

## Cleaning Reusable Bags

Reusable bags are an eco-friendly alternative to plastic bags for carting your groceries home from the grocery store. You can help prevent bacteria and mold from growing on or in your bags and cross-contaminating your food by washing and storing the bags safely between each use. Here is how.

### Clean

- Wash bags after each use, following care instructions. Some can be washed in the washing machine with soap and water on a gentle cycle.
- Those that are insulated should be wiped out with a disinfecting or sanitizing cloth, especially along the seams.

### Separate

- Use separate bags for raw meats, seafood and produce. Label bags to avoid confusion.
- Keep bags for non-food items such as cleaners, books, sports gear, etc. separate from food bags.

### Store

- After washing, make sure the bags are dry before storing.
- Don't store your bags in your dark trunk. This is a dark, warm and often humid environment that promotes bacteria growth.
- Help prevent bag bacteria by storing your bags at home in a cool, dry environment where air can circulate.

When in doubt, wash your bags! If bags are worn and dirty, throw them out!

### Types of Eco-Friendly Bags

**Woven or Nonwoven Polypropylene** – Is a form of plastic made from plastic containers. Hand wash or machine wash in gentle cycle with soap and cold water. Line dry.

**Nylon or Polyester** – Is a durable petroleum product. Hand wash in warm water and soap. Turn inside out and line dry.

**Bamboo or Hemp** – Is made of biodegradable natural fibers. Hand or machine wash on gentle cycle with mild laundry detergent. Machine or line dry.

**Cotton** – Is made of biodegradable natural fiber. Machine wash with hot water and laundry detergent. Machine or line dry.

**Insulated Bags** – Is insulated polyester fiber and coated thermal film keeping food or drink cold or hot. Hand wash in warm water and soap or wipe with disinfecting or anti-bacterial wipes especially along the seams. Line dry.

**Source:** American Cleaning Institute.