



Stony Brook
University

User Instructions

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Cleaning Up: Taking an Ideal Shower

Showering is a vital part to maintaining good hygiene habits. An effective shower will prevent smell all day, remove grime and dirt from your skin and leave you feeling refreshed and relaxed. Good hygiene is one of the most important parts of presenting yourself and can seriously impact both the way people view you and your personal health if ignored. To avoid this, follow our tutorial to take an effective shower.

Phase 1. Preparation

1. Assume appropriate attire

That is to say, become nude. Remove all clothing items that you do not want to take with you in the shower. For many, this will consist of all clothing, but some may choose to retain underwear or other clothing items, such as a shower cap. Store the clothing somewhere away from the shower within the bathroom to prevent the clothing from getting wet from any shower water.

2. Gather your bathing supplies

Gather together your bathing supplies; commonly, this includes a sponge or washrag, shampoo, soap or body wash, and a towel for drying after, but can consist of very many health and beauty items used to achieve many skin care benefits. For the purposes of these instructions, it is assumed that at minimum you will shampoo your hair and wash your skin.

3. Turn on the water, feeling and adjusting for your ideal temperature

Access the shower valve controls, consisting most often of a knob for hot water, a knob for cold water, and in bathtub-type configurations, a button controlling whether or not water flows toward the bathtub faucet or the shower head. Toggle the button and turn the cold knob a little bit to verify that water is flowing through the shower head, then adjust the controls until the water is to your desired temperature.

CAUTION: The water will likely have at least some latency between a knob movement and the water temperature changing. Be careful to move the hot water knob gradually, feeling between movements for the temperature change.

Phase 2. Cleansing

1. Enter the shower

Part the shower curtain, if there is one, or the door if there is one, and enter the shower. Stand in the water and make a final assessment of the water's temperature on your skin, and adjust again if necessary.

2. Shampoo your hair

Rinse your hair under the shower head until thoroughly soaked wet. Then take the shampoo, open the cap, and squeeze out an appropriate amount into your hand. If your hair is shorter, then you will need much less shampoo than if it is longer, but only experience can allow you to make that judgment reliably. Lather the shampoo in your hands until the front surfaces are coated with the shampoo, then run your hands through your hair evenly to apply the shampoo. Massage the shampoo into your scalp vigorously. If your hair is long, run the shampoo through the length of your hair to the tip, and repeat.

CAUTION: It is fairly common to get shampoo in one's eyes at this stage. Most shampoo tends to irritate the eyes. If this happens to you, place your eyes under the shower head and blink them to flush the shampoo out. Then, use a corner of your towel to dry your eyes.

Once you have repeated these actions for three or four minutes, take your hands and rinse them under the shower head. Do not yet rinse the hair, as the shampoo works best when allowed to set for some time.

3. Lather and wash your body

Grab the soap or body wash and lather it up on your hands, washrag or sponge that you are going to use to clean. Use the lathered apparatus to wash your skin, all over your body. Pay special attention to the armpits, the groin and behind the ears, as these areas tend to accumulate smell disproportionate amounts of smell and grime. If the cleaning apparatus at any time is running out of lather before you are finished washing, apply more to the apparatus.

After washing the lather over all parts of your body, you are ready to rinse yourself.

4. Rinse soap/body wash and shampoo off

Start by rinsing out your hair under the shower head, until you can confirm visually that all of the shampoo has left your hair. Next, rinse the lather off your body. The lather will likely have washed off somewhat in the process of rinsing out the shampoo, but some products can cling to the skin exceptionally well, and soaps typically have the effect of drying out the skin, so be extra careful to rinse it all off. Once your body is free of any lather, you have completed the shower.

Phase 3. Finishing up

1. Rinse any remaining lather down the drain

If lather is left to sit on the shower or bathtub, it will turn into soap scum, which contributes to the dirty buildup of muck in the shower. Redirect shower flow with your hands in order to rinse all lather down the drain as best you can. Likewise, rinse off your hygiene product bottles and all the lather out of your bathing tools, so as to prevent making a messy puddle of soap and water when returning them.

2. Turn the water off

Return the shower valve controls to their original (off) positions, visually confirming that water is no longer flowing from the shower head or bathtub faucet (if applicable.)

3. Return bathing supplies

Leave the shower, taking your bathing supplies with you. Return these supplies to wherever they are normally stored. Close the curtain or other entrance into the shower.

4. Dry yourself off

Take your towel and rub it over your body wherever wet in order to dry yourself off. Start with the hair, which you can leave wet to style later, or dry immediately. The armpits and groin remain especially important here, as if left wet, these areas are prone to produce unwanted odors and general discomfort. It is easy to forget the back here, but this can be dried effectively by swinging the towel around your neck, grabbing an end from either side, and pulling it back and forth across your back as you slowly advance down from your neck to your buttocks.

Once you are completely dry, you have finished taking a shower.