



Instrument Care Guide

Music time is full of smiles, laughter...and yes, a few preschool germs! Young children are still learning healthy hygiene habits, so keeping your classroom instruments clean helps create a safer, healthier environment for everyone.

A little routine maintenance goes a long way toward extending the life of your instruments and keeping them ready for many years of joyful music-making.

Smart Storage

Store instruments in plastic bins or containers whenever possible. Plastic containers are easy to wipe clean and sanitize, unlike fabric bags or wooden boxes, which can be more difficult to disinfect thoroughly.

Keep storage bins in a cool, dry place and allow instruments to dry completely before putting them away.

During Class

Most teachers don't have time to sanitize instruments between classes—and that's perfectly okay!

Instead, it's helpful to keep a few extra instruments on hand (especially frequently used items like egg shakers, rhythm sticks, and drums). If an instrument ends up in a child's mouth, nose, or anywhere else it shouldn't be (because preschoolers certainly keep us on our toes!), simply set it aside to be cleaned after class and replace it with a clean one.

Regular Cleaning

Whenever possible, give instruments a quick cleaning after your teaching day. At a minimum, sanitize them weekly.

During cold and flu season—or anytime illness is making its way through your classroom or school—you may want to clean instruments more frequently.

Cleaning by Instrument Type

Plastic Instruments

Examples: Egg shakers, plastic maracas, guiros, castanets, rhythm eggs

- Spray lightly with an approved sanitizing solution and wipe dry, or use disinfecting wipes.
- **Do not submerge egg shakers or other sealed instruments in water**, as moisture can damage the filling inside.
- Allow instruments to dry completely before returning them to storage.

Instruments with Metal Parts

Examples: Tambourines, wrist bells, jingle sticks, hand bells

- Wipe thoroughly with a disinfecting or sanitizing wipe.
- Dry completely before storing to help prevent rust or corrosion.

Wooden Instruments & Drums

Examples: Rhythm sticks, wood blocks, claves, hand drums

- Wipe with a disinfecting wipe or a soft cloth lightly dampened with a mild vinegar-and-water solution.
- Avoid soaking wooden instruments or drumheads.
- Always wipe dry immediately, especially drums with natural or synthetic drumheads.

Fabric Items

Examples: Scarves, puppets, parachutes

- Machine wash (preferably in a mesh laundry bag) or hand wash according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Air dry or tumble dry on low heat if appropriate for the material.

A Final Teacher Tip

No cleaning routine needs to be perfect. Preschool classrooms are wonderfully active places! Consistently removing heavily soiled instruments, cleaning them on a regular schedule, and storing them properly will help keep your instruments looking great and ready for every song, dance, and giggle.