

CLEANING & DISINFECTING FURNITURE MATERIALS

HOWE



CREATING A CLEAN AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT

In today's fast-paced world, ensuring a clean and safe workplace is more important than ever. While the COVID-19 pandemic increased awareness of hygiene practices, its need extends beyond crisis response. It's about fostering a culture of well-being for everyone in the workplace. From daily cleaning routines to disinfection techniques, our aim is to provide easy-to-implement strategies that keep HOWE furniture in great condition and prioritize the health and safety of your team.

VIRUS VS. BACTERIA

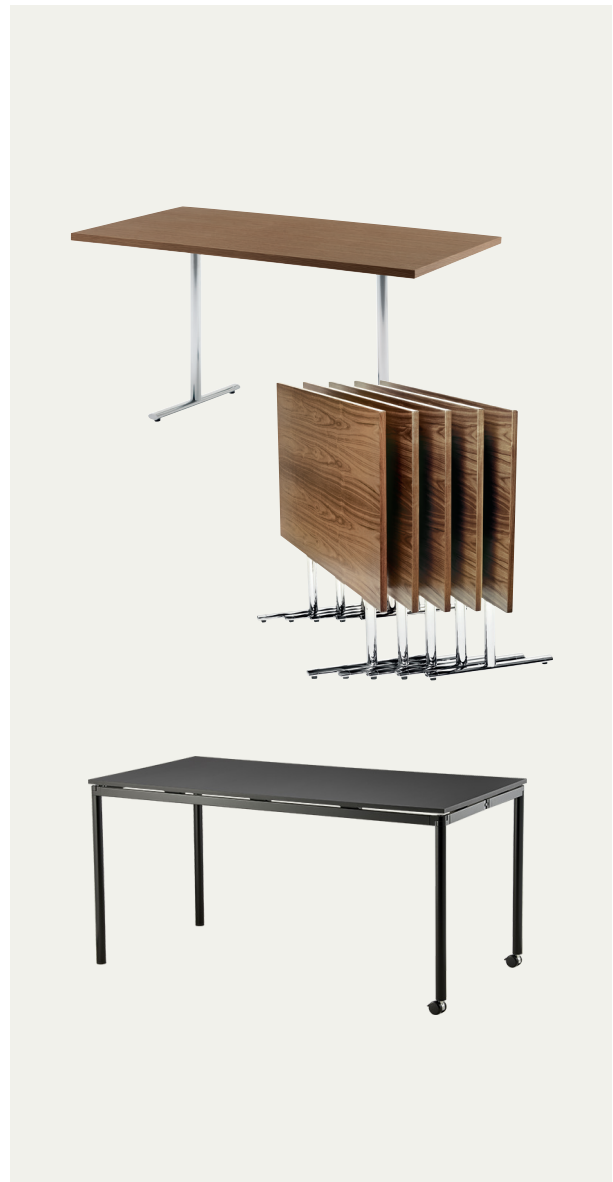
It is important to note the difference between bacteria and virus. Bacteria and viruses are different types of microorganisms. They can occur on different surfaces and materials. Bacteria can grow on a surface and multiply, whereas viruses lack the capacity to thrive and reproduce outside of a host body. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a so-called enveloped virus with a fatty outside layer. This structure is easily destroyed using regular surface disinfectants and detergents.

To prevent a virus and bacteria from spreading, good hygiene, both of the individual and at the workspace, is more important than ever. The World Health Organisation states that the most important thing you can do to protect yourself and others is to keep distance, wash your hands regularly, make sure your surroundings are clean and follow the guidelines of your local government.

ANTIMICROBIAL & ANTIBACTERIAL SURFACES

Antimicrobial and antibacterial material features are now high on the agenda and widely requested.

In that regard, it is important to stress that Antimicrobial and Health & Safety do not go hand in hand. Antimicrobial properties are created using silver ions and formaldehyde which are both considered highly toxic substances that eventually emit from the material surfaces to the surroundings.



Prevailing standards within health, safety and environment such as HHI and GlobalGreenTag™ explicitly bans antimicrobials in furniture.

Because, antimicrobials:

- Pose a risk to human health and environment.
- Contribute to antimicrobial resistance + promote future superbugs.
- May lead to false sense of security and result in less stringent infection control practices.

CLEANING GUIDELINES FOR FURNITURE MATERIALS

In the following we share specific guidelines for each HOWE furniture material on how to care for and clean it, to help you provide a hygienic work environment and make people feel safe and confident when being in their workplace.

FOR ALL PRODUCTS

When disinfecting and cleaning products the agent should be applied to a clean, soft cloth. With very few exceptions, abrasive cleaners and chlorine bleach should never be used as they can cause permanent damage or discoloration of the product.

For custom-ordered non-standard fabrics and finishes, the specific manufacturers' guidelines should be followed. Alternatively, seek assistance from HOWE Customer Service how best to safely clean the custom-ordered product.

All surfaces should be cleaned regularly. It is best to use warm water and a soft, damp cloth, then wipe dry. If the mild detergent/ standard household liquid has been used, always rinse thoroughly to remove the detergent with clean water, preferably warm.

RESINS

POLYAMIDE AND POLYPROPYLENE

Methylated spirit disinfectant can be used without damaging the resin. Concentration should be 50%. Rinse with clean water.

Avoid solvents.

METALS

No special requirements are needed for metal surfaces, use water and soap with soft cloth for basic maintenance. Water could leave limescale marks so it is recommended to wipe away any spillages.

POWDER-COATING / PAINT

Disinfect with a soft cloth moistened with Isopropyl alcohol. Concentration should be between 60-90%. Rinse with clean water.

A pre-softened automotive paste wax may be used after cleaning to maintain the sheen of the coating.

CHROME PLATING

Methylated spirit disinfectant applied to a soft cloth can be used without damaging the chrome surface. Concentration should be 50%. Rinse with clean water.

Afterwards, ensure the surface is dried to prevent water spots or rust on the surface.

Treat the chrome surface with chrome polish to help maintain the surface,



ALUMINIUM

Methylated spirit disinfectant applied to a soft cloth can be used without damaging the aluminium surface. Concentration should be 50%. Rinse with clean water.

Afterwards, ensure the surface is dried to prevent water spots or rust on the surface.

Treat the aluminium surface with a pre-softened wax paste to help maintain the surface.

VENEERS**LACQUERED VENEER**

The best way to clean lacquer is to use a mild soap and warm water. Once it's cleaned, you want to take a soft dry cloth and wipe any excess water away.

Using harsh household cleaners will pull the finish off as well. Avoid using any cleaner that has bleach or ammonia in it.

Water can damage lacquer in a relatively short amount of time. It will leave spots that are difficult to get out later, and if left alone it can remove the finish in these spots, wipe away any spills that may happen from time to time.

Alcohol disinfectant applied to a soft cloth can be used without damaging the lacquered veneer. Concentration should be 50%. Rinse with clean water.

Afterwards, ensure the surface is thoroughly dried to prevent staining.

Avoid solvents. Aerosol-powered cleaners and polishes should not be used.

LAMINATES / MELAMINES / LINOLEUM

Do not use any harsh liquid cleaners or scouring cleaning products. Polishes, waxes and solvents are also unsuitable for cleaning surfaces and do more harm than good.

Do not use a steam cleaner as it may cause water impregnation which makes the furniture components swell.

As a cleaning substance are also unsuitable so-called "balsam" washing-up liquids with moisturising aloe Vera additives. The skin care substances form a film on the product surface that is very difficult to remove.

Also, contact with aggressive cleaning products or descalers should not be used, but if they are, then they should only remain on the surface for a very short time. Drips must be removed immediately.

HIGH PRESSURE & COMPACT LAMINATES / MELAMINES

Alcohol disinfectant applied to a soft cloth can be used without damaging the laminates or melamines. Concentration should be 50%. Rinse with clean water.

Avoid solvents. Do not use chlorine bleach.

Laminates and melamines are highly resistant to chemicals and many household cleaners can be safely used, such as Formula 409 or Mr. Clean where available.

NANO-LAMINATES (EU) / TRACELESS LAMINATES (US)

Alcohol disinfectant applied to a soft cloth can be used without damaging the laminates or melamines. Concentration should be 50%. Rinse with clean water.

In case of micro-scratches using magic sponge:

- Superficial defects caused by micro-scratches.
- Rub the magic sponge gently on the area where the micro-scratches can be seen. The sponge can be used dry or slightly damp.

LINOLEUMS

Alcohol disinfectant applied to a soft cloth can be used without damaging the linoleum. Concentration should be 50%. Rinse with clean water.

Regular cleaning with a damp cloth, optional a 5% solution of pH-neutral detergent is recommended.

Avoid solvents. Do not use chlorine bleach.

Wipe clean with a damp cloth and a neutral cleaner. As a regular cleaner you can also use with a blend of water and natural soap or waxes.

Stain removal: To prevent stubborn stains always use coasters under the flowerpots, vases and cups, glasses, etc. It is important to remove spots, stains and spillages as quickly as possible to prevent them from penetrating into the material. The surface can be cleaned with a neutral/ mild detergent and water.

FABRICS

To preserve the fabric's attractive colour, we recommend regular vacuuming, preferably every week, with a soft fitting.

Always rinse fabrics thoroughly with clean water after the use of disinfectants in order to remove any chemical residues remaining in the fabric after the recommended dwell time.

There are several types of disinfectants and products on the market and to ensure that the product will not cause adverse changes to the fabric, we recommend testing before general use.

Chemical disinfectants and sanitisers should in general only be used when absolutely necessary.

For safety reasons and to protect your fabrics and furniture, always follow authority recommendations and the guidelines defined by the supplier of the disinfection chemical.

POLYESTER AND TREVIRA CS

Ethanol-based disinfectants can be used without damaging the textiles or changing its colour. Concentration should be between 70-85%.

Chlorine-based detergents can be used without damaging the textiles or changing its colour. Concentration should be 1000-1200 ppm.

Bleach disinfectants can be used without damaging the textiles or changing its colour. Use a 5% bleach concentration, mix 1 part bleach to 10 parts water.

Upholstery textiles made out of polyester and Trevira CS can be washed in temperatures up to 80 degrees Celsius.

Make sure to keep your fabrics as dry as possible, both during use and after eventual washing to prevent bacteria development.

WOOL

For woolen textiles we recommended dry cleaning or professional cleaning.

Ethanol-based disinfectants can be used without damaging the textiles or changing its colour. Concentration should be between 70-85%.

Avoid chlorine-based and bleach cleanable agents. We do not recommend washing woolen textiles.

IN GENERAL

The same basic principles for care and maintenance of fabrics continue to apply: vacuum upholstery regularly to remove dust, dirt and crumbs; attend to stains quickly with a damp cloth; use branded upholstery shampoo on specific types of staining; and periodically consider specialist deep cleaning services such as dry cleaning.



