

Cat Enclosure Sanitation

General Sanitation Practices

- Prior to performing sanitation of cat enclosures, cats should be observed for changes in physical and behavioral health and findings documented as appropriate.
- Individuals performing sanitation should wear appropriate, clean, protective outerwear and care should be taken to properly [don and doff attire](#).
- Each animal housing area should have designated, labeled cleaning equipment for use exclusively in that area. Such equipment should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after use.
- In most situations, and especially for cats that are mildly ill, anxious, fearful, or stressed, [spot cleaning](#) is the preferred method for daily care. **Spot cleaning is generally preferred for cats with URI and ringworm.**



Indications for Sanitation

- After cats have left the enclosure and new cat(s) will be housed in the enclosure
- When the enclosure is heavily soiled
- Minimum of every 2 weeks when cats are housed long-term in the same enclosure
- When the occupant has been diagnosed with or exposed to a severe infectious disease (e.g. panleukopenia)

Supplies

- Gloves & outerwear that covers arms
- Detergent & disinfectant products
- Garden sprayer/spray bottle
- Hand-held scrub brush
- Clean rags/paper towels
- Dustpan
- Trash can
- Laundry bag/basket
- Clean enclosure supplies

Step-by-Step

1. Remove occupant from enclosure or confine them to a physically separate compartment.
2. Remove food and water bowls, cage furnishings, and toys and place in a designated “dirty” area for disposal or sanitation as appropriate.
3. Using rag and dustpan, remove all visible solid contaminants (e.g. food, feces, vomit, etc.) from enclosure.
4. Apply detergent* using a garden sprayer or spray bottle, coating all surfaces of enclosure including both sides of the door.
5. Physically scrub all surfaces of the enclosure using a hand-held scrub brush or clean rag.
6. Rinse all surfaces with a clean rag soaked in clean water.
7. Apply disinfectant solution using a garden sprayer or spray bottle, thoroughly coating all surfaces of enclosure including both sides of the door.**
8. Allow appropriate contact time based on product label.
9. Rinse all surfaces with a clean rag soaked in clean water.
10. Use a clean rag or paper towel to dry all animal contact surfaces or allow enclosure to air dry.
11. Re-set enclosure and/or return occupant to enclosure.

*Some products have both detergent and disinfectant properties; therefore, the same product can be used for both cleaning (step 4) and disinfection (step 7). Even when using a dual-purpose product, it is important to perform both the cleaning and disinfection steps to ensure appropriate sanitation.

**If the enclosure is heavily soiled, e.g. food has been smeared over large areas, but the risk of infectious disease is LOW and the same cat(s) will be returning to the enclosure, the application of disinfectant and second water rinse may be eliminated