

If you have trouble playing discs, it may be because they are seriously damaged, or it could just be an indicator that cleaning is necessary. It is extremely handy to know how to clean a CD, as it is an important part of disc maintenance. Especially with rental discs, a quick cleaning can make the disc play more easily, and it will ensure that dust is not introduced to your CD or DVD player. Cleaning discs is also important when you are reading data, as dust or small scratches can corrupt the integrity of data.

Often, all that a disc requires is a quick dusting, ideally using a cloth which has been specifically designed to clean a CD. To remove dust from a DVD or CD, use a soft, lint-free cloth. Hold the disc in a pincer grip with one finger along the edge and another in the hole in the middle, without touching the shiny portion, and gently move the cloth radially outwards from the middle. Do not rub the disc or move the cloth in circular motions, and avoid following the circular lines in the disc.

If the disc still looks dirty after dusting or you are having trouble playing it, a more serious cleaning effort may be required. Several companies make special chemical formulas for the purpose of cleaning DVDs, but you can also use household cleaning supplies. One of the best cleaners is rubbing alcohol, but you can also use a warm water and mild soap solution. Avoid any heavy duty solvents when you clean a CD, as they can damage the disc.

Apply the cleaning solution to a clean lint-free cloth, and wipe the disc, again radially. When you clean a CD with a liquid material, make sure to wipe the excess liquid off, and never put the disc back into its packaging when it is still wet. Allow the cleaned disc to dry completely before attempting to play it again. When you clean a CD with alcohol or a specialized cleaning solution, often the cleaner dries so quickly that this is not a major concern, but check for spots and marks which may interfere with clean play.

Even after cleaning, a disc may fail to play properly because of scratches. Some companies manufacture products which are designed to resurface discs, smoothing out scratches so that they will play again. Depending on how severe the damage is, these products can be quite effective, but it is a good idea to back up the data as soon as you have repaired the disc, in case it fails again.

Source: <http://www.wisegeek.com/how-do-i-clean-a-cd-or-dvd.htm>

