

# Tips for Cleaning Your Reusable Bags

To prevent cross-contamination and reduce risk for foodborne illness, here are tips to ensure your bags stay germ free.



**Woven or Nonwoven Polypropylene Bags:** Machine-wash on gentle cycle with soap and cold water or hand-wash with soap and water, line dry.

**Nylon or Polyester Bags:** Hand-wash in warm water and soap. Turn inside out and line dry.

**Bamboo or Hemp Bags:** Machine-wash on gentle cycle with soap and cold water, machine or line dry.

**Cotton Bags:** Machine-wash with soap and hot water, machine or line dry.

**Insulated Bags:** Hand-wash in warm water and soap or wipe with disinfecting wipes, especially along seams, line dry.

**Take care to separate.** Whenever possible, designate separate bags to always use for the same type of product (e.g.: produce bag, seafood bag, meat bag, shelf-stable product bag and cleaner bag) and always place meats into a disposable plastic bag before placing in a reusable bag. Avoid using reusable shopping bags for multipurpose uses, too. You never want to carry fresh produce in bags that once served as a temporary diaper or gym bag.

**Store safely.** Once groceries are put away and bags are cleaned out, most of us never give a second thought to where bags are stored. Perhaps they're thrown in the car so you don't forget to use them during the next shopping trip? Unfortunately - that's a big no-no! Reusable bags should be kept in a cool, dry space with adequate air flow, since dark, warm and humid environments (think: in the trunk of your car) are where bacteria thrive.

**Have a bag that's seen better days?** Follow the ultimate food safety guideline:  
*When in doubt, throw it out!*

Based on information from the American Cleaning Institute® and [foodsafety.gov](http://foodsafety.gov).

