

# Laundry Essentials

## *The first step is sorting it out.*

*In the “good old days” laundry was done with soaps, scrub boards, wash tubs and lots of elbow grease.*

*Today’s advanced washing machines, hi-tech detergents and laundry additives make wash days easier and more successful, especially with the array of fabrics used in contemporary clothing.*

*The laundry basics, however, haven’t changed and are more important than ever.*

*Here is a quick refresher to help get sparkling- clean results, washload after washload.*



Proper laundry sorting is important to prevent laundry problems like dye transfer from one garment to another, shrinking clothes and unsightly lint accumulations over the rest of the wash. Follow care labels, if there is any doubt about proper care. Sort laundry loads according to:

### Color

- ◆ Whites and pastels together
- ◆ Same color brights
- ◆ Dark colors

Note: Multicolored items with lots of white background are best washed separately first. If colors don’t bleed or run, then they can be washed with other items in the future.

### Fabric and Construction

- ◆ Separate delicate or lightweight fabrics from heavier items
- ◆ Separate lint givers (terrycloth) from lint catchers (corduroy)

Loosely knit sweaters, lingerie or items with delicate trim require gentle care and need to be separated from heavier items like jeans. Different fabrics need different laundry care- be sure to read and follow the care label directions.

### Degree of Soil

- ◆ Heavily soiled work or play clothes should be washed separately from lightly soiled laundry
- ◆ Wash diapers and soiled bed linens separately to avoid contaminating other clothes.



## **Zip, check, shake and mend... to take a load off your mind**

Taking an extra minute to check clothing prior to washing can save serious problems later. Pockets with crayons, tissues, lipstick or other surprises can leave laundry streaked with shredded tissues or a rainbow of stains.

Before washing:

- ◆ Empty pockets
- ◆ Shake out loose dirt from cuffs
- ◆ Close zippers and other fasteners to prevent snagging and fabric tearing
- ◆ Mend rips or tears before laundering, to prevent further damage
- ◆ Tie strings and sashes loosely to avoid tangling
- ◆ Remove belts, pins, trim or ornaments that are not washable

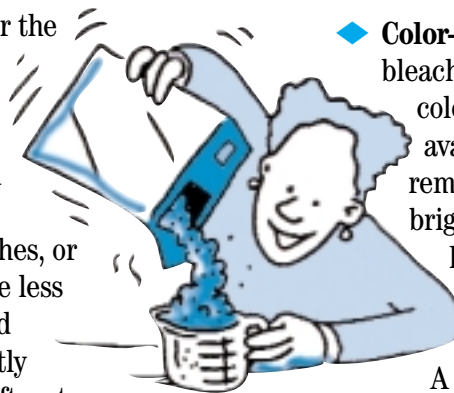
## Laundry Products

Successful laundry results start with the right laundry products. Here's a checklist of laundry essentials:

### Detergents:

Detergents work to effectively remove soil and prevent lint and soil from redepositing on clothes.

Follow directions for the proper amount and measure, don't guess. Extra detergent is needed for large loads, extremely dirty clothes, or hard water. Likewise less detergent is required for small loads, lightly soiled clothes, or soft water.



**More laundry problems are usually caused from using too little detergent rather than using too much.**

- ◆ Granular detergents are recommended for hard water conditions and when loads contain mud or clay soil.
- ◆ Liquid detergents are especially good for cold water washing and for cleaning greasy, oily stains.
- ◆ Detergent with bleach combines color-safe bleach with either granular or liquid detergent.
- ◆ Detergent with fabric softener both cleans and softens laundry.

### Bleach:

You can keep washables whiter and brighter longer when bleach is used in every washload. Choosing the right bleach is easy:

- ◆ Household liquid bleach, identified by the words "sodium hypochlorite" in the ingredient listing is the only bleach that disinfects. It is also the most effective bleach for stain removal and whitening. This is the bleach of choice for whites and colorfast garments.

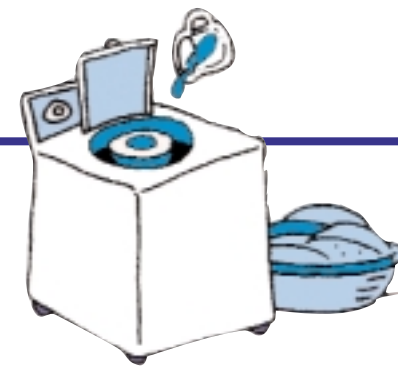
It pays to do the bleach-safe test when you think a garment should be bleachable. Clorox laundry studies confirm that about 52 percent of all washables are actually safe with household liquid bleach.

Other laundry studies show how liquid bleach is safe for fabrics, when used as directed. This bleach does not wear down fabrics any more than detergent alone, washload after washload.

- ◆ **Color-Safe Bleach** is, quite simply, a bleach that is safe to use on washable, colored clothes. These bleaches, available in powder and liquids, remove stains and help keep colors bright. The powdered bleaches also have enzymes to break up tough protein stains, which is why they make an excellent presoak.

A color-safe bleach is not a diluted bleach. The gentle bleaching action in liquids is from hydrogen peroxide. Powders commonly use sodium perborate.

These color-safe bleaches also have optical brighteners. This ingredient is like an invisible layer on fabrics. It reflects light, making colors appear brighter and whites whiter.



### RECOMMENDED LIQUID BLEACH AMOUNTS PER WASHLOAD

<b>Extra large</b>	<b>1 1/2 cups</b>
<b>Standard large</b>	<b>1 cup</b>
<b>Medium</b>	<b>3/4 cup</b>
<b>Small</b>	<b>1/2 cup</b>
<b>Handwashing</b> (2 gallon sudsy water)	<b>1/8 cup</b>

Note: When machine washing heavily soiled clothes, add 1/4 cup more bleach to above amounts.

*If you think a care label is inaccurate and an item should be bleachable, here's how to test the fabric:*



### BLEACH-SAFE TEST

- ◆ Mix 1 tablespoon household liquid bleach with 1/4 cup water.
- ◆ Dab 1 drop of this solution on a hidden part of a fabric such as an inside seam, hemline or cuff. Be sure to test all colors and any decorative trim or ribbing.
- ◆ Wait 1 minute, then blot dry with paper towel. If there is no change, the fabric can be safely washed with household liquid bleach.

## Adding bleach to your washer

Many washing machines today are equipped with convenient automatic bleach dispensers for household liquid bleach. If a washer is not equipped with a liquid bleach dispenser follow either of these two methods:

### 1. For maximum cleaning results...

- ◆ Add detergent as washer fills, then add clothes.
- ◆ After machine has agitated for 5 minutes, add household liquid bleach that has been diluted in 1 quart of water. Avoid pouring mixture directly onto clothes.

*Note: Always use this method when using detergent with bleach products.*



### 2. Convenient and effective...

- ◆ While the machine fills with water, pour in liquid bleach and detergent.
- ◆ Once agitation begins, add clothes.

## Prewash Soil and Stain Removers:

These products are formulated to help get clothes stain free. Their special detergents and enzymes penetrate stains and break them up, helping detergents work more effectively to wash stains away.

## Fabric Softeners:

Fabric Softeners help reduce static cling, minimize wrinkling and soften clothes. Rinse-added softeners are added to the final rinse cycle. These can be added automatically in washers equipped with a fabric softener dispenser. Otherwise, diluted softener must be added manually to the final rinse. Dryer sheets are convenient to use with one sheet added to the dryer along with the clothes.

## Water-levels, temperature & softness make the difference

Water plays a major role in how clean the laundry is... hardness or softness, level and temperature all affect the laundry process. Soft water aids in the cleaning process, while hard water can create some problems. If water is hard, add a water softener or more detergent than the product label recommends. Both help to soften the water and increase the cleaning power of detergent.

Choosing the proper water level and temperature is vital for best cleaning. Laundry must have ample room to circulate, clean and rinse properly or the dirt will end up back on the clothes. Use a hot water wash for most white fabrics and heavily soiled colored fabrics. Warm water is recommended for very lightly soiled or brightly colored garments, and most other laundering needs.

With increased concern for energy conversation, many consumers are lowering hot water heater thermostats as well as washing in cooler water. While this saves energy, laundry results are not always satisfactory. For effective cleaning, hot water heaters should be set no lower than 120F, but hotter water up to 140F gives better cleaning results.

## Drying Time

Before putting garments into the dryer, shake them out so they are loose, not bunched up. This will allow quicker drying. Always check that stains are removed before drying. Heat can permanently set some stains making them impossible to remove. Avoid overdrying, which can cause shrinking and wrinkling. Remove clothes from the dryer as soon as it shuts off. For maximum drying efficiency, clean the lint filter after each load.

*Water temperatures below 65F won't activate some laundry additives and may cause lint, residue, and poor cleaning.*

*Detergent manufacturers and care labels define cold water as 65- 85F.*

## HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS TO MAXIMIZE CLEANING EFFICIENCY

- ◆ Presoak and pretreat stains
- ◆ Use appropriate bleach.
- ◆ Increase the amount of detergent and extend wash time, if possible.
- ◆ Don't overload the washer.

# LAUNDRY CHALLENGES EVERYWHERE!

Household liquid bleach can make a difference in tackling both common and special laundry problems, as well as eliminating bacteria and germs for a safer, cleaner and healthier wash.

## COMMON KIDS' STAINS

**Blood** Rinse in cool water and pretreat with soil and stain remover. Rinse and repeat until stain is gone. Launder in cold water, using appropriate bleach.

**Grass** Pretreat stains with soil and stain remover, allow to sit for 5 minutes. Launder in hottest water safe for fabric, using appropriate bleach.

**Mud** Allow to dry, then brush off excess mud, Pretreat stain, allow to sit for 5 minutes. Launder in hottest water safe for fabric, using appropriate bleach.

**Crayon** To remove crayola stains, the Crayola Company recommends: Place the stained surface down on a pad of paper towels, spray with WD-40, and let stand for a few minutes. Turn the fabric over and spray the other side. Apply liquid dishwashing detergent and work it into the stained area. Replace towels as they absorb the stain. Wash in hot water with laundry detergent and bleach for about 12 minutes (use "heavy soiled" setting if there is no minute timer on your machine), and rinse in warm water.

**Fingerpaints, ballpoint ink & felt tip markers**  
Pretreat stains and launder in hottest water safe for the fabric, using appropriate bleach. Permanent markers may be impossible to remove.

**Baby Formula**  
Soak in cool water using a presoak product. Launder in hottest water safe for fabric, using appropriate bleach

**Diaper stains, vomit**  
Rinse off soils. Follow presoak instructions (see sidebar). Launder in hottest water safe for fabric with appropriate bleach, To kill bacteria that contribute to diaper rash, add liquid bleach to the wash cycle.

**Vitamins, liquid pain relievers**  
Pretreat and let sit for 5 minutes. Launder in hottest water possible, using appropriate bleach.

## FOOD STAINS

**Beverages** Sponge promptly with cold water or soak in cold water. Pretreat and launder in hottest water safe for fabric, using appropriate bleach.

**Egg, milk & milk products**  
Rinse in cool water and pretreat. Rinse and repeat, if necessary. Launder in cold water, using appropriate bleach.

**Chocolate, fruit flavored drinks, gravy, juices, tomato products**  
Soak in cool water. Pretreat, wait a few minutes, then wash in hottest water possible safe for the fabric, using appropriate bleach.

**Mayonnaise, mustard, salad dressing**  
Pretreat, launder in hottest water safe for fabric, using appropriate bleach.

## COMMON STAINS

**Oil & grease, perspiration & deodorant**  
Pretreat and launder in hottest water safe for fabric, using appropriate bleach.



### CLEANING MELTED CRAYON OFF THE DRYER DRUM

- ◆ Spray a soft cloth with WD-40 and wipe the drum. Run a load of dry rags through a drying cycle to ensure that your drum is clean.



### STAIN REMOVAL TIPS

- ◆ Treat stains early. Fresh stains are easier to remove than old ones.
- ◆ Rub stain remover gently onto garment and wash in hottest water safe for fabric.
- ◆ Check that stains are gone before machine drying or ironing. Heat can set some stains permanently.
- ◆ If stain remains, pretreat and wash again.
- ◆ Some stains, including inks, dyes, and rust may be permanent.

### PRESOAK PROCEDURE

- ◆ Use 1/4 cup household liquid bleach per gallon of water.
- ◆ Submerge entire garment and soak for 5 minutes.
- ◆ Rinse and wash according to care label.
- ◆ Use 1 cup dry bleach per gallon of water.
- ◆ Soak 30 minutes or overnight.

Note: When using any bleach as a presoak, be sure to soak the entire garment as well as other sections worn together for best results.

### POWDERED COLOR-SAFE BLEACH PRESOAK





## Special Concerns

### Kitchen

Dish towels, cloths, and sponges really get around the kitchen, and are a breeding ground for germs.

In a recent study of kitchen bacterial contamination, **20 percent of the dish cloths and 12 percent of the sponges contained salmonella, a leading cause of food-borne illness in the United States.**<sup>1</sup>

Since food-borne bacteria can double in number every 20 minutes in some conditions, it's important to wash towels and sponges often in hot water and liquid bleach. A convenient way to disinfect dish cloths and sponges in-between washings, is to soak for 5 minutes in a solution of:

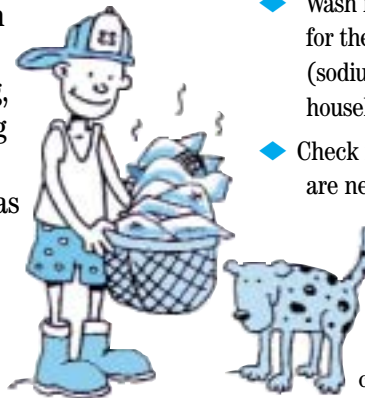
- ◆ 3/4 cup household liquid bleach
- ◆ 1 gallon warm water

Ideally, kitchen surfaces should be disinfected daily.

### Disinfect laundry for a healthier home

Liquid bleach has a long history of use in places where disinfection is critical such as in hospitals, nursing homes and restaurants.

At home, regular laundering with liquid bleach may help reduce the spread of disease-causing bacteria and viruses. Liquid bleach eliminates disease-causing organisms and provides a safer, healthier home environment. This is especially important when laundering soiled bedding, clothing and diapers from those incontinent. Using liquid bleach for cleaning, disinfecting and removing stains is important for a greater sense of comfort as well as cleanliness.



<sup>1</sup>Study by Dr. Charles P. Gerba, environmental microbiologist at University of Arizona in Tucson

### S.O.S. (Save Our Stuff!)

#### Where there's smoke, there's a cleaning challenge

The removal of smoke odor from clothes following a fire is a challenging task. Sulfuric acid, carbon, and other components of smoke become trapped between fabric fibers and must be eliminated. The greater the severity of the smoke damage, the more difficult to restore.

Separate washable items from those that must be dry cleaned. Separate heavily smoke damaged items from those less severe. Dry cleaning, frequently suggested by many insurance companies, is not always effective in removing stains and odors.

A recent study on smoke damage and fabrics representing the majority of today's apparel fabrics demonstrated the effectiveness of home laundering. The study showed that five launderings with detergent in combination with liquid bleach successfully removed visible smoke damage and odors.

#### Useful smoke damage tips

These procedures are useful in handling smoke damage of textiles:

- ◆ Washable textiles with mild smoke damage should be hung outside, at least 3 inches apart. To allow for greater air circulation, do not close fasteners such as zippers or buttons. Fresh air, particularly with at least a light breeze and sunlight are natural partners in helping to remove smoke odor from clothing. An electric fan can be used to supplement the air flow through the clothes. Clothing should be left outside four to eight hours, with repeated airings if smoke odor is still strong.
- ◆ Wash items in the hottest water possible safe for the fabric with liquid household bleach (sodium hypochlorite), if not suitable with liquid household bleach then use a color-safe bleach.
- ◆ Check items for odor. Usually several washings are needed to fully remove odor. Once odor is eliminated, line dry in the sunlight. Do not dry in the dryer because heat will set any lingering odor.

Note: For severely smoke-damaged textiles, consult the services of a professional drycleaner that specializes in fire restoration. If damage is severe, they may not be salvageable.

# NEW CARE LABEL SYMBOLS

Reading labels is an important element to insure an effective wash. By law, manufacturers must place labels on garments, specifying at least one safe cleaning method. Beginning July 1, 1997, manufacturers may voluntarily, use labels with care symbols instead of written instructions. These symbols will become standard in all countries participating in the North American Free Trade Agreement.

When care symbols are used, laundering instructions will include, in order, four symbols – washing, bleaching, drying and ironing.

Drycleaning instructions will use one symbol, a circle. Additional symbols or words



**Here is a sampling of the new care symbols for washing, bleaching, drying, and ironing.**

*Are the new dots confusing?  
It's actually easy to remember...  
the more dots, the higher the temperature*

WASH					
Wash	Machine Wash Cycles				
	Water Temperatures				
	HOT 120°F	WARM 105°F	COLD 85°F		
BLEACH					
Bleach					
	any bleach when needed	only non-chlorine bleach when needed	do not bleach		
DRY					
Dry	Tumble Dry Cycle				
	Heat Setting				
	any heat	high	medium	low	
	Special Instructions				
	line dry	drip dry	dry flat		
IRON					
Iron	Iron – Dry or Steam				
	high	medium	low	don't iron	

# PROBLEM LAUNDRY SOLVER

## What's the best way to treat unknown stains?

Soak the item in cold water for 20 minutes, pretreat and launder with a generous amount of detergent and the hottest water possible for the fabric. If item is bleach-safe and you know the stain is not rust, use liquid bleach. Air dry item until the stain is removed. Machine drying can set the stain and make further removal almost impossible.

## What can be done to prevent dye transfer or bleeding from fabric dyes and what are the procedures to follow if discoloration has occurred?

Color bleeding occurs when unstable dyes are used and bleed from one garment to another. Some of the newer garments are overdyeed to produce very bright, rich colors resulting in dye removal and/or transfer when laundered. Sorting brightly colored garments, washing separately and avoiding prolonged contact of damp items before and after laundering helps to minimize this damage. If dye transfer has occurred, pretreat and relaunder in warm water. As a last resort, for whites only, use a commercial color remover, following package directions.

## How can I eliminate dinginess and poor cleaning?

Overall dinginess and inadequate cleaning can result from a number of factors. Cleaning results can be improved by:

- ◆ Proper sorting; pretreating spots, stains and heavily soiled garments
- ◆ Using enough detergent
- ◆ Using hot enough water suitable for the fabric
- ◆ Using the proper water setting on the washer
- ◆ Loading the washer loosely
- ◆ Using bleach to improve stain removal and overall cleaning results.



## Mildew on clothing

If Mildew is not severe, pretreat the stains and launder in the hottest water recommended for the item along with liquid bleach, if appropriate for fabric. For more extensive cases, presoak bleach-safe fabrics in a solution of 1/4 cup liquid bleach per gallon of warm water.

Household items and clothes soaked during flooding require disinfecting. Always wear rubber or plastic gloves when handling flood-soaked

items. Sort soiled garments as soon as possible, separating washable items from those requiring drycleaning.

For washable items, rinse several times in cold water, soaking heavily soiled items overnight. Presoak heavily soiled items in powdered color-safe bleach, following package directions. Machine wash using 1-1/2 times the amount of detergent recommended along with bleach in the hottest water possible for the fabric.

For drycleanables, consult a professional drycleaner.



*For free care label assistance contact:*

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