

# Simple Handwashing Steps

1. Wet your hands with warm water.
2. Lather up with soap. Soap removes the oil that helps germs stick to your hands. **Stronger soaps or antibacterial soaps are not “better” than regular soap for getting flu germs off your hands.** What matters is washing your hands correctly. The best soap is the soap you actually use!
3. Rub and scrub your hand together for at least 20 seconds. Strongly rub and scrub your wrists, palms, between fingers, under your nails, and the backs of your hands. It’s the soap and scrubbing action that loosens the germs off your hands and sends them down the sink when you rinse.
4. Rinse your hands thoroughly with warm, running water.
5. Dry your hands completely with a clean towel. If you’re using paper towels, you may want to use the towel to turn off the faucet when you’re finished drying your hands. Throw the paper towel away.



If soap and water are not available or convenient, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. **(Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are not “better” than regular soap and water for getting flu germs off your hands. You don’t need to kill all the germs and viruses on your hands. You just need to wash them off.)** Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can usually be found as a gel or as wipes. Make sure the product is at least 60 percent alcohol.

To use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

- Rub the gel or wipe all over both hands.
- Rub hands together until they feel dry.

**Remember to keep all alcohol-based and hand-gel sanitizers out of the reach of small children. Always supervise children when using hand-gel so that they do not put it in their eyes or mouth.**