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The No. 1 Thing About Your Hand Sanitizer You Need to Know

For a while, hand sanitizer was nearly impossible to find. It was sold out everywhere across the country, leaving shelves at massive retailers completely bare and forcing people to learn how to make their own. After the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) began allowing companies to make hand sanitizers for public use in order to meet the high demands as a result of COVID-19, many pivoted their efforts in order to create a product in a timely manner. That means instead of the OG hand sanitizer brands customers have trusted for years—like Purell—many people are buying the product from fashion companies like American Eagle or even local breweries across the country. But what should you be checking for before buying your hand sanitizer? One magic number: the percent of alcohol.



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), your hand sanitizer needs to contain at least 60 percent ethanol (often labeled as ethyl alcohol) or 70 percent isopropanol in order to be effective. Anything lower than that may not fight off the coronavirus and therefore, won't be preventing you from getting sick or spreading germs to others. It's important to note that 60 percent ethanol and 70 percent isopropanol are the minimum amounts of alcohol required—but products anywhere in the 60 to 95 percent range have been found to be effective at killing germs.

While the alcohol is a key ingredient in hand sanitizer, water is, too. So don't be alarmed when you spot that on the ingredients list as well. "There is some water in hand sanitizer that helps to dissolve proteins inside pathogens so the alcohol can then kill them," explains Samantha Yamine, PhD, a neuroscientist and stem cell biologist based in Canada. "Alcohol-based hand sanitizers also help to break down the outer membranes that encapsulate many viruses and bacteria."

Whenever you use your hand sanitizer, Yamine says to put enough in your palm to cover both hands completely. Then, spread it all over your hands, making sure to get between your fingers as well. As long as you're choosing a hand sanitizer with the right amount of alcohol and using it properly, those germs won't stand a chance. Stay safe!

[Source: msn.com - Best Life](https://www.msn.com)

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