

Standard Operating Procedures for reusable gloves

Background



For further information please see our Sustainability Ratings Charts and Decision Tree for gloves.

As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic (and other illness outbreaks) the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves and face masks is increasing. A significant percentage end up in nature and marine environments **harming ecosystems and animals**.

In June 2020, 125 scientists agreed that switching to single-use does not necessarily prevent the spread of infection and the World Health Organisation promotes **frequent handwashing protocols*** over single-use gloves. Where PPE is required, reusable products that can be washed or sanitized will reduce unnecessary waste and pollution such as reusable rubber gloves for example.

However, handwashing procedures still need to be followed **whilst wearing gloves to avoid the spread of germs or cross contamination**. It is important to bear in mind that different types of gloves should be used according to their different preventive functions:

- a) Food protection
- b) Protection against chemicals
- c) Protection against bacteria and microorganisms

It can help to colour code gloves according to their function, this will avoid them being used incorrectly or unnecessarily. Handling food for a long time with the same gloves can pose a health risk and therefore they should be cleaned and disinfected frequently. Every time different food is handled, **gloved hands should be washed to avoid cross contamination**. The main objective is to ensure that gloves used for cleaning are not used for food handling and vice versa.

Steps to clean reusable gloves correctly and remove them for washing and storage

- 1 **Wet gloved hands with clean water** and apply PH neutral soap.
- 2 Rub your hands together concentrating on the palm, back and between the fingers.
- 3 Rinse well.
- 4 **Remove reusable gloves** and hang them to dry.
- 5 When the exterior is dry, wash your hands as per steps 1-3, turn the gloves inside out and wash and rinse as per steps 1-3 and re-hang gloves to dry.

* For more information please see our SOP for handwashing whilst wearing gloves.

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- 6 As an alternative **submerge the gloves in sanitising solution** for 5 minutes or the time suggested on the sanitising solution product. Then hang to dry, ensuring that the gloves are dry internally and externally.
 - 7 **Dry, clean reusable gloves should be stored for reuse in an airy and dry place.** It is important to know how and when they should be disposed of, for example damaged gloves should be disposed of immediately.
 - 8 When you come to reuse the gloves again, **wash your hands thoroughly before putting reusable gloves on.**

Basic recommendations to ensure the correct use of reusable gloves

- 1 Gloves are personal, they should not be used by different people. To avoid possible confusion, they can be marked with the person's name.
- 2 Put on the gloves with clean, dry hands.
- 3 Check gloves carefully before use.
- 4 Avoid wearing jewellery and long nails.
- 5 Wash the gloves as outlined above.
- 6 Take off gloves if they are damaged and dispose of them responsibly.
- 7 If reusable gloves are dirty and no longer fit the purpose, they cannot be recycled and should therefore be disposed of in the general waste container (in Spain, this would be the grey bin).

IMPORTANT: Please always follow the manufacturers instructions to ensure a correct and safe usage.



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