

6: Housekeeping Equipment and Supplies

This chapter will help you to:

- Understand the various types of cleaning equipment and supplies in housekeeping.
- Evaluate the factors that need to be considered while selecting cleaning equipment and cleaning agents.
- Review the safety considerations while handling and storing cleaning chemicals.
- Learn about the impact of Covid-19 on cleaning and the cleaning chemicals used.

The biggest factor contributing to guest satisfaction is hotel cleanliness, and good housekeeping results in maintaining customer loyalty, thus ensuring repeat purchase. A clean and hygienic guest room is the basic amenity. That is why it is pivotal to procure high quality and efficient equipment and cleaning supplies to ensure hygienic and safe guest rooms and public areas.

Cleaning equipment

Selecting the most suitable and efficient cleaning equipment is essential to meet and maximise the productivity standards.

Points to consider while selecting cleaning equipment:

- The cleaning equipment selected must be suitable for the type of the area and surface, and should be versatile, so that it can be used for general as well as for tougher cleaning purposes.
- The selected piece of equipment should be easy to handle and store, and be portable (e.g. has wheels and detachable parts) as the housekeeping staff will need to carry it on floors as well as in various public areas.

- The equipment should have an excellent manoeuvrability, so that it is able to clean every nook and corner as well as high areas.
- The equipment should be safe to use, with no sharp edges to avoid injuries, and employees should not have to overstrain while using it. Thus, enhancing the productivity and reducing the accidents.
- The selected equipment should be durable, and spare parts should be easily available. The maintenance of the equipment should be easy. The long term operating and maintenance costs need to be taken into account at the time of purchase.
- It is equally important to check the noise level of the equipment, as the guests should not be disturbed and have cause for complaint.

Classification of cleaning equipment

Cleaning equipment are broadly classified into two categories: manual and mechanical equipment.

Manual equipment

Manual equipment uses the manual energy of the employee and therefore while selecting, care must be given to ensure they will not cause fatigue. If they are efficient an employee's dependency on mechanical equipment will be less.

Some of the examples of manual equipment are:

- 1 **Brooms** can be *hard* (bristles of coconut fibre), or *soft* (bristles of corn/grass fibres); *wall brooms* have long handles and are used to remove cobwebs from ceilings.
- 2 **Brushes:** Used to remove dust and dirt from the surfaces. They have non-slip handles and the bristles attached to clean the surfaces. Examples: Carpet brush, feather brush, toilet brush,
- 3 **Mops:** There are *dry* mops (dust control mops) and *wet/damp* mops (used with a bucket to remove dirt from surfaces). *Cotton* mops have high absorbing ability but need more maintenance and care as compared to synthetic mops. *Mop wringler trolleys* are used to squeeze the excess water from the wet mops.
- 4 **Dusting cloth:** Soft microfibre cloths used for wiping the surfaces and removing the settled dust. Various types of dusters include *swabs/wipes* (loosely woven cotton absorbent material used for bathtub and washbasin) and *floor cloths* (big and thick coarse knitted cotton).