



## TIPS TO A CLEANER WORLD

1. **Educate your Kids and yourself about hygiene.** Thanks to the collective paranoia about all the “icks” (epidemics, pandemics), it’s a good idea to learn what we can. Washing hands is a healthy thing to do before and after dinner, and especially after bathroom events. It’s even better when they wipe their hands on a towel instead of their clothes.
2. **Stock up on sanitary wipes.** They come in well-designed containers that make it easy for anyone to grab a sheet. Wipe hands and surfaces with them. Get a squeegee for the shower.
3. **Put a lid on it.** I drew a picture for My Kids that shows them how far droplets travel during a flushing cycle. It scared the crap out of them. The lid is no longer left up --- as often.
4. **Encourage your Kids to report spills and messes.** Dads are great educators and can turn these upsets into learning experiences. Make them know it’s okay to tell you.
5. **Teach your Kids about cleaning products and supplies.** Even a toddler can work an absorbent paper towel.
6. **Stock up on separate supplies for the bathroom, kitchen and the laundry area.** Keep them in those rooms. Distribute paper towels and sanitary wipes strategically around the house.
7. **Break up the cleaning schedule.** Do the bathrooms, kitchen and laundry on different days. Doing a little at a time is much less stressful.
8. **Put a hamper in each Kid’s rooms.** Train them to put their laundry IN the hamper. Check the hampers regularly, especially where the younger Kids are concerned.
9. **Bite the dust.** Unhealthy dust accumulates all the time. More Kids and Dads are developing allergies. I have several little duster thingy’s. Even my Kids get into the dusting.
10. **Talk trash to your Kids.** I got myself those metal garbage bag holders for the garage and a wastebasket for each of the Kids’ rooms and their play area.

## WEAPONS OF MESS DESTRUCTION

If you're using store-bought products, read the labels carefully. When using solvents, make sure you keep the area you're working in well ventilated. In general, it is better to blot than rub. Don't use metal spoons or metal containers with bleaches. If you want to avoid getting a ring around a stain, lightly feather out the solution or solvent you're using at the edges. For a larger stain, test a small area first to make sure your solution works. Some stains will require the services of a professional. If you don't know what you're doing, don't experiment.

*NOTE. For pre-treating stains before doing a wash, see the LAUNDRY section on page 162.*

### CHEMICAL SUPPLIES

1. **ALCOHOL-BASED SOLUTION.** Buy it at your local grocery or drugstore. Make sure there's no added color or fragrance.
2. **AMMONIA SOLUTION.** Mix 1 tbsp of ammonia and a ½ cup water.
3. **AMMONIA – MILD DETERGENT SOLUTION.** Mix a few drops of ammonia with a MILD DETERGENT SOLUTION (see #13). Make sure the ammonia doesn't contain coloring or a fragrance.
4. **AMYL ACETATE SOLVENT (BANANA OIL).** Get it in drug stores. Don't use oil-type nail polish remover.
5. **CHLORINE BLEACH SOLUTION.** Mix 1 tsp of bleach with 1 tbsp of water.  
*NOTE. Do not use chlorine solution on wool, silk, or spandex.*
6. **DRY CLEANING SOLVENT.** Get it in drug stores, grocery stores, and hardware stores.
7. **DRY SPOTTER.** Mix 1 part mineral oil and 8 parts DRY CLEANING SOLVENT.
8. **ENZYME DETERGENT SOLUTION.** Mix a 1/2 tsp of liquid detergent containing enzyme and 1/2 cup warm water.
9. **HYDROGEN PEROXIDE.** Use a 3% solution sold as a mild antiseptic in drug stores. Don't use the stronger solution sold in cosmetic departments for bleaching hair.
10. **LARD.** This can be found in your local grocery store.
11. **LAUNDRY PRE-TREATMENT SPRAYS.** These are available in grocery stores.
12. **MILD DETERGENT SOLUTION.** Mix 1 tsp of mild liquid hand dishwashing detergent with 1 cup of warm water.
13. **MINERAL OILS.** Your local drug store carries this.
14. **WHITE VINEGAR SOLUTION.** Mix 1/3 cup of white vinegar and 2/3 cup of water.
15. **WHITE VINEGAR – MILD DETERGENT SOLUTION.** Mix a few drops of white vinegar with the MILD DETERGENT SOLUTION (see #13).

*NOTE. Water in solutions should be kept cool to lukewarm.*

### TOOLS

1. **COTTON, PAPER, CLOTH & SPONGE.** Have a supply of all of these --- absorbent cotton, white facial tissues, white paper towels soft white cloths and sponges. Don't use anything with color in it.
2. **MEDICINE DROPPER.** This ensures you will hit the target with the right amount.

# 3

## REMOVING STAINS

### STAIN TO CLEAN

soft drink, mixed drink, juice, coffee, wine & mud

### WEAPONS OF MESS DESTRUCTION

sponge, water, absorbent pads, vinegar - mild detergent solution, alcohol solution, enzyme detergent solution, medicine dropper, chlorine bleach solution, vinegar solution

1. Using a sponge, soak the area with cool to lukewarm water.
2. With an absorbent pad, apply a VINEGAR – MILD DETERGENT SOLUTION.
3. Flush/wash the pad with water to clean it out for the next step.
3. Using the pad, apply the ALCOHOL SOLUTION to the stain. Change the pad as it picks up the stain.
4. Moisten a pad with the ENZYME DETERGENT SOLUTION. Apply it to the stain and leave it for 30 minutes. Keep the stain warm and moistened with the solution.
5. Apply a CHLORINE BLEACH SOLUTION with a medicine dropper. Don't let the solution sit for more than 2 minutes. Flush/wash the area with water after 2 minutes. Apply a VINEGAR SOLUTION to remove the excess chlorine, then flush/wash it again with water.
6. If the stain was on clothes, launder them as soon as possible.

*NOTE. Do not use chlorine solution on wool, silk, or spandex.*

### STAIN TO CLEAN

glues (hobby, contact cement), nail polish, varnish, lacquer, carbon ink

### WEAPONS OF MESS DESTRUCTION

sponge, dry-cleaning solvent, several absorbent pads, dry spotter, amyl acetate, medicine dropper, chlorine bleach solution, vinegar solution

1. Sponge the stained area with the DRY-CLEANING SOLVENT. If it's on clothes, put a pad underneath at the same time.
2. Lubricate the pad with DRY SPOTTER (lard or mineral oil also works).
3. Flush/wash the stain with the DRY-CLEANING SOLVENT. Repeat steps 2 and 3 until you see that you are not getting any more stain out.
4. Moisten a pad in AMYL ACETATE and apply it to the stain. Keep the area moist for 15 minutes. Blot it occasionally. Then flush/wash the stained area with the DRY-CLEANING SOLVENT.
5. Using a medicine dropper, apply a CHLORINE BLEACH SOLUTION to remove the final traces of the stain. Don't let the solution sit for more than 2 minutes. Flush/wash the area with water after 2 minutes. Apply a VINEGAR SOLUTION to remove the excess chlorine, then flush/wash it again with water.

*NOTE. Do not use chlorine solution on wool, silk, or spandex.*

### STAIN TO CLEAN

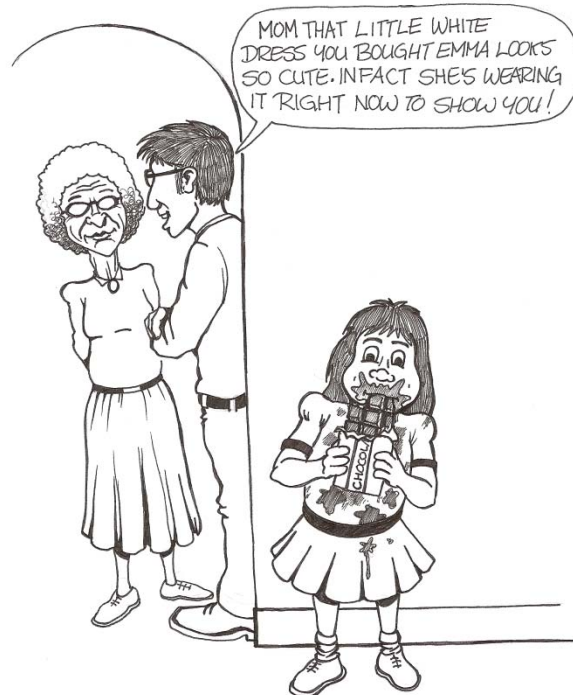
chocolate, ketchup, egg yolk, ice cream, cheese or chilli sauce, gravy, pudding, mayonnaise, meat juice, milk, syrups, vegetable soup

### WEAPONS OF MESS DESTRUCTION

Sponge, dry-cleaning solvent, several absorbent pads, dry spotter, medicine dropper, ammonia - mild detergent solution, chlorine bleach solution, vinegar solution, hydrogen peroxide

1. Sponge the stained area with the DRY-CLEANING SOLVENT. If it's on clothes, put an absorbent pad underneath.
2. Lubricate a pad with DRY SPOTTER. Keep the stain moist, changing the pad as it picks up the stain. (You can also lubricate it with a small amount of MINERAL OIL or LARD.)
3. Flush/wash the stained area with the DRY-CLEANING SOLVENT. Let it dry.
4. Use a medicine dropper to apply an AMMONIA – MILD DETERGENT SOLUTION. Flush/wash the stained area with water.
5. Using a medicine dropper, apply a CHLORINE BLEACH SOLUTION to remove any final traces of stain. Don't let the solution sit for more than 2 minutes. Flush/wash the area with water after 2 minutes. Apply a VINEGAR SOLUTION to remove the excess chlorine, then flush/wash it again with water.
6. For chocolate stains, use HYDROGEN PEROXIDE (3%) and add a drop or two of ammonia. Then flush/wash the stained area with water.

**NOTE.** Do not use chlorine solution on wool, silk, or spandex.



# 5

## LAUNDRY

### SORTING

Smaller loads are better. As much as any Dad wants to get laundry done as quickly as possible, it ends up eating a big chunk of one day. Ever since I decided to make the loads smaller and split the laundry chore up over a month, it works a lot easier. Besides, bigger loads wreak havoc on a machine and don't necessarily save costs or time in the long haul.

Manage your family's laundry with more than one laundry basket and one hamper. Use a separate hamper for any clothes that get exposed to pesticides.

1. **GENERAL SORTING.** Separate "lint-givers" (terry towels, cotton sweats, cotton/ramie knits) from "lint-takers" (synthetic blends, smooth, dark or wrinkle-free fabrics). Separate the lightly soiled from the heavily soiled. Separate delicates and wools from non-delicates. Delicates include silk clothes and lingerie. Separate permanent press from everything else. Permanent press clothes include wrinkle free fabrics and those with synthetic fibers excluding acrylic, modacrylic, rayon and acetate. Always keep pesticide-soiled clothing separate from regular laundry. Don't put too many clothes in one wash load. You want your laundry to move freely during the agitation cycle to ensure the best cleaning performance.
2. **UNDERWEAR & SOCKS.** With Kids, this stuff piles up fast.
3. **BATHROOM & KITCHEN TOWELS & FACE CLOTHS.** This is the heavy folding load. Because these items get used everyday, plan to wash them on a semi-regular schedule.
4. **DARKS (& REALLY REDS).** This pile includes anything black, dark blue, dark gray, dark burgundy, dark green or red. Now that detergent manufacturers have come up with a detergent specifically for dark clothes, use them to keep clothes looking darker, longer.  
I feel like a commercial.
5. **WHITES.** These are anything white or have white-background prints that are colorfast. The key here is to avoid including anything with a strong color in it. If something has a very light color in it, but is predominantly white, then you won't have a problem.
6. **COLORS.** Things with patterns and strong colors get thrown into this batch.  
*NOTE. Reds like to run. You might want to wash your red stuff with the darks.*
7. **BEDDING.** Sheets, covers and pillow-cases take up a lot of space in the wash. Washing the bedding as a separate load is easier on your machine.
8. **BABY CLOTHES.** These should be washed separately and with a different detergent, which is gentle to both the clothes and the skin of your little one (or more than one).
9. **ICKY.** This would be the category containing rags from your garage and workshop. If you have heavily stained items --- coveralls, for example --- throw these in this load.

# 6

## PREPARING CLOTHES

1. Empty the pockets.
2. Check pant legs and sleeves.
3. Close zippers and Velcro® so that fabrics don't snag on each other. Tie loose strings.
4. Turn jeans and dark-colored clothes inside out to prevent color streaking.
5. For Dads with teenage daughters, put their panty hose and items with long ties in a mesh bag so they won't get tangled or torn.
6. Turn T-shirts with screen designs on them inside out so they won't peel.
7. Always check the labels on the clothes for symbols and special instructions. A symbol might tell you that something should be dry-cleaned and not washed.

*NOTE.* See the *SYMBOLS* chart on page 166.

## PRE-TREATING STAINS

1. Pre-treat stains of washable clothes; take dry-cleanable items to the drycleaner.
2. Pre-soak protein stains in cold water (milk, egg, soybean formula, ice cream, blood and meat juice, or any food stain that contains these ingredients).
3. Use a liquid detergent or pre-treatment spray to take care of oily shirt collars, grease, or oil stains.
4. Don't pre-treat tannin stains with soap (cola drinks, coffee, tea, and fruit juice). Soap will make these stains permanent. ("Tannins" are a plant chemical that produces colors.)
5. Bleach can be used to deal with dye stains from things like felt tip markers. Bleach can also be used on items that are washable, white, or colorfast. Don't soak cottons in bleach solutions for more than 15 minutes.
6. For combination food stains or difficult stains (chewing gum, pencil), check out a stain removal guide. We've covered some of them in this chapter.
7. Use rust remover to treat rust-colored stains. Don't use bleach.
8. Some soap bars are known to take out grass stains. Experiment first on a piece of cloth you don't care about.

## DETERGENTS & ADDITIVES

Some people like powders; others like liquids. Dads might prefer the powdered ones that come in packs so that nothing has to be measured. One caveat: products change all the time. I will warn you now to read the directions on any package or bottle. If you have something very special to clean, check with someone you can trust --- the people who sell the stuff, a tailor, or even a drycleaner.

1. **LIQUID DETERGENT.** They're good at handling grease and oily stains, and are easier to work with when it comes to pre-treating stains. Usually, they're more expensive, but they work equally well in all water temperatures.
2. **POWDERED DETERGENT.** They cost less to use and seem to work well to lift out clay, mud and ground-in dirt, the kind of dirt accumulated by ground-loving Kids. Powdered detergents have more trouble dissolving in lower water temperatures. So, if you do a lot of cold-water washes, you might want to take this into consideration.

3. **COMBINATION DETERGENT.** They come with multiple personalities: detergent-softener, detergent-bleach. Sometimes, it's easier to use these than having to figure out the use of separate additives, like bleaches and softeners.
4. **LIGHT DUTY DETERGENT.** These are perfect for lightly soiled items and delicate items. If you have a baby, you might want to use this type of detergent. When washing baby's clothes, use detergents without dyes or perfumes to avoid irritating their skin.
5. **DARK DETERGENT.** These were designed to help dark stuff stay darker, longer. If you use the wrong temperature of water (like hot), you will be digging yourself out of a mountain of suds.
6. **LIQUID CHLORINE BLEACH.** It is one of the most effective whiteners and sanitizers. But, it can damage the following: cellulose (fiber made from plant material, but not synthetic), silk, and wool. It can also fade or change the colors of fabrics of any fiber content. Follow the colorfastness test directions on the bleach package to see if it's safe for the fabric you're washing. Never *ever* pour full-strength, liquid chlorine bleach onto a wash load. It can cause color fading, and weaken fabrics, causing holes or tearing. Don't use liquid chlorine bleach on silk, wool, spandex, polyurethane foam, or rubber.
7. **CONCENTRATED BLEACH SOLUTION.** This solution can weaken cellulosic fibers. Same things happen when you soak cellulose for too long.
8. **ALL-FABRIC BLEACH.** This is a slower acting bleach that may be safe for colors. Read the package directions carefully. A little bit of this stuff can perk up your darks. If you add the bleach too early during the wash (like I did once), you end up with black jeans sporting a zebra pattern.
9. **FABRIC SOFTENER.** They help reduce clinging, static, and soiling. But, if they're overused, they can reduce the absorbency of towels and diapers, and leave oily looking splotches on medium-colored items.



# 8

## UNDERSTANDING LOADING & WASHER SETTINGS

1. Start the washing machine before you load anything.
2. Add the detergent. Don't add the bleach until the washer is almost full. Add the softener during the rinse cycle (if you use softener when you wash).
3. Once the detergent has settled into the water, add your clothes.
4. Your clothes should be completely covered with water and no higher than the top of the agitator vanes.
5. Use the highest level for all loads of pesticide-soiled clothes.
6. **CYCLE.** To choose a cycle, you need to understand what kind of load you're working with. The general categories are: regular, permanent press, and delicates. The NORMAL cycle plus HOT or WARM WATER works for soiled and heavier clothing or non-delicate whites. The NORMAL cycle plus COLD WATER is best for dark clothes and clothes in a red color that might have a tendency to run.  
*NOTE. Consult the CHART on page 166.*
7. **WATER LEVEL.** Most levels are determined by the setting you choose. I thought I'd swim one length further to explain them, so that you could amaze your Kids with this information as you gather laundry together. A 10 to 12 minute wash cycle is needed for regular loads; 8 to 9 minutes for synthetics and knits; 3 to 4 minutes for delicate items and washable wools.
8. **AGITATION.** Heavy-duty agitation helps get out the heavy soils. Slower speeds are used for delicate, lightly soiled items. Too much agitation causes wool to shrink. Too many Kids whining about their laundry causes agitation.
9. **WATER TEMPERATURE.** Hot temps from 120 to 140 degrees F are used for white cottons, underclothes, and pesticide-soiled items. Why? 'Cause hot water kills bacteria. Warm temps from 85 to 105 degrees F are used for synthetics, knits, wrinkle-free or permanent press items. When washing with liquid detergent, cold temps from 65 to 75 degrees F are good for dark or bright-colored clothes and for rinsing. Water temps below 60 degrees F are too cold for detergents to work.

## DRYING

1. The best rule of thumb to follow is to dry the same load you wash.
2. Don't overload the dryer. Neither the clothes nor the machine wins. Think of it this way. A full load of laundry contains 1 gallon of water going into the dryer. An overloaded dryer also wrinkles clothes something fierce.
3. Clean the lint out of the filter.
4. Add some clean white towels to speed up the drying time of small loads.
5. Turn jeans inside out; they won't fade as much.
6. Don't take the clothes out the moment you hear the buzzer. Let the clothes take advantage of the residual heat during the cool-down period.

LAUNDRY GUIDELINES & SYMBOLS

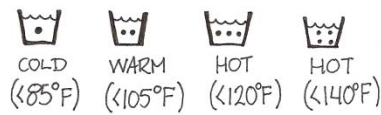
LOAD	CYCLE	WATER TEMP	DRYER SETTING
whites	regular	hot	normal
colors	regular	warm/cold	normal
permanent press	permanent press	cold	permanent press
delicates	delicates	cold	delicates
wool	delicates	cold	tumble-no heat

Check the labels on your fabrics and clothes for these symbols.

MACHINE WASH INSTRUCTIONS



WATER TEMPERATURE SETTINGS



SPECIAL CARE



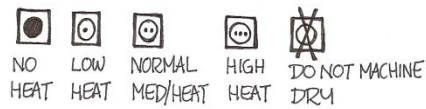
BLEACHING INSTRUCTIONS



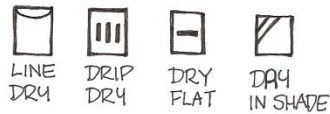
DRYER INSTRUCTIONS



DRYER HEAT SETTINGS



SPECIAL DRYING INSTRUCTIONS



IRONING



DRY CLEANING

