



Give Your Dishes a Do-Over: Lemi Shine's Stay-at-Home Sink Time Strategies

The people at [Lemi Shine](#), a family-owned company that creates powerful and safe household cleaning products, each powered by citric extracts, know a thing or two about cleaning dishes—both professionally and personally—and they're here with some tips and tricks to help save time.

WASHING DISHES BY HAND

Soak, or not?

It's not cheating. Definitely soak your dishes. Scrape off any excess food, then pop them in piping hot, soapy water for 15-30 minutes. Change a diaper, Zoom a work call, come back and you're ahead of the game. You likely won't have to scrub dishware – just rinse and dry. If you can, grab a couple of tubs—one filled with soapy water for soaking and one with just water for rinsing. It will speed up the whole process.

Got a burn casualty or stubborn stuck-on food? Fill the dirty pot with hot water and a little dish soap then bring it to a boil on the stove, quickly remove and allow it to soak for at least one hour.

The hotter the better

Use really hot water to help get items that need hand washing cleaner faster, and scrubbing brushes or sponges with long handles to help limit skin contact with the water.

Wash things in order

Go in order: cleanest to dirtiest and change the water as you go. Sounds simple, but it saves water and time. Of course, if your dishwasher detergent is powerful enough, you can load more of those dirty pots and pans into the dishwasher and have fewer items to hand wash, saving both time and money.

Switch out brushes and sponges regularly

Yes, you have to clean the things that clean your stuff. Left unattended they can become breeding grounds for bacteria. Replace your brushes and sponges at least a couple of times a month to avoid bacteria growth. You can also sanitize them (so long as there are no metal parts) with a zap in the microwave or on the top tray of your dishwasher.

Don't forget to clean your garbage disposal

Speaking of cleaning things you use to clean— the garbage disposal is a hot zone of bacteria and dirt that can easily back up from time to time and splash back on your dishes. To avoid nasty smells and combat the spread of germs, you should clean your garbage disposal once or twice a month. Try [Lemi Shine garbage disposal cleaner](#) – it cleans naturally and harmlessly using citric extracts, plus it's like watching a fun science experiment.



USING THE DISHWASHER

Rinse or not?

If your dishwasher was made in the past 10 years, there's no need to pre-rinse, but you do need to scrape off excess food before loading. Otherwise it can get baked on your dishes, or clog the filter.

How to properly load the dishwasher (and occasionally avoid an argument)

Top rack: delicates

- Glasses, mugs and small bowls go on the top, upside down. Lean them a little if they have crevasses that collect water.
- Plastic items go here too. Dishwasher heat comes from the bottom and can warp plastics.
- Carefully place any small and irregular items so they don't fall through the gaps, potentially blocking the washer arm or landing on the heating element.
- Spatulas, ladles and other large utensils should lie flat on the top rack, not with the silverware where they can block the water spray.

Bottom rack: heavy duties

- Plates, large bowls, pots and pans must go on the bottom.
- Flat pans or platters should be placed in racks away from the door—placing them near the door can block detergent from reaching other dishes or stop the detergent door from opening altogether.
- Big items should be loaded on their sides, not face down to avoid blocking the spray arm.
- Face the dirty sides of your plates toward the middle where the water sprays.

Utensil holder:

Load spoons and forks handle-first, facing up, and place knives point-down so that you don't cut yourself when you unload them. Organize each holder by forks, knives and spoons to help save time when you unload.

Don't overload

If you have to run your dishwasher a couple of times a day it's better than overcrowding. Cramming dishes in your dishwasher with little breathing (cleaning) room prevents them from being cleaned evenly and means you'll end up having to rewash many pieces by hand.

Give your detergent a boost



If you still have spots and residue on your dishes and glasses when they come out of the dishwasher, you likely have hard water (most of us do). Try adding [Lemi Shine's booster](#) to the cycle, the citric extracts work to naturally take care of spots and cloudiness.

Check the spray arm

Spin the arm before you start the dishwasher to make sure it can move unobstructed by pots or plates. The arm or your dishes can be damaged, plus it needs to spin freely to clean well.

Preheat the water

Run the kitchen sink on hot for a couple of minutes to get the heated water flowing before starting your dishwasher—an easy way to get the dishwasher working efficiently from the moment you press go.

Dishwasher do-nots and nevers

Always check items to be sure they're ok to go in the dishwasher.

Dishwasher blacklist (never put these things in):

- Cast iron: it will destroy the coating and cause rust.
- Non-stick pans: some nonstick cookware is labeled "dishwasher safe," but for the most part, these items can't withstand the intense heat of the dishwasher.
- Delicate pieces: anything that could break easily, such as fine china & crystal.
- Fine metals and finishes: heat and detergents can ruin the finish on silver or enameled items.
- Wood utensils and cutting boards: wood is porous and can't sustain the amount of water a dishwasher uses to clean. They'll warp, or crack over time.
- Sharp knives: chefs hand-wash their knives to keep the blades sharp and the handles tight. Be like a chef and do the same.
- Copper cookware: they can discolor and become dull.
- Aluminum cookware: when exposed to the hot water and high heat of the dishwasher, aluminium will fade and oxidize quickly.

Clean your dishwasher regularly

Is your dishwasher clean enough to wash your dishes? Even if you do a good job of removing gunk prior to washing, food particles buildup over time and can lead to funky smells and poor drainage. Eighty-five percent of the United States has hard water with minerals that not only leave spots on glasses and dishes, but cloud dishwashers, too. You can protect your dishwasher (likely save maintenance fees) and extend its life with regular cleaning that takes a few minutes. Try a [Lemi Shine dishwasher cleaner](#)—it uses citric extracts to bind up minerals in the water and naturally soften hard water.