

The Three Rules of Cleaning: Clean, Disinfect and Dry

1) Clean

To clean using hot water, sponge and a light amount of soap, scrub off any foods and fluids that have come into touch with the board. Scientific evidence shows that in cleaning, the volume of water matters more than anything, as it washes away bacteria and particles, so make sure you run it under lots of water and especially on scarred sections that are good at trapping food particles.

2) Disinfect

To disinfect, use either pure white vinegar or a mixture of two tablespoons of chlorine bleach in a gallon of water. Note that any vinegar other than pure white vinegar may impart smells to your board that are undesired. These solutions work to disinfect the board because vinegar has a low pH and bleach has a high pH, both of which will kill bacteria and germs, as they can only live within certain pH conditions. To apply, soak a cloth in the solution, then wipe the board down thoroughly with the wet cloth.

If your board has any sour or mold-like smell, you can also put a cup of baking powder onto the board and pour a cup of white vinegar over the board. The combination of these two ingredients will create an oxidization process that will remove stains and (hopefully) any lingering smells left in your cutting board. For a more natural route, you can also cut lemons in half and rub the board down with the sides of the lemon. Let sit for a few minutes before rinsing off.

3) Dry

After you have disinfected your board, the most important part is to wipe it with a dry cloth. This last step is the most important for maintaining your cutting board, as water permeating the wood is what causes the wood fibers to swell and then warp your board. This is why you should *never* soak your cutting board in water and **never put it into the dish washer.**

While not a part of cleaning, it's always good practice after your board is dried to rub mineral oil onto your cutting board. **Do not use other organic oils,** as the fats in those oils can and will spoil, turning rancid and causing your cutting board to stink. One of the few natural oils that you can use is coconut oil, which will not go rancid for some time (but is not immune to eventually spoiling). Oils work by occupying the space in the wood fibers and preventing water from entering your board and causing cracks and splits. These little crevices are where bacteria love to hide and multiply, so preventing your board from having small fractures is the key to keeping your cutting board sanitary.

4) Recommended Product

Your cutting board has had 2 coats of Howard's mineral oil and 2 coats of Howard's BBC012 conditioner (available at <https://www.amazon.ca/Howard-BBC012-Butcher-Conditioner-12-Ounce>) on the top and on the bottom. It is recommended to oil your board every 3 to 4 weeks. **Warranty ends with receipt of the cutting board.**

