

# FACT SHEET

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Focusing On Clean Clothes . . .

## GETTING READY TO WASH

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### Sorting and Inspecting

Sort and check all clothes before you put them into the washer. This will help you keep your clothes looking nice longer. You will be able to choose the right water temperature for different fabrics. At this time, you can also get stains out before they set.

### Sort Your Clothes

To keep white clothes white, wash them separately. (Example—sheets, pillowcases, underwear, shirts.) Wash white nylon and other white synthetic fabrics separately—underwear, blouses, socks.

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Test colored clothes to see if the colors fade or run. Put one garment at a time in very warm water. Lift them up and down a few times to see if the colors run. If they run, wash them alone or with other clothes the same color. Sort clothes that shed lint from those that don't.

Wash heavily soiled clothes apart from lightly soiled clothes.

Separate delicate items from sturdy ones.

### Inspect Every Item

- Empty and brush out pockets and cuffs.
- Sew up rips and tears.
- Replace buttons that have come off.
- Remove pins and ornaments.
- Close zippers, hook fasteners and tie loose strings together (such as apron strings).
- Check for stains.

### Pretreating

Before washing:

Rub heavily soiled areas, such as shirt collars and cuffs, with a wet bar of soap, liquid detergent or a paste made with powdered detergent and water. This will loosen heavy soil.

Soak in an enzyme detergent or bioenzyme product to loosen stains and heavy soil.

On permanent press clothes, pretreat grease spots with soap, detergent or enzyme product and let stand for a couple of hours, at least.

### Removing Stains

The sooner you treat a stain, the easier it is to remove.

You can usually remove these stains by pre-treating with soap, detergent or an enzyme product:

- Cosmetics
- Crayon
- Grease
- Ice cream
- Oil
- Grass
- Milk
- Light scorch

If the stain is still on the clothes after you have washed and rinsed them, try using a bleach. Read the label on the bleach bottle to be sure it is safe to use on the stained clothes.

If fresh blood, egg, catsup or soft drinks stain washable clothes, soak the stained spot in cool water for half an hour or more. Then rub gently between your fingers. If the stain doesn't come out, work a little soap or detergent into the cloth. Then rinse.

Do the same thing for chocolate, soup and gravy stains. Let the clothing dry. If a greasy stain is still there, sponge gently with a nonflammable dry cleaning fluid. **Warning: Do not use carbon tetrachloride.** It is too dangerous. If you

inhale the fumes it can cause damage to the liver, kidneys, brain and nervous system. You can buy safe nonflammable cleaning fluid at most grocery or drug stores. Keep a window open or work outside when you use it.

Coffee, tea and fruit juice stains usually will come out after soaking and rubbing. But if boiling water won't hurt the cloth, hold it over a pan or bucket and pour boiling water through the spot. Pouring the water from 1 to 3 feet above the spot will force the stain out.

### Remember

- Don't overload your washer. Each load of clothes should have enough room to move about freely. Less soil is removed when the washer is too full. Overloading a washing machine damages the motor.

- Mix small items with large ones for good washing action. For example, put pillow cases in with sheets, wash cloths in with towels.

### References

*Home Laundering: The Equipment and the Job*, Home and Garden Bulletin No. 101, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., October 1964.