

MANAGING WASHDAY ISSUES

So you are getting ready to do a load of laundry...

Just like everything else in life laundry works best with a little preparation. What then should we do to make laundry day run smoothly and prevent any damage to our clothes and household articles from improper care?

Here are a few tips to help us make the day easy on you.

Empty all pockets

Turn down cuffs on shirts and trousers

Close all zippers snaps and hooks.

Sort the laundry.

Here's what you should do

Read and follow all labels. Care labels make sorting easy

Separate dark and light colours

Sort heavy fabrics from delicate ones.

Keep lint producing fabrics separate (e.g. towels)

Sort according to the degree of soil (*You do not want heavy soil to be distributed on other clothes*)

Here are a few tips to bear in mind before you turn the start knob on the washer

Choose temperature and cycle settings on your washing machine (simple rule is Hot = whites and very dirty clothes. Cold =darks and colours that bleed. Use warm for everything else)

Make sure the filter is empty

Turn on washer then add detergent.

When wash drum is about 1/4 full start adding clothes. (Remember never overloads the washer. Follow manufacturers instructions for size of load.)

Take clothes out of the washing machine as soon as the cycle is over to avoid wrinkling.

For the real difficult batch of laundry

Pre-treat stubborn stains

According to the severity of soils/stains on your garments you may want to pre-treat, pre-soak or pre-wash.

Pre-treat: Use a few small spots. Apply undiluted laundry detergent, undiluted dishwashing detergent or soap directly on the soiled area.

Pre-soak: Use for deep set soils, old stains extensive staining or protein stains like blood food grass or body soils. Soak stained items in a plastic bucket or laundry tub with the water temperature safest for the fabric and a good heavy-duty laundry detergent for a maximum of thirty minutes. Wash with a non-chlorine detergent.

Bleach: Sensitive stains like fruit juice or wine or other beverages should be rinsed in cold water then washed. If further treatment is needed use a non chlorine bleach like hydrogen peroxide or a branded non-chlorine bleach.

Pre-wash. Use for heavily soiled garments like work, gardening or children' play clothes. Cloth diapers should be rinsed in cold water and placed in a soak solution of a non-chlorine bleach and water until they can be laundered.) Run through the pre-wash cycle with the recommended amount of detergent. When wash cycle is complete drain the pre-wash solution and launder in the hottest water recommended for the fabric.

Know your washing machine and Use it Properly.

Choose the right water temperatures

Wash water temperature directly affects cleaning and wrinkling. Proper choice of water temperature can also minimise dye transfer from unstable colours. Check your garment care labels for the recommended wash temperatures. If the care label advise is not available use the following as a guide

Hot water provides the quickest and the best cleaning.

Use it for sturdy whites, colourfast pastels, light prints, cloth diapers, soiled baby items, heavily soiled works and play clothes.

Warm water cleans while minimising dye loss and helps reduce wrinkling in the washer. Use it for permanent press, all colourfast dark and bright colours, synthetics of nylon, polyester, acrylic and washable woollens.

Cold water may help protect sensitive dyes minimise washer wrinkling and save hot water. However it does not clean as well as warmer temperatures. Use it for bright colours lightly soiled fabrics removal of some protein stains such as blood. **COLD WATER SHOULD BE USED FOR RINSING ALL LOADS REGARDLESS OF THE WASH TEMPERATURE.**

DRYING TIPS

Using proper drying procedures protects fabrics and minimises wrinkling. Most dyes have delicate permanent press cycles, which have lower heat settings to protect fabrics, which may be damaged by high heat.

Check care labels carefully for the proper drying procedures

Remove clothing from the dryer as soon as the cycle ends. Hang or fold immediately to help reduce wrinkling

Do not overload the dryer clothes need to be able to circulate freely. Overloading results in excessive wrinkling. Heat damage to clothing can also result if the dryer vents become blocked.

Too small a load reduces the tumbling effect add clean white cloth or towels depending on the load to speed up the drying of small loads.

TIPS FOR WASHING BY HAND OR IN THE GENTLE CYCLE

Many of the fashion fabrics used presently require gentle care. For best results when laundering the following is suggested

Follow care instructions on the label

Wash in warm or cold water (according to care guidelines and rinse in cold)

Allow detergent to fully dissolve before adding clothes

After washing squeeze out excess water and dry flat out of direct sunlight.

To avoid shrinkage do not machine wash or dry

To avoid colour loss so not rub or wring

To determine if colour is rub a little detergent on an inside seam or other hidden area and check for consistency of colour