

# Shoemaker

## Frequently Asked Mold Questions

1. **Do I literally have to clean everything in my house (i.e. plastic storage containers, books, toiletries, candles, knickknacks, canned food etc) or just the major things like clothing and furniture?**

Yes, everything.

2. **Is it possible to clean electronic devices that may have mold spores inside of them, seeing as I have no way to clean the inside of these devices (i.e., DVD players, computers)? Is it good enough to simply clean the outside of them?**

Clean the outside and vacuum the openings.

3. **Do pictures and documents have to be scanned/copied or can the originals be kept?**

Photos can be washed. Porous frames are trash. Documents need to be copied.

4. **What about books, journal? How do you clean them? Or do they have to be thrown out?**

Books are difficult. If the books are on a shelf and not opened, HEPA vacuum each one. Opened books are trash.

5. **Do I need to use a new cloth for every item that I clean (one clean cloth per moldy item) or can I use the same cloth for several items?**

One cloth can be reused. You will be vacuuming, then wiping and vacuuming again anyway.

6. **Can leather furniture be cleaned since it is not porous like cloth?**

Use quaternary cleaners on leather. Vacuum the nooks and crannies of the piece of furniture and do the same thing again. I know some people will say throw away the leather, but I have seen good results if the leather has a finished (not rough) surface.

7. **Is it likely that I have cross contaminated my car seeing as I drive in it, in my moldy clothes and with other items from my home on a daily basis? If that is the case, do I need to sell my car as well or can it be cleaned? The interior of my car is cloth, not leather, if that makes a difference.**

The trouble with cleaning for mold is where do you stop? There are many chemically sensitive people who have to get new cars. For most people the car isn't the problem. Be careful about the antifreeze system in a car as that system's glycol ethers are a real problem.

- 8. Is it likely that I have contaminated my friends' homes just by being there as well? If so, is that going to be problematic for me when I go to visit with them? I plan to move in with one of my friends for several months while I look for a new place to buy. I have slept at this person's house already with my moldy clothes and suitcase quite a few times...will I need to clean her floors and table tops etc, or is any possible cross contamination from my simply having slept there too minimal to worry about? Have I cross contaminated this person's bed by sleeping in it?**

Clothes are much less of a problem if they are laundered before wearing to someone else's home. I get mold hits from families that come from moldy homes, but the risk of illness and cross contamination from clothes is less if the clothes are removed from the home, cleaned or dry-cleaned.

- 9. I plan to purchase a HEPA vacuum cleaner. After I clean things with it will it need to be thrown out, or is replacing the filter sufficient?**

Replace the filter. A good HEPA will last a long time. Better yet, invest in a central vacuum.

- 10. I assume that plates, dishes, silverware etc. can simply be run through the dishwasher. If so, where do I clean them? My current moldy dishwasher before I move out or the dishwasher in my new place?**

I have not seen people made ill by a cleaned dishwasher. Rub down the outside and vacuum it but the wash cycle is enough to safeguard your silver and china.

- 11. I am a little worried that work could be moldy too. None of my coworkers are sick and I have asked about water damage. I am told there has not been any. But I have noticed tiles that you can tell have been wet. Any way to determine if the building is moldy short of doing a test?**

ERMI is the key concept here. I don't trust any building to be safe just because a landlord said so. Spend the \$300 to know for sure.

- 12. Would it be better to clean everything myself or to hire a mold expert?**

As far as abatement and removal of materials, you need to learn the tricks of the trade. But there is no reason you can't do the work yourself if you have carpentry skills. The cleaning you probably should do.

<http://www.survivingmold.com/>