

How to use a microfiber towel for cleaning house...

Extracted with the permission of the author from:

The Super-Green Clean: Using Microfiber Towels to Clean Nearly Anything with Plain Water, by Appaloosa Moose

A microfiber towel will pick up dust, surface residues, microscopic particles and even grease and oil with plain tap water; but for a towel to work its magic, it must be handled the right way.

With a brand new towel, fill a sink or basin with cool to lukewarm tap water. Hold the towel underwater for several seconds until it becomes saturated. Then wring it out. Repeat the process.

To wring out a towel, fold the towel in quarters, then roll it up and wring out as much moisture as you can. Microfiber towels clean most effectively when they are just dampened, not wet.

To clean with a microfiber towel, wipe any smooth surface with the towel open (not wadded up). Keep turning the towel as you clean to use a fresh area, for the most efficient cleaning. If the towel is leaving streaks of moisture behind, it is too wet, and should be wrung out again. If the towel is leaving streaks of dirt or grime, move to a fresh area of the towel or rinse the towel.

Do not use soaps, detergents, cleaners or degreasers with a microfiber towel. The chemicals will prevent the towel from working.

When the towel gets dirty, fill a sink or container with cool to lukewarm water. Swish the towel around in the water. Then, holding the edge of the towel, dunk it in and out of the water several times. When the towel stops leaving more dirt in the water, it is ready to reuse. Wring it out and use it for cleaning again.

When you are finished cleaning, rinse and wring the towel once more. Hang it to dry overnight and it can be re-used day after day. When it gets really dirty and won't rinse clean, the towel can be machine-washed following the directions on the next page.

NOTE: Microfiber towels by themselves won't scratch glass or delicate surfaces. But they are very good at picking up grit (particles of dirt or sand). If you have grit in the towel and wash a window, you stand the chance of scratching it. So if you're going to clean windows, glass objects or other delicate surfaces, make sure to use a freshly clean, well-rinsed towel.

Never let wet paint, glazes, glues or milk dry on the surface of a microfiber towel. They can attach permanently to the fibers. If you can't rinse out the towel right away, drop it in a basin of water to soak in the meantime.

Basic Directions for Machine Washing:

- **NEVER** use hot water with a microfiber towel; the fibers will shrink and not work as well (the tiny channels close up). This means cool to lukewarm water to rinse the towel with as you're working, and the "cool" or "cold" setting on the washing machine.
- **NEVER** expose the microfiber towel to heat. Use the coolest ("delicate") setting on the dryer, don't iron it (why would anyone?) and don't use it on hot objects. With high temperatures the synthetic fibers will melt.
- **NEVER** use a fabric softener with a microfiber towel. Not in the washer and not in the dryer. The chemicals in the softeners will coat the microfibers, keeping them from working like they should.
- **NEVER** wash a microfiber towel with regular terry cloth towels, socks or other items that shed a lot of lint. The microfiber towel will pick up the lint from cotton towels and get clogged up. Instead, wash the microfiber towels in a load with other fabrics that also need cool water. What I have learned is that the towels actually wash up the best if you do a load of just the microfiber towels, using about $\frac{1}{4}$ as much laundry detergent as for a regular load. The towels need lots of water, though so only put about half as many in the wash as you would with regular fabrics. I tested a load just going through the rinse cycle with four towels, and they were just about as clean as the ones that had gone through the wash cycle too.
- **AVOID** powdered laundry products since some of them don't dissolve all of the way and detergent grains can get picked up by the microfibers. The same is true if you want to use a disinfectant with the towel—stick to the liquids. You can add bleach to the wash load, but only use about half as much as you would for bleaching whites. (The exact amount will depend on how large your washing machine is.)

By learning to use microfiber towels, you can avoid using many household cleaning chemicals and contribute to cleaner air and water as well as having a super-green clean home. Microfiber towels leave surfaces cleaner than conventional methods so things stay cleaner longer, too. To learn more about how these towels work, see *The Super-Green Clean: Using Microfiber Towels to Clean Nearly Anything with Plain Water*, by Applalooosa Moose. The book is available online at Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.