

Laundry and Cleaning Tips

If you do not have access to a Laundromat, or friend/relative who has a washer/dryer, consider washing your clothes out by hand. The bathtub works great. If you have to wear a uniform for work and are only issued one or two sets, this is a good way to keep them clean and neat. Clothes drying racks are inexpensive and can be folded to save room when not in use. Just stand it up in the bathtub so clothes can drip in a safe spot.

Laundromat Hints

- Buy a laundry bag and put all your supplies in it, such as quarters, laundry detergent, fabric softener, and stain remover.
- Make it a point to get change whenever you can. Keep it near your laundry bag and you'll never have to look for change on laundry day. A helpful hint is to get a roll of quarters each time you get paid and keep them in a safe place for laundry day.
- Most laundromats have signs giving customers instructions on how to use the machines.
- Find a laundromat that's clean, brightly lit and well-maintained. Some may have rolling baskets, hanging racks, worktables, attendants and working change machines!

Six Steps to Successful Laundering

1. **Preparing Clothes for Washing:** Empty pockets, close zippers and Velcro to prevent snagging of fabrics, turn jeans and dark colored clothes inside out to prevent fading. Treat stains.
2. **Sorting Your Laundry:** Read and follow care labels. Sort by:
 - Color: Separate loads for whites, light colors, similar bright or medium colors and similar dark colors.
 - Soil Content: Heavily soiled clothes, like work clothes, should be washed separately from more lightly soiled clothes.
 - Fabric Type: Delicates (laces, lingerie, silk, etc.) are best washed separately from other laundry. Lint-giving fabrics like towels should not be washed with lint-attracting items like corduroy, fleece, or dark socks.
3. **Pretreating Clothes:** According to the severity of soils/stains on the garments, you may want to pretreat or presoak your clothes.
 - Pretreat: Use for a few small spots. Apply a pre-treatment spray or a paste of granular detergent and water.
 - Presoak: Use for deep-set stains, old stains and extensive staining. Pretreat and soak the items in a bucket or sink with the hottest water safe for the fabric and color-safe bleach.

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4. **Selecting Water Temperature:** Selecting the right water temperature for your wash is important in keeping your clothes looking their best. Here is a basic outline:
- Hot Water: 120° F and higher for heavily soiled permanent press fabrics.
 - Warm Water, about 90° F is best for permanent press and synthetic fabrics such as nylon, acrylics and polyesters. It will reduce wrinkling and help protect the finish of the fabric than hot water.
 - Cold Water, about 60° F offers maximum safety for non-colorfast items, saves energy costs and minimizes wrinkling of synthetic fiber fabrics. It should be used at all times for rinsing.
5. **Adding Laundry Products**
- Detergent: Choose a product that is right for the job. Powder, generally removes mud and clay better than liquids and can cost less to use. Heavy-duty liquid detergents generally are better at cleaning many greasy, oily food stains. When to add Detergent:
 - Turn the machine on to fill with water.
 - Measure and add your detergent into the running water, which promotes suds.
 - Add clothing. Do not put too many clothes in one wash load. Free movement of the clothes during agitation in washing is needed for best cleaning.
 - Liquid Fabric Softeners: Fabric softeners are designed to work in the final rinse cycle. Pour the softener into the rinse water. Never pour directly on the fabric or spotting may result. If you use a built-in automatic fabric softener dispenser, pour a capful into your dispenser and add fresh water to keep the dispenser clean.
 - Dryer Sheets: Dryer sheets are easy to use and are an effective means of controlling static cling as well as softening and freshening laundry. As the load tumbles, the dryer sheet tumbles with the load distributing its static control, softening and perfume ingredients. Be sure to remove the lint from the lint screen as excess lint can extend drying times.
6. **Drying Your Clothes:** Check the labels! Some clothes, especially sweaters, keep their shape best by laying on a flat surface to dry. If clothes are dryer machine safe, most dryers have at least two cycles: 1) regular/heavy and 2) permanent press. Use the regular/heavy for heavy and medium weight cotton items and the permanent press cycle for synthetic fabrics, knits and permanent press items. Then choose the drying time. Use a damp/less dry time for items to be ironed, a normal dry time for items to be hung in the closet or items with creases or pleats and a very dry time for towels, denims and items with thick seams.

Stain Removal

Many common stains can be removed by just washing, especially if the stain is fresh. More difficult stains may require extra care and effort but can often be successfully removed.

1. **Common Stain Removal:** For grease or a tough set-in stain- Apply liquid detergent directly on the stained area. Rub it into the stain. Let it sit 2-3 minutes. Launder as usual. For set-in stains - Presoak the garment in warm water using detergent. Launder as usual.
2. **Tough Stains:** For stains needing special treatment that can't be removed through laundering
 - a. Treat the stain as soon as you can. Fresh stains generally come out more easily than old ones.
 - b. Avoid machine drying while the stain is in the fabric as it will set most stains, making them difficult to remove.
 - c. Read and follow directions when using any stain removal product.
 - d. Always test the stain remover before using. For testing, apply the recommended amount of product on a hidden piece of fabric. Let stand for 2-5 minutes, then rinse. If the color is affected, don't use the product.
 - e. When treating a spot, place it face down on paper towels and apply stain remover to the underside of the stain so the stain will be forced off the surface of the fabric.
 - f. When using any bleach, do not use full strength directly on the fabric as it will wear the fabric down. Mix bleach with water before soaking! Bleach the whole garment to prevent uneven color removal. Even if the color has lightened, it will be uniform.
 - g. Always launder as usual after using any stain removal treatment.

Stain Removal Guide for Washable Fabrics

- **Adhesive tape, chewing gum, rubber cement:** Apply ice to stain to harden it. Remove excess stain material carefully with dull knife. Place face down on paper towels and sponge with a dry-cleaning solvent.
- **Antiperspirants and deodorants:** Place stain face down on paper towel and sponge back of stain with a dry-cleaning solvent. Let dry, rinse. Rub on detergent paste and launder using hottest water safe for fabric.
- **Blood, fresh and dried:** Rinse fresh bloodstains in cold running water and rub with bar soap like Ivory. Rinse again and repeat. For dried stains, first scrape or rub off as much dried blood as possible. Soak remaining bloodstains in warm water using a product containing enzymes like Biz. Launder. If stain remains, rewash using nonchlorine bleach. Special rust remover chemicals may be helpful in removing stubborn stains.
- **Candle wax, crayon:** Remove excess wax carefully with a dull knife. Then place the stained area between paper towels and press with a warm iron. Replace

towels frequently to absorb more wax. Place stain face down on clean paper towels and sponge back of any remaining stain with a dry-cleaning solvent. Let dry. Always hand wash before machine laundering. If traces of color remain, wash again, using chlorine bleach, if safe for fabric. Otherwise soak in nonchlorine bleach using hottest water safe for fabric. Launder. For coffee or tea stains- Presoak in detergent with bleach included. Launder using detergent with bleach included in hottest water temperature that is safe for fabric.