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TIPS AND TRICKS TO KEEP YOU CREDIT CARD TERMINAL GERM FREE

A credit card machine is not immortal – Yet it's easy to forget the influence a card machine can have on the spread of viral conditions like the Coronavirus, or that inside a terminal, a brigade of dirt can slowly disable the tech over time.
It's logical when you think of it: customer after customer will enter their PINs with the same buttons, perhaps holding the terminal in their hands. Employees at the till will rip off receipts, touch the keypad and move it around on the counter.

THE CLEANING PROCESSES

To reduce the likelihood of spreading bacteria, disinfecting the surfaces becomes necessary. Read the following steps.

Disinfecting: Use disposable, disinfectant wipes specifically for electronic devices, or a soft cloth sprayed with disinfectant cleaning spray for electronics. A push-button terminal may need different wipes or spray than a touchscreen smart terminal, as the latter has a protective layer that could be affected by e.g. alcohol solutions.

Cleaning the card slot: Use a 'cleaning card' made specifically for card readers.

Beware: Only use an alcohol or other solvent-based solution if you know your terminal model can take it (some manufacturers advise against it).

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Avoid

• Do not spray any liquid directly on the card machine.

• Whether you're using a throwaway wipe or reusable cloth, make sure it isn't so moist it can leave drops of liquid on a surface. It should be moist but wring it first if the wetness is excessive.

• Especially the openings, such as the card slot or gaps around buttons, should not have moisture exposure as this might seep into the internal machinery and damage it

WHAT TO DO?

• If the card machine is plugged into a power socket, unplug it, and switch off the terminal (if possible).

• Carefully rub the exterior of the card machine with the wipe or cloth, one surface at a time. Be particularly thorough around buttons and sides where people tend to grab the terminal. If an area gets too wet, immediately wipe it with a dry cloth or paper towel.

• Use the cleaning card (for chip and swipe slots) according to the manufacturer's instructions.

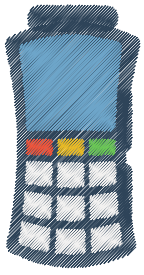
• Wash your hands afterwards. Switch the card machine back on again if it was switched off before

How often you should clean the card machine depends on the questions: Is there a good reason to clean it more frequently in your type of business?
Are viruses currently ripe? If so, you should aim to clean it as often as possible – in the latter case, (ideally) after each time it was touched by a customer.

If you just want to keep it clean so it lives longer, once a week may be sufficient, or more frequently if you work in the food industry or other environments where the terminal can easily accumulate dirt. Whatever the circumstances, if you notice dirt on the terminal, clean it straight away.

OTHER WAYS TO PREVENT SPREAD OF GERMS

What if it's too much of a hassle to clean the card terminal this often when you're trying to prevent the spread of germs? There are a few hacks you can implement.



• Keep the credit card machine behind the counter, away from customers' reach. When someone needs to pay by card, encourage the customer to use contactless while you hold the terminal.

• A physical payment card can be used for tap payments below £30. Higher amounts can be accepted via Apple Pay or Google Pay which don't have strict transaction limits.

• If a customer can't pay via contactless, hand the terminal to the customer for a chip and PIN payment and clean it before the next person handles it.

• Wrap the terminal in cling film or other plastic, wipe with a disinfectant solution every time it's handled by a customer and change the cover daily.

In your business, assess which routines would best work for you, train employees to follow them, and be careful not to get too lax with the steps. Sanitizing can get boring, but the gains are greater than you might notice.