

How It Works: Washing Hands with Soap and Water

Components to washing with soap and water, the proper technique, and how washing with soap and water works.

Components:

- Three components:
 1. Soap
 2. Warm water
 3. Friction

Technique:

- Six steps:
 1. Wet hands with warm, running water.
 2. Add soap.
 3. Rub hands vigorously for 20 seconds.
 - Wash all surfaces including:
 - Backs of hands
 - Wrists
 - Between fingers
 - Tips of fingers
 - Thumbs under fingernails—nailbrush is best
 4. Rinse.
 - Keep fingers pointing down
 5. Dry vigorously with paper or clean cloth towel.
 6. Turn off faucet with towel and open door with towel.

How it works:

- The soap suspends the dirt and soils.
- The friction motion helps pull dirt and greasy or oily soils free from the skin.
- Warm running water washes away suspended dirt and soils that trap germs.
- Final friction of wiping hands removes more germs.