

### Mould Experiment

You will experiment with different items and different levels of dirt/cleanliness to see what creates the most mould, and therefore has the most germs on.

#### Materials:

- 4 slices of bread (preferably white)
- 4 ziplock bags
- 4 pieces of kitchen roll
- Water
- Marker pen
- A child
- A well-touched item such as a tablet, favourite toy (plastic rather than fluffy) or phone



#### Instructions:

Write on the bags; **untouched**, **dirty hands**, **clean hands**, and **toy/tablet** (depending on what you are going to use for the experiment).

Take a sheet of kitchen roll, fold it in quarters, wet it and put it inside one of the bags. Repeat for all 4 bags.

Put a slice of bread into the untouched bag, touching it as little as possible with your hands, use some tongs if you have any.

Ask your child to rub their dirty hands on a slice of bread – they don't need to make their hands specially dirty, just ask them to stop whatever they are doing and come to touch the bread – and put the bread into the dirty hands bag.

Now ask your child to go and wash their hands well with soap and water. Then rub their hands on the third slice of bread and put it in the clean hands bag.

Finally rub the last slice of bread on the toy or tablet screen (whatever you have chosen) and put it in the last bag.

Seal all the bags and put them in a warm dark place. A cupboard is fine, avoid the garage or shed as they may be too cold for the mould to grow quickly.

**Predict** what you think will happen, which slice of bread will grow mould first? How long will it take to show mould, what colour will it be?

**Check** your bread every few of days. Don't open the bags. You should see signs of mould after 4 or 5 days.

**Record** what happens. Were your predictions correct?

Which slice of bread grew the most mould? What does this tell us about where germs and mould live? What does it tell your children about washing their hands regularly? And what other surfaces do we need to clean more often?



You can see from our photos that the iPad grew the most mould (I have cleaned the screen regularly since then). The untouched bread didn't grow any mould on it – but the paper in that bag that we touched DID grow mould.

For information about what mould is see here: <https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/mold/442740>

For information about good mould see here: <https://kids.kiddle.co/Penicillium>

For another mould experiment see here: <https://explorable.com/mold-bread-experiment>