



SCIENCE EXPERIMENT

Testing which common surfaces harbor the most bacteria

Name: _____

Date: _____

Experiment #: _____

? QUESTION

Which common surfaces harbor the most bacteria?



MATERIALS

- 5–8 sterile agar plates with lids (pre-poured, store-bought)
- Sterile cotton swabs
- Marker
- Masking tape
- Hand sanitizer or soap and water
- Common surfaces to test (see ideas below)



PROCEDURE

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Label the bottom of each agar plate with the name of a surface you will test.
3. Use a sterile cotton swab to firmly swab an area of the first surface (about a 2x2 inch area). Swab in back-and-forth and up-and-down motions.
4. Immediately rub the swab evenly across the entire surface of the agar plate.
5. Close the lid and seal with masking tape.
6. Repeat steps 3–5 for each surface, using a new swab and a new plate each time.
7. Place all plates in a warm spot out of direct sunlight.
8. Observe the plates daily for 3–5 days. Do not open the plates.
9. Record your results in the table.

SURFACE IDEAS (choose 5–8)

- Kitchen counter
- Phone screen
- Computer keyboard
- Light switch
- Doorknob
- Faucet handle
- TV remote
- Desk or table
- Toilet seat (top)
- Refrigerator handle

💡 HYPOTHESIS

I think _____
will have the most bacteria because _____



RESULTS

After 3–5 days, count the number of colonies (visible spots) on each plate. Record below.

Surface Tested	Day Observed	Number of Colonies
	(3–5 days)	
	(3–5 days)	
	(3–5 days)	
	(3–5 days)	
	(3–5 days)	
	(3–5 days)	
	(3–5 days)	
	(3–5 days)	

Most bacteria: _____

Least bacteria: _____



ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

1. Which surface had the most bacteria? Why do you think so?

2. Which surface had the least bacteria? Why do you think so?

3. Were any results surprising? Explain.

4. How could you make this experiment more accurate?



CONCLUSION

What did you learn from this experiment?

