

# Water containers for handwashing

## Introduction

**Handwashing with soap is one of the most important behaviours which will reduce the incidence of faecal-oral diseases.**

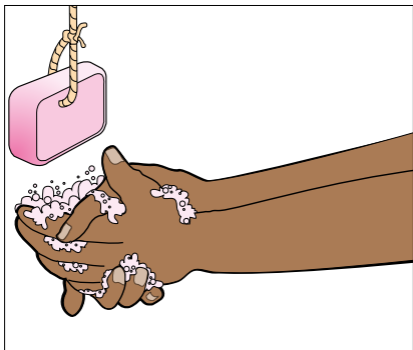
Handwashing facilities need not be expensive. They can be made out of resources available locally.

This mobile note demonstrates how two types of handwashing facilities can be made out of simple materials. Refer also to [Note 47](#) and [Note 3](#) for more information about handwashing practice.



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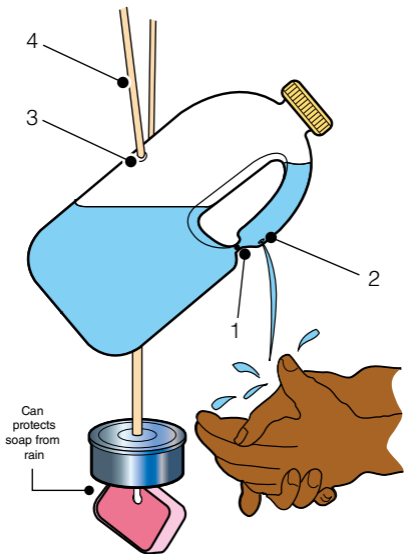
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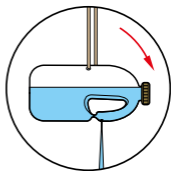
## The 'Tip-tap' handwashing bottle

Choose a plastic bottle with a hollow handle such as a used milk bottle.

- Ensure the bottle has been thoroughly cleaned.
- Heat the base of the handle with a candle flame until the plastic softens (1).
- Squeeze the plastic closed at this spot. Use a hot nail to make a hole above this spot (2).
- Make two holes at the same level on the opposite side of the bottle (3).
- Use string to hang the bottle from these holes (4).
- Fill the bottle three-quarters full with clean water. Put the cap back on.
- Tip the bottle so that the hollow handle fills with water (see insert picture).
- Let the bottle swing back. The water in the handle will continue to run out of the small hole long enough for handwashing.



Watch the video

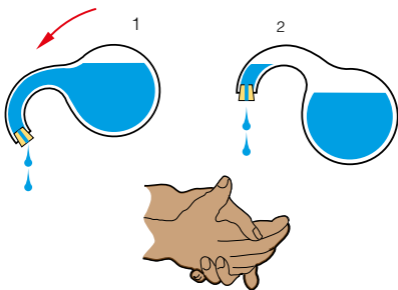
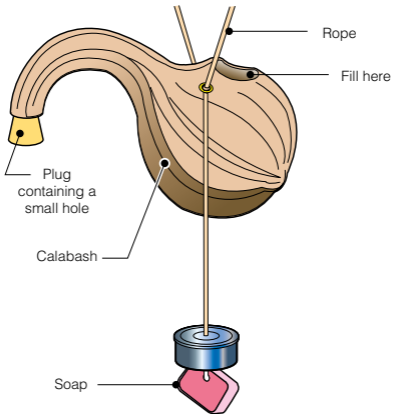


## Using gourds for handwashing

In some countries gourds are used as handwashing devices because they are plentiful and cheap. They do not develop algae as plastic containers do and they use very little water.

A gourd used for handwashing is known in Uganda as a 'Mukombe'. Here's how to make one:

- Choose a gourd which has a long curving neck.
- Cut a wooden plug to fit in the neck of the gourd, leaving a small hole for the water to run out.
- Cut a hole to fill with water.
- As the gourd is tipped, just enough water for handwashing flows into the neck (1).
- Make sure that the gourd hangs at the same angle shown in the diagram.
- Wash and rinse hands (2).
- A small half tin hanging above the soap protects it from rain.



## About this note

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Designed and produced by WEDC

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