

Guide to Housekeeping Jobs – Variables & Time Standards

By Joel Levitt

One of the biggest complaints among custodians is that the workload is unfair – that someone “got less work than me,” or “has an easier job than me.” The only fair way to evaluate jobs is by time. Each custodian should be expected to complete a reasonable day’s work. This “reasonable day” is determined by an analysis of the areas and tasks required. The analysis below uses techniques of work standards.



Custodial work is one of the easiest areas in which to analyze the work/time content of the jobs. There are jobs that are heavier or dirtier or more difficult than other custodial jobs. But, ultimately, the measurement is how long the jobs take.

The following standards are taken from the book, *Housekeeping Handbook for Institutions, Business and Industry*, by Ed Feldman, a leading consultant in the housekeeping industry. Other sources of standards include: the General Services Administration (GSA); the publication, *Housekeeping Handbook*; and the U.S. Navy publication, *Engineering Performance Standards*.

The information below is meant to be a general guide only. Time standards are developed on the assumption that all factors are at an average level, a condition, which would be almost impossible to achieve in practice. As your housekeeping program develops, the time requirements for various jobs will be lessened. It would be necessary to take time studies to establish rates for a specific situation. Specific time studies may be found to vary as much as 50% with respect to a given estimate. Where figures are given in ranges, the variability is even more pronounced.

VARIABLES

The Worker

- Ability to work with others
- Age
- Attitude
- Experience
- Fatigue
- Health and limitations
- Intelligence and literacy
- Manual dexterity
- Morale
- Motivation and incentive
- Physical strength and build
- Quality of supervision
- Training

The Surface to Be Cleaned

- Condition of subsurface (level, smooth, etc.)
- Condition of surface (smoothness, porosity, etc.)
- Degree of soil
- Total area involved
- Traffic
- Type of soil

Work Conditions

- Amount of obstruction
- Attitude of other employees
- Comfort level
- Desired quality of result
- Distance to custodial facilities
- Evaporation rate
- Illumination intensity
- Method of work
- Presence of others
- Quality of materials
- Type, size and conditions of equipment being used.

TIME APPROXIMATIONS FOR GENERAL CLEANING OPERATIONS

TIME PER OPERATION

Chair, café, wash	36 sec.
Classroom (40 desks), dust	5 min.
Desk or table, clean & wax	10 min.
Desk or table, strip & re-wax	15 min.
Desk or table, wash	6 min.
Desk top, glass, wash	115 sec.
Dispenser, napkin, refill	90 sec.
Dispenser, soap, refill	60 sec.
Dispenser, towel, refill	90 sec.
Dust executive office	3 min.
General office dusting, 1,000 square feet	12 min.
Partition, wax or polish, one foot	90 sec.
Table, café, damp wipe	90 sec.
Trash can, wash	4 min.
Wall, marble, wash, per square foot	5.5 sec.
Wall, tile, wash, per square foot	9 sec.

Wall, vacuum, per square foot	4.7 sec.
Windows, wash, per square foot	7.5 sec.

TIME APPROXIMATIONS FOR FLOORS

MINUTES PER 1,000 SQUARE FEET

<i>Maintenance Operation</i>	<i>Degree of Obstruction</i>			
	<i>None</i>	<i>Slight</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Heavy</i>
Auto scrubber-vac	16-20	18-24	-----	-----
Buff, 16-inch single-disc machine	23	32	38	42
Buff, 19-inch single-disc machine	15	25	30	35
Carpet shampoo, dry foam	65	-----	80	-----
(Same, but before & after)	110	-----	125	-----
Carpet shampoos, water extraction	400	-----	-----	-----
Damp mop	14	17	20	28
Dust mop	7	9	11	13
Hose & squeegee	20	25	36	43
Re-wax (apply one coat wax only)	16	19	22	27
Scrub, manual	75	105	120	135
Scrub, 16-inch single-disc machine	50	60	85	95
Scrub, 19-inch single-disc machine	25	30	40	45
Spray-buff, 19-inch machine	30	40	50	-----
Strip once & re-wax	110	140	-----	-----
Sweep, administrative areas	9	11	13	16
Sweep, plant areas	11	14	18	22
Vacuum carpets	20	23	29	35
Vacuum, dry	15	19	23	28
Vacuum, wet	29	33	37	45
Wet mop & rinse	32	36	40	48

TIME APPROXIMATIONS FOR FURNISHINGS

*DUSTING, SECONDS PER ITEM OF
AVERAGE SIZE
(DOUBLE THESE FIGURES FOR DAMP
CLEANING)*

Air conditioner, unit	90
Ash tray	15
Book case, 36 inches x 40 inches	35
Cabinet, 3 feet x 6 feet	108
Calculator, covered	8
Chair, large	43
Chair, medium	35
Chair, small	22
Cigarette stand	25
Clock, desk	8
Clock, wall	20
Coat tree	15
Desk, large	28
Desk, medium	23
Desk, small	18
Desk trays	8
Dictator, covered	8
Door, flush, dust	25

Door, glassed, dust	40
File cabinet	25
Fire extinguisher	16
Glass partition, dust per square foot	1.2
Lamp, wall fluorescent	8
Lamp, desk fluorescent	18
Lamp, with shade	35
Mural, 3 feet x 5 feet	45
Pencil sharpener	15
Pictures, framed	15
Rack, 6-foot coat & hat	90
Radiator, open	180
Radiator, enclosed	30
Sand urn	60
Spittoon	180
Table, large	40
Table, medium	35
Table, small	22
Telephone	9
Telephone switchboard	110
Typewriter, covered	7
Vending machine	60
Venetian blind	210
Sofa or divan	150
Waste basket	16
Wall, dust per square foot	2.1
Window ledge per foot	2

TIME APPROXIMATIONS
FOR WALLS, CEILINGS & GLASS

CLEANING, SECONDS PER ITEM

Door, wash both sides	150
Glass partition, clear, wash, per square foot	8
Glass partition, opaque, wash, per square foot	3
Vacuum & wash drop light	3.3
Vacuum & wash fluorescent light	5.9
Wall, painted, wash, per square foot	9
Wash receptacle, large, empty	30
Wash receptacle, small, empty	15
Windows, washing, typical	40-60

TIME APPROXIMATIONS
FOR REST ROOMS

CLEANING, SECONDS PER ITEM

Basin, including soap disposer	120
Bradley basins, semicircular	180
Bradley basins, circular	300
Dispenser, napkin	13
Dispenser, paper towel	7
Door, spot clean	50
Drinking fountain	110
Fixtures, de-stain	180
Mirror, average	30

Mirror, large	60
Receptacle, paper towel	10
Shelving, per square foot	12
Toilet, including partition	180
Urinal	120
Wainscot, per 10 inches	3

COMPREHENSIVE JOBS

These average time estimates include setup and put-away time, some non-productive time, and assume a reasonable mechanization and training level.

WORK LOAD PER 8-HOUR DAY

FOR WASHROOMS, LOCKER ROOMS & RELATED AREAS

Swing & locker rooms (including damp mopping)	15,000 - 18,000 square feet
Swing & locker rooms (no damp mopping)	17,000 - 20,000 square feet
Toilet rooms in office areas	120 fixtures (basins, commodes, urinals)
Toilet rooms in plant areas	107 fixtures
Toilet rooms (alternate estimate)	3,000 - 4,000 square feet

WORK LOAD PER 8-HOUR DAY

FOR GENERAL AREAS

Elevators, freight: no damp mopping	24 elevators
Elevators, passenger: including damp mopping	24 elevators
Overhead office areas: dusting & vacuuming	7,000 – 10,000 square feet
Stairs: sweep treads, dust handrails	60, 12-foot flights
Stairs: mop & rinse	45, 12-foot flights
Storage & supply areas: sweep floors, dust horizontal areas	40,000 – 60,000 square feet
Unobstructed areas: manual sweeping	60,000 – 80,000 square feet
Unobstructed areas: power sweeping	400,000 – 600,000 square feet

WORK LOAD PER 8-HOUR DAY

POLICING OPERATIONS

Lobbies & corridors	200,000 square feet
Stairs	180 flights
Swing & locker rooms	45,000 square feet
Toilet rooms in office areas	360 fixtures
Toilet rooms in plant areas	320 fixtures

Springfield Resources
Maintenance Management Consultation and Training

Joe I. D. Levitt
President

205 Ash Lane
Lafayette Hill, PA 19444-2101 USA

Toll free: 800-242-5656 Phone: 610-397-1006
Fax: 610-397-1007 Mobile: 267-254-0061
E-mail: JDL@Maintrainer.com
Website: <http://WWW.Maintrainer.com>