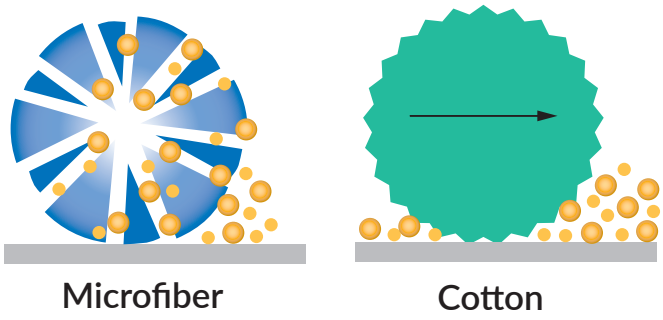
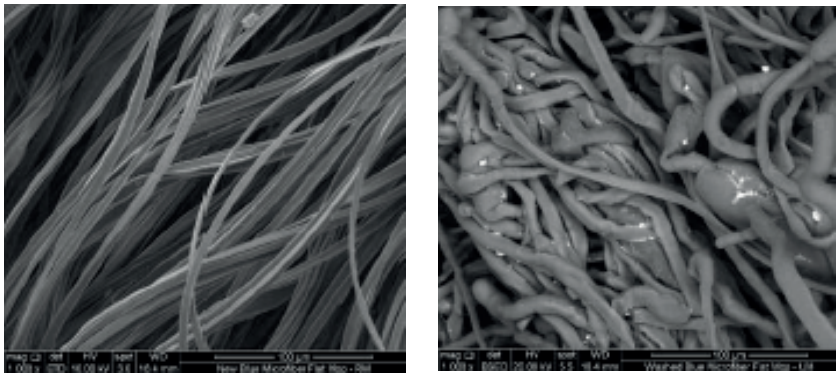
What is Microfiber?

Microfibers are synthetic fibers finer than 1.0 denier. When bundled together in a yarn, the fibers are measured as denier per filament. These are terms used by textile scientists, but for the rest of us, microfibers can be defined as extremely tiny and delicate fibers with a diameter of less than 10 millionth of a meter (10 microns). Microfiber can be made from a mixture of polyester and polyamide (nylon) or from just polyester. The mixed microfiber often is further processed to split the polyester and polyamide apart ("split microfiber"), creating even smaller fibers. The benefit of a wipe or mop pad made from either type of microfiber is to trap particles inside the wipe or mop, unlike textiles made from large fibers like cotton that push soil and particulate around from one place to another. While split microfibers have smaller diameters than microfibers from 100% polyester, the nylon in the fibers can interact with many types of disinfectants like quats and hypochlorous acid, causing the disinfectants to quickly lose their potency.

Microfiber vs. Cotton



Because of the extremely small size of microfiber filaments, wipes and mops made with microfiber exhibit excellent mechanical removal and trapping of particles. However, this also means microfiber products do not always release particulate contamination when laundered Also, the delicate fibers can be damaged by high temperatures and harsh chemistries. These effects accumulate as the products are relaundered. As a result, the wipes and mops don't clean as well as when brand new and the entrapped organic particles and detergents further impact the stability of the disinfectants that contact the textiles. None of these issues occur when using quality disposable wipes and mops in instead of laundered microfiber.



Scanning electron micrograph (1000x magnification) of a new, unlaundered microfiber flat mop (left) and a re-laundered flat mop (right).

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