

# 6. Housekeeping – Cleaning Equipment

***"My father was a general manager with Hyatt, so we lived in the hotel so he would be close by if there were any problems. My mum was always adamant about us not abusing it. So I still had to clean my room. Housekeeping would never come and do it."***

***-Dianna Agron, American Actress, Singer, and Dancer.***

The housekeeping staff needs to clean various guest rooms, guest bathrooms, and a number of public areas in the hotel. The staff needs to take the help of various cleaning equipment while trying to keep the hotel premises to the highest standard of appearance.

Today, there is a wide range of cleaning products available in the market.

## **Advantages of Cleaning Equipment**

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The cleaning equipment are advantageous in multiple ways:

- Equally effective for general as well as tougher cleaning tasks.
- High cleaning capability.
- Reduce work fatigue and increase **productivity**.
- Save the **time** of hotel housekeeping staff.
- High **maneuverability**. They can reach any corner or height of the room, which is otherwise difficult to reach.
- Eco-friendly, widely available, and easy to operate
- They give protection from injuries occurring while cleaning when they are handled by using proper instructions.

## **Classification of Cleaning Equipment**

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There are broadly categorized as follows:

### **Manual Cleaning Equipment**

As the name suggests, they are used manually to keep the surfaces clean. Some commonly used manual equipment are:

- **Abrasives:** They are the sharpening stones or grit papers used to polish metal or wooden surfaces. There are various abrasives depending upon the size of grit and adhesion of grit particles on the paper.

- **Brushes:** They are handheld flat brushes with bristles to dust the plain surfaces as well as the corners. They come with non-slip handles and stiff scratch-free bristles. They help removing stubborn dust.
- **Chambermaid's Trolley/Housekeeping Trolley:** This trolley is large enough to keep all the guest room and guest bathroom supplies in an organized manner. It makes the housekeeping staff to move it around and carry large number of items in one go while keeping and cleaning the guest rooms.
- **Dustbins:** They are used to collect daily garbage produced in the hotel.
- **Dusting Cloths:** They are soft cloths used for wiping the surface dust.
- **Dustpans:** They are used to collect dust and garbage from the floor and putting it into the dustbin.
- **Janitor's trolley:** It is a trolley that stores cleaning supplies such as detergents, spray bottles, dustbin, mop, and dusting cloths, all in a compact manner. It can be moved around easily. It fulfills the challenge of modern day housekeeping in hotels.
- **Mops:** There are various types of mops such as string mops, flat mops, dust mops, and synthetic mops. Mops are generally made of flat cotton strings or heavy-duty sponges fixed on the metal frames. The cotton mops have high absorbing ability but need more care unlike the synthetic mops that offer almost zero absorbing ability and very less maintenance.
- **Mop Wringer trolley:** A mop bucket cart (or mop trolley) is a wheeled bucket that allows its user to wring out a wet mop without getting the hands dirty. The mops are squeezed between two surfaces to remove dirty water from it.
- **Scarifying machine:** It is used for keeping gardens, golf courts, and lawn in the hotel premises. It cuts through the turf, and removes moss and dead grass. It helps grow spongy lawn. Scarifiers have fixed knife blades attached to the rotary cylinder. They cut through the grass by which the offshoots are separated into lots of individual plants. This helps to thicken up the turf and improve its health.
- **Spray Bottles:** They are used to spray water or chemical solutions on the surface that needs cleaning. They are also used to spray water on the delicate flowers or leaves of flower arrangement.

### Electric Cleaning Equipment

As the name depicts, this equipment requires electrical power to operate. They are operated either on AC power or on the battery. Some important electric equipment are:

- **Box Sweeper:** It is electric sweeper that consists of a friction brush. The brush often is fit to revolve vertically or horizontally, when the equipment moves on the

surface. It can clean floors as well as carpets. The wider the better is the box sweeper brush.

- **Vacuum Cleaner:** It is again a majorly used equipment in hotel housekeeping. It comes with a suction motor fit in a case, a hose, and various attachment for delicate as well as tough cleaning requirements.
- **Polishing Machine:** They are used to add a shine to the floors of most frequented areas of the hotel.
- **Scrubber:** It is a floor care accessory that comes with handheld electrically operated scrubber. It is used where only mopping doesn't suffice. It can scrub stubborn and sticky stains on the floors of cafeterias, restaurants, lobbies, and fitness areas where people can take food and beverages.
- **Vapor Cleaning Machine:** They are used where the chemical odors are not desired. They are equipped for continuous operation. They heat up quickly and work with low amount of moisture. They kill the beg bugs and their eggs, the yielding a completely clean environment.

## Cleaning Agents or Chemicals

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Apart from water and regular detergents, the housekeeping staff also uses cleaning chemicals, which are often available in the form of liquids, blocks, and powders.

- **Water:** It is the most commonly used medium for cleaning and rinsing. The housekeeping staff needs to use only soft water because hard water cannot dilute detergents properly. Non-oily and non-greasy stains such as ink stains can be removed using water.
- **Vinegar:** It is used in removing light stains in the bath.
- **Bathroom Cleaners:** They come in liquid form for easy cleaning. They clean, descale, and disinfect the bathroom walls, bathtubs, bathroom flooring, sinks, and showers. They often contain phosphoric acid.
- **Clean Air Sprays:** They are best for freshening the hotel corridors, washrooms, bathrooms, and reception areas. These sprays remove the pungent smell of tobacco, smoke, and organic wastes.
- **Degreaser:** This is mainly used in bars to remove the marks of grease and lipstick that cannot be removed by traditional washing of glasses and cups. Degreaser restores the surface shine and transparency of the glasses and bowls.
- **Floor Cleaners and Sealers:** One of the important tasks of hotel housekeeping is cleaning the floor periodically and keeping it sealed with the help of sealer of the right consistency for optimum maintenance. Some areas in the hotel are busy and bear heavy traffic such as lobby, corridors, parking areas, restaurants, and dining

halls. Their floorings lose smoothness and shine. In such a case, the floor cleaners and sealers are used for restoring their look and shine.

- **Laundry Cleaners:** They are liquid concentrates with variable amount of peroxide that removes tough stains, bleaches the linen, and enhances its whiteness. A number of chemicals are used in dry-cleaning. They are camphor oil, turpentine spirits, benzene, kerosene and white gasoline, petroleum solvents such as naphtha blends, chloroform, carbon tetrachloride, and liquid carbon dioxide. They remove the stains from silk tapestry without damaging the fibers.
- **Surface Sanitizers:** They often come in the form of liquid concentrate. They are water-based and sanitize the surfaces without damaging their appearance. The sanitizers reduce the presence of bacteria to a great extent. They come with different concentrations and fragrances.
- **Toilet Blocks:** They deodorize the toilets and leave them with a fresh smell. They come with two variants: continuous action and instant action. They contain oxidizing agents such as ozone, hydrogen peroxide, or chlorine that removes unpleasant organic odor from the surface of a material.
- **Toilet Cleaners:** They are available in liquid form containing strong hydrochloric acid. They remove stains and plumbing scales easily, and restore the shine of their surface.
- **Carpet Cleaning Agents:** Cleaning and maintaining the carpets are important tasks of hotel housekeeping. As suggested by the Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI), carpet cleaning is complete when the following issues are tackled:
  - Soil containment
  - Vacuuming
  - Spotting
  - Interim cleaning
  - Restorative cleaningCarpet cleaning chemicals are often low-moisture, fast-drying cleaners that take care of the above said issues effectively.
- **Swimming Pool Cleaners:** They are used for cleaning the swimming pool water. Some of them are TCCA-90 granules or tablets, SDIC, hydrochloric acid (HCL), liquid chlorine, and alum. The pool cleaning chemicals kill the bacterial and algae growth in the water.

The chemicals like Sodium Dichloroisocyanurate (SDIC) has 60% of chlorine content and is used worldwide for disinfecting water. The pool cleaning chemicals dissolve fast in water and provide quick cleaning results. The housekeeping staff needs to take extra care while cleaning baby pools using these cleaners.