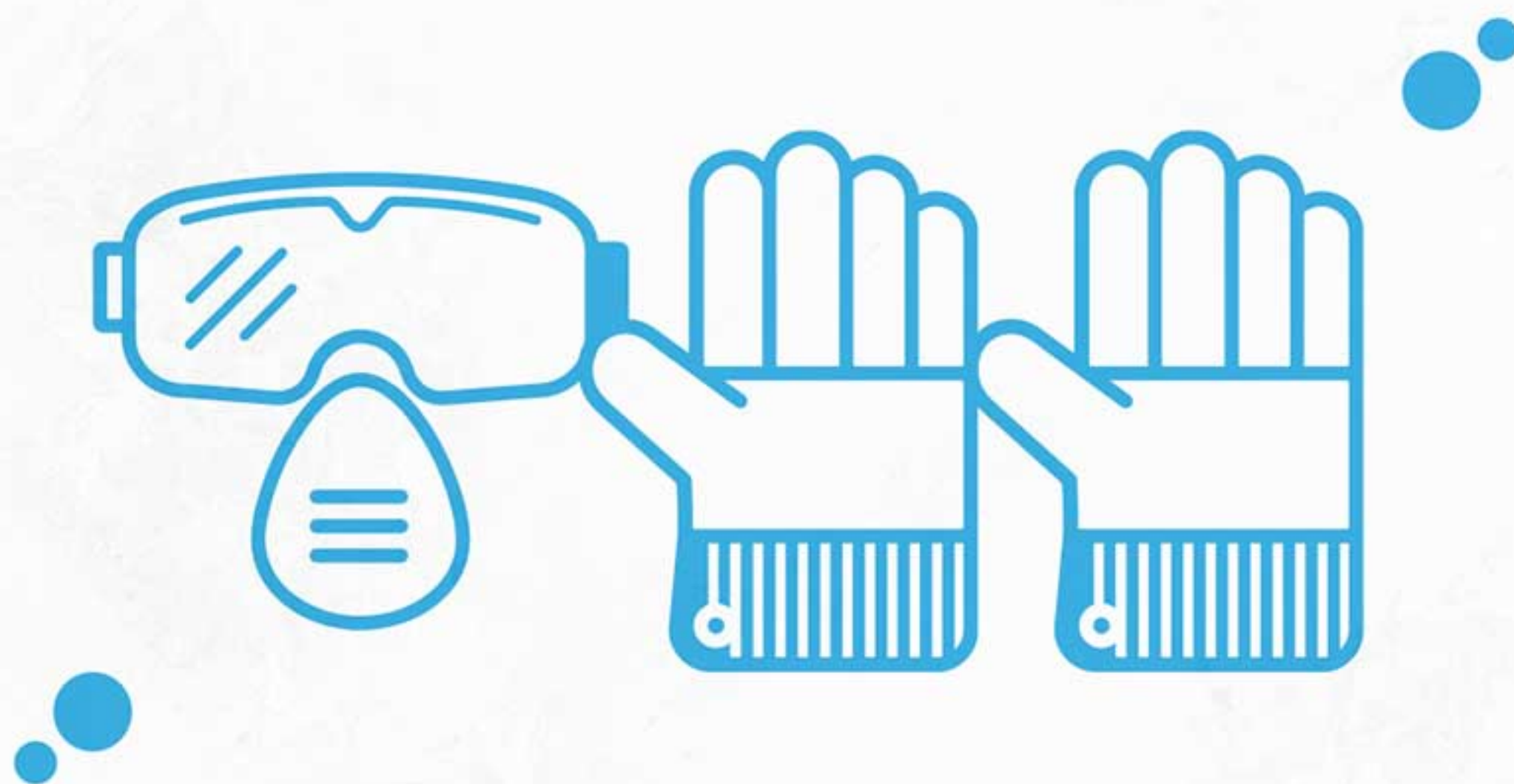
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Introduction

One of the primary tasks in the cleaning routine of any environment, it is often treated as a given that mopping is an effective way of keeping floors clean, removing dirt, dust and grease to keep surfaces visibly hygienic. Mopping also is vital in controlling levels of bacteria on floor surfaces, especially in areas with high foot traffic where people may carry germs in on their shoes from other areas or outside. Indeed, mopping has proved to be effective against this: all kinds of mopping, including both dry and wet mopping, have been found to reduce organic material on floors by a significant amount in ATP testing.

However, from the moment that a mop is first used, both it and the water it is cleaning with becomes polluted, getting progressively worse as the task continues. Unsurprisingly, a dirty mop will not clean effectively, instead just spreading filth between surfaces. In fact, studies assessing the cleanliness of floors have actually discovered higher levels of bacteria after mopping than before.



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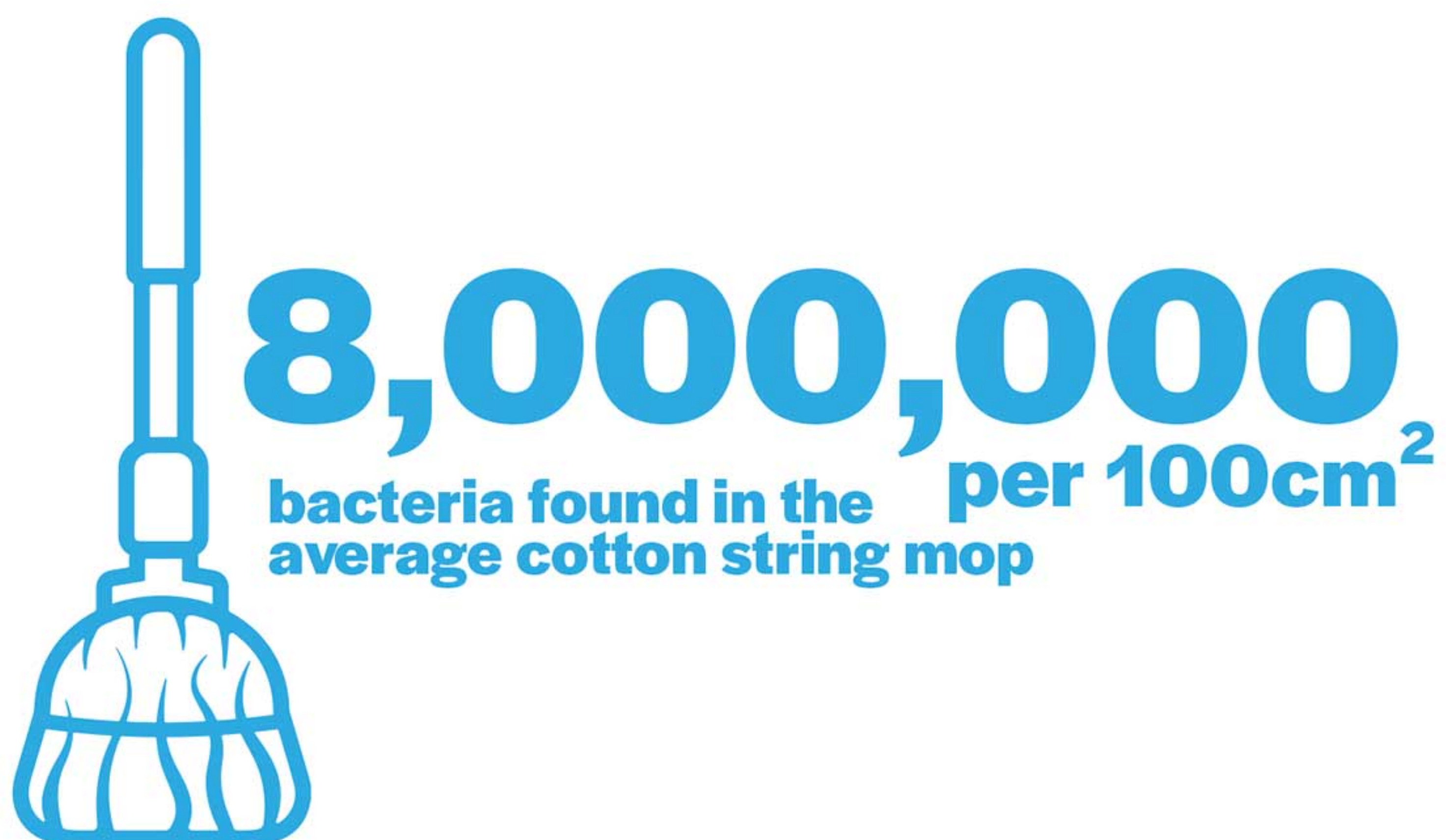
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Cleaning can be ineffective for any number of reasons, but one factor that is often an obstacle to cleaning success, without always being immediately obvious, is problems with the equipment itself. Selecting tools that are not fit for purpose and suited to both the environment and the cleaning task itself will without a doubt hinder overall cleaning performance, proving ineffective in removing either surface level mess or bacteria and often needlessly damaging both the equipment and the surface that it is being used to clean. However, even if the correct equipment for the job is being used, if it is not cared for properly, replaced when necessary, then the very tools that are being used by cleaners to keep people safe can be a potential cause for harm.

It is common practice in performing audits for cleaning performance for surfaces to be tested for bacterial growth, using methods such as ATP (Adenosine Triphosphate) testing, which detects the level of microorganism life as a measure of overall cleanliness. This can often reveal startling truths about the effectiveness of cleaning equipment and procedures in eliminating bacteria, particularly if surfaces in sensitive hygiene environments like hospitals and care homes have been found to have dangerous levels of contaminants. Even more startling, is the levels of microbial growth that have been reported in cleaning tools themselves.

Over the course of a standard cleaning routine, any item used for cleaning will naturally get progressively dirtier, picking up mess like dust and grease from surfaces, as well as bacteria. If equipment is not adequately laundered or disinfected after use (as is common in environments that are busy or lacking appropriate washing facilities), then any contaminants that are transferred to the item will multiply. Common household cleaning products like sponges can be notorious hives of bacteria, a new sponge becoming infested within 3 weeks of use, as can mops. In testing, a standard cotton string mop, the kind of mop that is most commonly used in daily cleaning routines, has been found to contain more than 8 million bacteria per 100cm². This makes mops far more heavily contaminated than anywhere else likely to be found in workplace, including even the average toilet seat, which has been measured at 1,600 germs per 100cm², a tiny fraction of the sum found on mops in the study, which were being used to clean hospital floors. Mops used for wet mopping in particular have been found to support bacteria growth to very high levels, especially if they have been stored wet, often left standing in buckets and water between uses, and even chemical disinfection has proven to be ineffective in safely decontaminating these products.



These statistics are hugely concerning, seeing as these highly contaminated products are being trusted every day to keep surfaces clean and tidy, and to remove bacteria that may have the potential to cause harm to health. There may be a number of reasons for this contamination: as was noted previously, it may be due to insufficient washing or disinfection, as well as improper storage, after use, but in reality bacteria growth in many mops is inevitable, regardless of whether or not they are appropriately laundered. Many traditional cotton mops start to rot from the very first use, the organic fibres that make up the strings naturally deteriorating, exacerbated by the water and filth they are absorbing whilst cleaning.

In addition to presenting a potentially serious hazard to health and a way of spreading contaminants whilst cleaning, mop rot will result in breakdown of the mop fibres, impairing performance even further, and requiring the product to be replaced much sooner than it should, often accumulating in high costs for businesses.

Mop rot may not be immediately visible, making it very easy for cleaning operatives to unknowingly rely on an unhygienic product for some time, but often the high bacterial levels cause odour and discolouration of the mop fibres. Being seen cleaning with such impaired equipment could damage customers, staff and other visitors' trust in cleaning teams, severely harming brand image in some cases.



> SOLUTIONS

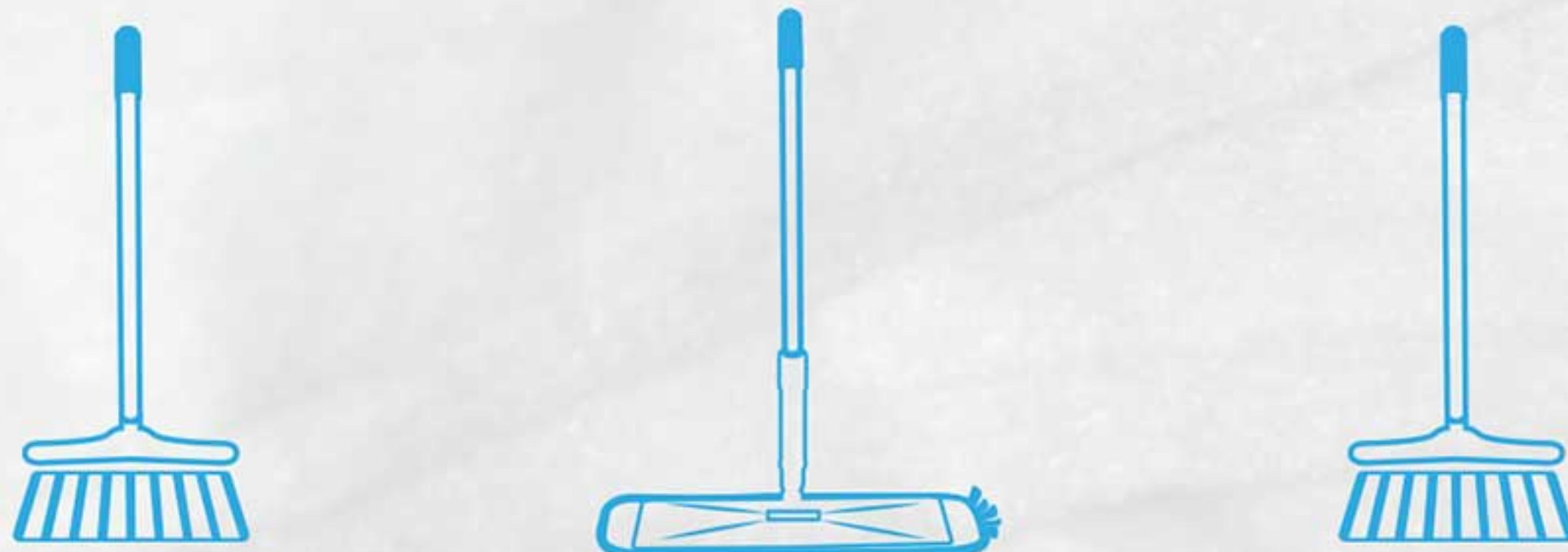
In preventing mop rot and the contamination risk that goes along with it, it is vital that reusable mop heads, which are so commonly seen in standard cleaning cupboards, are washed sufficiently after every use. After completing a mopping task, always rinse the mop off to remove any clinging dirt, dust or other mess that may spread to other surfaces the next time the mop is used, before machine washing, if there are suitable facilities to do so onsite. After laundering, it is also imperative that mops are allowed to dry sufficiently, either by air-drying or machine drying. As has been discovered, wet storage conditions are the perfect breeding ground for mould, mildew and bacteria, and hasten the effects of mop rot, so to keep your mop performing well for longer, and to prevent it from becoming a cleaning hazard, taking care of your mops is in your business' best interests.

Disposable mopping products have also been posed as an alternative solution, especially useful for businesses without the time or means to launder large amounts daily. These single-use products, which are also often cost effective, are not only ideal for their convenience, saving time that would have been spent washing and drying, but they are also extremely useful in preventing cross-contamination in the workplace. By disposing of the mop head after every use, the risk of carrying germs and mess from one area to another whilst cleaning is eliminated, as is the potentially harmful bacteria that equipment may harbour as a result of mop rot.



For this reason, disposable cleaning tools are the products of choice for mopping in heavily soiled or contaminated areas, as well as in sensitive hygiene environments where it is important to reduce the risk of cross-contamination as much as possible. One major drawback, however, particularly for those striving for sustainability in one's cleaning practices, is that single-use products can often generate large amounts of waste, accumulating over time, especially in larger environments with daily, heavy mopping responsibilities. This waste can cause problems for the environment, often ending up in landfill and even potentially contaminating the natural landscape, transferring the chemicals and contaminants that they have absorbed over the course of their life.

A natural compromise, then, is to use a product that is semi-disposable, balancing both mopping hygiene and sustainability, offering a safer and more effective clean compared to most traditional mops, and a more eco-friendly option than single use products. Avoiding mops made from 100% cotton is also a good choice, as the organic fibres are susceptible to bacterial growth; instead, a synthetic blend will resist much of the natural wear and tear of traditional mops, and – provided it is laundered and dried after each use – should not rot in the same way.



> SYRSORB

SYR have worked tirelessly for many years to design and manufacture a wide range of cleaning products to combat a variety of cleaning challenges and tasks. We acknowledge that mopping is one of the most common and time-consuming of cleaning tasks, so having the right mop for the job, one that balances durability with cleaning performance, is imperative.

For a durable, high quality mopping product that cleans floors effectively and safely, without the risk of cross-contamination, SYR has created SYRSorb, an exclusive mop material designed to modernise routines and maximise cleaning performance. Made of a synthetic, non-woven, spun lace fibre, these premium mops, available in a selection of sizes and styles, will not rot like their cotton counterparts, staying fresh for much longer. Each SYRSorb mop is launderable up to 10 times.

As they are fully absorbent from new, SYRSorb mops will not only keep floors and other surfaces cleaner and safer but they will look (and smell) better too, improving the image of your brand for all who visit the premises.



SYRSorb's man-made fibre is manufactured from offcuts of the materials used to make hygiene products, scraps that previously would have been discarded as waste. Hence, with every purchase of a SYRSorb mop, businesses can be assured that they are making a good decision for the environment, minimising the volume of products sent to landfill.

A common problem with many mops is linting, when loose fibres are shed on surfaces during cleaning. Lint left on floors can often look unsightly and make floors appear dirtier than they actually are. It can also be a potential source of contamination, particularly in sensitive cleanroom environments.

SYRSorb mops are non-linting, absorbing large amounts of water without leaving any residue behind, as a result of its man-made fibres. Several of the mops in the SYRSorb range are also looped and banded, further preventing linting, and ensuring durability and maximum liquid retention whilst mopping.

SYRSORB MOPS:

- Durable***
 - High Performance***
 - No risk of cross-contamination***
 - Fully absorbant***
 - Non-Linting***
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