



CLEANING OF TOYS



Toys, puzzles and games are so much more appealing if they are clean. No-one likes to borrow a dirty toy. Every member is required to take reasonable care of the items they borrow from the Toy Library. **This includes cleaning and drying toys, bags and boxes before returning them.** We would therefore like all members to read and follow the information and special tips provided below.

Cleaning Kit

Everyone must have:

- 1 A cleaning formula which removes grease and kitchen/household smells, eg
 - Something like Spray & Wipe (for grease)
 - Vanilla Fridge Wipe (for smells)
 - Bicarb soda and vinegar (environmentally friendly and non-toxic)
For toys that may go into babies' mouths, using bicarb soda and vinegar to clean them is a good option. Otherwise wipe baby toys clean of all detergents after cleaning.
- 2 Some disinfectant, like Pine-O-Cleen or Dettol
- 3 An old toothbrush
- 4 A wettex
- 5 A clean tea towel
- 6 Toothpicks or satay sticks and cotton wool to clean nooks and crannies

How to do it

Always set aside time to clean toys before returning them to the Toy Library.

Expert tip: *Many parents do this the night before and then put the toys away (or in the car boot!) so that the children cannot get to them.*

If it is appropriate, wash the toy well in a laundry tub full of hot soapy water with some disinfectant in it. **But please don't soak the toy.** Use the old toothbrush to get into nooks and crannies. Rinse with hot water and drain or dry with a clean tea towel. Now that it is perfectly clean, hide it!

Special Tips

- ***If your child has been ill***, please disinfect the toys thoroughly, but don't soak them in disinfectant, as this can remove colour from some plastics. Please also inform the Session Leader when you return your toys.
- ***Kitchen smells*** on toys, plastic bags and contacted boxes can be removed very effectively with Vanilla Fridge Wipe.
- ***Baby rattles*** should not be immersed in water if there are parts where the water can get in, as often we can't get it out!
- ***Wooden toys***, like Brio train sets, need to be washed well with a toothbrush and hot soapy water, if they are dirty, but please **don't soak any wooden toys in water**.
- ***Duplo*** needs washing as above. The challenge with Duplo is the drying. Rinsing it in very hot water and leaving it to drain overnight does the trick.

Expert tip: If it is very grimy, put a couple of tablespoons of Napisan in a trough of warm water, drop the toy in then soak for 3-4 hours or overnight. The dirt just falls off! For the larger single items a quick wipe with an old towel as you pull them out to dry takes off any residual grime quick as a wink.

Expert tip: Items such as Duplo, waffle blocks etc. that come packaged in plastic boxes can be soaked in their own boxes - cleaning the toy pieces AND the inside of the box at the same time.

- ***Bath toys*** need lots of grease removing formula and **disinfectant**. Please don't say these don't need cleaning because they have been in the bath all week!
- ***Outdoor and sandpit toys*** need to be cleaned just as well as other toys because they may be used inside by the next borrower.
- ***Wooden puzzles and game boards*** can generally be sprayed with Spray & Wipe then wiped over with a wettex. Please ensure they are dry when put in the bag.
- ***Cardboard puzzles and game boards***, wipe with a damp cloth if there has been a spill.
- ***Dress Ups***, most costumes can be gently hand washed in warm water. Allow time to wash and dry thoroughly. Some accessories cannot be washed, please note any special instructions on the bag.
- ***Raeco Bags & storage boxes*** need to be cleaned & looked after too! Please wipe them with warm soapy water or spray cleaner and keep them out of harm's way.

Expert tip: After removing the toy from its bag, turn the bag inside-out & clean the inside, then hang it up (away from the kids) to air dry. The night before return, turn it back the right way and wipe the outside before putting the toy back in.