

# BOOKLET WITH TIPS AND TRICKS FOR IMPECCABLE LAUNDRY



**CANDY**

This booklet is **full of tips, tricks and ideas** for taking the **best possible care of your laundry**, using your washing machine as effectively as possible and keeping your clothes in **perfect condition for a long time**.

*Having clean clothes and linen is an important part of all of our lives, so why not spend just a little extra time and do it more effectively?*

We have all had the bad luck to ruin an item of clothing at least once, by setting the washing machine the wrong way, failing to remove a stubborn stain or even just using the wrong products. In this guide, we hope to help you make sure that this never happens again.

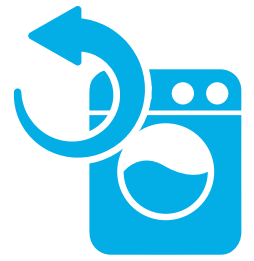


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# 1.

## BEFORE WASHING



### EXAMINE EACH GARMENT CAREFULLY

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If your clothes have seams that are coming undone, or loose buttons that could come off during the wash, you should note these problems before you put everything in the washing machine. This way you will not find yourself landed with awkward holes to mend or missing buttons to replace.

### EMPTY THE POCKETS

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Emptying the pockets of our clothes, especially trousers and jackets, is one step that we should never forget. Often – indeed far too often! – banknotes, coins (which could cause problems if they get stuck in the washing machine), paper hankies and bits of paper can end up in the laundry and these often disintegrate during the cycle, dirtying all the other clothes.

### TURN JEANS INSIDE OUT AND FASTEN ALL ZIPS

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If we forget to turn our jeans inside out before washing them, the colour will be more likely to run, sometimes creating unsightly faded lines. Zips should all be fastened to protect them from damage.

### READ THE LABELS CAREFULLY

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It might be tempting to just scoop up all our washing and shove it straight into the washing machine, without separating different fabrics and colours. But this can have disastrous results. Some clothes will have shrunk, others are bobbled and others still are completely ruined. So before doing the laundry, we should always read the label and note:

- whether the garment is machine-washable
- the maximum washing temperature
- the type of wash needed
- whether or not it can withstand a spin cycle

### SEPARATE THE COLOURS

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Once we are sure that clothes are machine-washable, and have separated them according to their labels and washing instructions, we have to sort them by colour. It is all too easy to inadvertently let the famous “red sock” fall into a white wash and turn all our white shirts pink. It is easier still to turn our white garments grey by washing them with coloured clothes. It is therefore essential to divide our laundry into:

- coloureds: similar shades of colour, separate wash, low temperature
- blacks: black, or very dark, almost black garments, low temperature, separate wash.
- whites: only white garments
- light-coloured garments: very light-coloured garments that have already been washed before, so that we know that they do not fade.

## SEPARATE THE FABRICS

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Of course, we can't wash wool with cotton. If we were to do so, our favourite sweaters would inevitably come out of the wash matted and unwearable. All modern washing machines allow us to set different programmes based on the fabric of the garments we want to wash. Here too, it is important to read the labels so that we know the right programme to select and the clothes that can be washed together.

## WASHING POWDER OR LIQUID

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How many of us use the same kind of washing powder or liquid for all kinds of washes? It is important to know that:

- for each type of wash, the washing powder or liquid must be dosed as indicated on the packaging or in the instruction manual provided with the washing machine;
- it is advisable to choose the washing powder or liquid depending on the garments to be washed and their colour: it is better to use washing powder for more resistant, white and light-coloured garments and washing liquid for coloured, dark and also more delicate garments;
- it is important to consider the hardness of the water when deciding the dose;
- bleach should only be used if the label of the garment expressly allows this.

## THE TEMPERATURE

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There is no need to wash everything at 90° when with modern technologies washing our laundry at 30-40° is enough to clean garments effectively and also remove any stains. Our choice of temperature is fundamental for the wash, not only because it lets us save on our electricity bill, but also because the right temperature will help to take good care of our garments. Constantly washing even garments made from tough fabrics at a high temperature can cause them to deteriorate in the long-run. So check the temperatures recommended in the washing machine booklet for each wash; you will also avoid waste.



# 2.

## THE CLEANLINESS OF OUR LAUNDRY



Sometimes we may find ourselves battling with unusual stains which are not easily removed with standard washes. If we know what type of stain we are dealing with and the fabric it is on, we can avoid this problem.

### Removing the most stubborn stains from different types of fabric

The following are some general examples of stains that can be found on various garments, with a series of tips for removing them before washing.

#### Common stains

##### ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

These should be blotted immediately with a dry cloth and the garment washed in cold water, adding a powder specifically intended for delicate washes. For wine stains, even more care is required: the stain should be rubbed with a solution of water and a specific stain-removing product.

##### COFFEE

If you can, wash the stain immediately with castile soap and hot water. If the stain is no longer fresh, it can help to blot it with a blend of glycerine, ammonia and alcohol.

##### BUTTER

Butter is a highly saturated fat and so great care must be taken when removing it. First remove any residues, then pour some liquid detergent on to the stain and scrub gently with a soft-bristled brush.

##### TEA

Traditionally tea can be removed with vinegar and lemon juice, which should be left on the stain for approximately one hour, after which the garment should be washed normally. As with coffee, glycerine could be a useful alternative.

##### GREASE

Grease is always the kind of stain that people fear the most, but it is actually not very hard to remove. One very effective solution is to blot the fabric with a liquid soap or, in the case of a very stubborn mark, use equal parts of soda and water on the stain and rub it. The garment should then be washed normally in the washing machine.

##### BLOOD

Blood is one of the most difficult stains to remove. It is essential to put it in a basin of cold water with some salt and leave the garment to soak for at least an hour. For more stubborn stains, try creating a cream made of equal parts of corn starch and cold water, then rub it on the stain for a few minutes, and wash the garment normally in the washing machine.

## **EGG**

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In this case, cold water is a must: leave the garment to soak in it for approximately one hour before machine-washing. If this is not sufficient to remove the stain, the alternative is to use hydrogen peroxide diluted with water, which should be applied straight to the stain and rubbed, before washing the garment normally in the washing machine.

## **OILY STAINS**

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Oily stains should always be pre-treated with washing liquid. Any red wine stains should be treated with sparkling water as soon as possible.

## **INK**

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Turn the garment inside out and blot the back of the stain with a concentrated solution of washing liquid in methylated spirits, placing kitchen paper underneath it.

## **CHOCOLATE**

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To remove chocolate, take a teaspoon of soap mixed into a cup of water and apply this to the stain, leave it for half an hour and then wash the garment. This will soften the stain so that it dissolves when washed.

## **SWEAT**

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Pre-treat the stain with liquid detergent and rub well.

## **TOMATO SAUCE**

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One home-made remedy is to boil some lemon juice and add a pinch of salt, then rub the solution on the stain before washing the garment.

## **RUST**

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The traditional method is to boil some lemon juice and add a pinch of salt, then rub the solution on the stain before washing the garment.

## **CHEWING GUM**

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Put the garment in the freezer to harden the chewing gum then scrape it off the fabric with a knife. Next wash the garment normally.

## **ACIDIC FRUIT**

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Here the tip is to use cold water with some glycerine, applied directly on to the stain. Leave to work for at least an hour and then machine-wash in the normal way.

## **LIPSTICK**

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Pour a few drops of alcohol on to a cotton wool ball and press it down hard on the stain, without rubbing.

## **CANDLE WAX**

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Wait for the wax to cool and set as hard as possible. Then, scrape it off with a knife. Finally, place the garment between two sheets of kitchen paper (one under and one over the stain) and heat the area with an iron, so that the remaining wax is attracted on to the paper by the heat.

## Children's stains

Children never seem to have difficulty in finding new ways to have fun, and to get dirty, some of which can be hard to imagine! Here are some of the most common children's stains (but that's not to say that they aren't also found on adults' laundry too!)

### ICE-CREAM

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When the stain is still fresh, use a small piece of castile soap. More stubborn, dry stains should first be softened with water and borax.

### VINYL GLUE

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Cover the stain with castile soap, without rubbing, and leave to soak in cold water. Then wash in the washing machine.

### FRUIT JUICE

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There are various solutions for removing fruit juice stains; one is to rub lemon juice on the stain. Another is to pre-treat the stains using sparkling water or white vinegar. If the stain is stubborn or very old, it is advisable to use glycerine, which should be left to act for approximately twenty minutes, then rinsed with lukewarm water and finally washed in the washing machine as normal.

### URINE

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If the stain is still fresh, soak garment in water with castile soap and bicarbonate of soda, and then machine-wash. Alternatively, the stain can be blotted with a few drops of hydrogen peroxide or ammonia, diluted with water.

### GRASS

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Grass stains should be blotted with white vinegar, left for approximately one hour and then washed in the washing machine.

### FELT TIP PENS

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Dissolve some starch in cold water, blot the stain with the solution, leave it to dry and then brush it well to remove any residues before washing the garment in the washing machine.





## Babies' laundry

Babies' skin is more delicate than that of adults, so it is important to take extra care when washing their clothes.

### WHAT TO AVOID AND WHAT TO USE

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As a baby's skin is very sensitive, great care must be taken in choosing washing powders and liquids, and the additives to use when doing their laundry. For a scented effect, you can add a few drops of lavender oil or your favourite natural scent to the wash. Of course, it is always a good idea to wash babies' clothes separately from adults' garments. Once washed, avoid hanging babies' clothes outside at times of the day when the traffic is busy, avoid pollution or contamination with fine dust.

### TYPICAL STAINS FOUND ON BABIES' LAUNDRY

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For all urine, faeces and food stains, it is always advisable to pre-wash the garment before putting it in the washing machine. Soaking in lukewarm water with a mixture of castile soap and bicarbonate of soda for a few hours can do the trick.

## Keeping whites white

How can we keep our whites white? Here are a few suggestions for removing stains and restoring your white garments to their former glory. Remember that using bleach is not always a good idea and that, in the long term, it tends to turn your laundry grey and ruin the fabrics.

### CURTAINS

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Curtains can sometimes be impregnated with smoke and grease. In this case it is advisable to use a more intense cycle with a pre-wash so that the curtains look brighter and cleaner.

### TABLECLOTHS

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It is always advisable to pre-wash tablecloths with bleach.

## Shoes

How many pairs of shoes do you have in your wardrobe? And how many of them always look as good as new and in excellent condition? Here are a few tips about cleaning our shoes regularly to ensure that we keep them in perfect condition.

### FABRIC SHOES

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Fabric shoes are undoubtedly easier to keep clean than shoes made of other materials, as they can easily be placed in the washing machine, or in any case washed by hand. If they have laces, these must always be removed before the wash, and washed separately in a basin. The shoes must then be washed in cold water, with soap and fabric softener. To keep them in shape, slot some newspaper inside after washing them, before they dry.

# 3.

## HOW TO IRON LESS



After washing our clothes obviously we then need to dry them. But are we sure that we are using the drying time as effectively as possible, and obtaining the best possible result?

Well, here we will suggest some of the most commonly used methods for drying different types of fabrics and clothes in the most effective way. And some tricks you can learn in order to iron less.

### HANG CLOTHES CORRECTLY FOR FEWER CREASES

To hang laundry out effectively and minimise drying times, but most of all to avoid having to iron the garments once they are dry (if the fabrics can be ironed), hang in a way that prevents creases from forming. Try to avoid hanging clothes over the washing line, as this inevitably leaves a crease, as do clothes pegs.

### HANG THE WASHING OUT IMMEDIATELY

Another tip is to hang the clothes on the rack or line immediately, as soon as the wash cycle has finished, first shaking them out briskly. This enables them to dry more easily and prevents additional creases from forming if they are left in the washing machine for too long.

### THE SPIN CYCLES

If you have a state-of-the-art washing machine that enables you to choose the number of spins in your programme, choose a low number, to avoid extra creasing.

### CLOTHES PEGS

Plastic clothes pegs are preferable to wooden ones as the latter can sometimes absorb and release the colour of the previous garment. It is also important to place them on the garment in a position where any mark they may leave will not be visible when the garment is worn.

### USE THE DRYER

Not everyone knows that by using your dryer correctly you can not only cut down on your ironing, but also obtain laundry which is cleaner and more hygienic. In particular, sheets, towels and bathrobes will leave the dryer feeling soft and new. If you select the ironing setting for the drying programme, garments will contain the ideal level of humidity for easy ironing. The belief that dryers ruin fabrics and consume large amounts of electricity is nothing but an old wives' tale. Modern dryers have cycles designed to meet different requirements and dry clothes at moderate temperatures, taking care of our laundry and also watching our pennies.

### WASHING LINE MARKS

Sometimes a washing line can leave a visible mark on garments hung out to dry. Placing a piece of fabric between the garment to be dried and the washing line can prevent this from happening.

## **WOOLLEN GARMENTS**

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If possible, woollen garments should not be hung up but dried flat, to prevent them from losing their shape. When they have been hand-washed, a good idea is to first roll them up in a towel to absorb any excess water.

## **COLOURED GARMENTS**

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Coloured garments are very sensitive to the sun, and if left in the sunlight for a long time can fade and be ruined, perhaps also taking on the colour of the washing line or rack. They should therefore always be hung up inside out and only be exposed to direct sunlight for the time strictly necessary to dry them.

## **SKIRTS**

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Skirts should preferably be hung up by the waist. Since they are often made of synthetic or mixed fabrics, in this case they will often not need to be ironed and will dry much more easily.

## **SHEETS**

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Sheets are usually the laundry item that takes the longest to dry. To dry a sheet easily and more quickly, pin it to two parallel washing lines by its two opposite edges using lots of clothes pegs, creating a kind of sack. Otherwise, if you can hang it outside, and don't need to worry about it trailing too low, it can be pinned to the line by only one edge, again using lots of clothes pegs, but without folding it.

## **CURTAINS**

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Curtains are made of different fabrics from clothes and it is a good idea to dry them by hanging them up at the window while still damp. They can be steamed with an iron to ensure any creases drop out.

## **SOFA COVERS**

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It is important for sofa covers to keep their shape. To ensure that they do, put them back on the cushions when they are still slightly damp, so that they fit perfectly to the shape of the sofa.

## **CLOTHES WASHED BY HAND**

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One problem we often encounter when washing clothes by hand is that of removing excess water. Setting the washing machine to perform a spin cycle can help (for garments that allow this). Otherwise, cover the drying rack with a dry white towel and lay the garments on it horizontally, so that they do not lose their shape. Silk garments should be ironed when still damp.

## **T-SHIRTS**

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T-shirts should be shaken out vigorously then pinned up to dry by the hem, neck down, to ensure a "natural ironing" effect.

## **TROUSERS**

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Trousers should be pinned to the line by the hems at the bottom of the legs, and of course, shaken out a few times before they are hung on the line, just like all other garments.

## **SHIRTS**

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Particular care must be taken when it comes to shirts: these too should be shaken out and the edges flattened between the fingers to smooth out the fabric as much as possible. They should be hung on hangers so that they keep their shape and are easier to iron.

# 4. FIXING COLOUR RUN



Here we are again: the umpteenth white shirt is now a subtle shade of pink thanks to the same old red sock that keeps getting mixed in with the white wash by mistake. Now what do we do? No need to despair! We still have a trick up our sleeves for saving the unsaveable.

Let's try and make a white garment white again! It has happened to us all at least once: you put a coloured or dark garment into a white wash and it ruins absolutely everything. In this case, before ironing the dyed garment, wash it again with other whites at the wash programme recommended for this type of fabric and add a sheet of "colour catcher", which is widely available on the market under a range of different brands. This should revive the grey or pink garment, removing the excess colour.



# 5.

## LOOKING AFTER YOUR WASHING MACHINE



To ensure that our laundry is always impeccable we naturally need to take good care of our washing machine, the trusted friend that saves us such a great deal of hard work every day.

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### Don't leave washing in the drum

To **prevent mould** from forming inside it over the years, try **not to leave washing in the drum** for too long. As well as making the laundry smell unpleasant, in the long term this can also ruin the inside of the washing machine

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### Perform regular circuit cleaning cycles

Every 4 to 6 weeks it is important to run your washing machine empty through a cycle at a high temperature (at least 60°) with a small amount of washing powder or liquid, or launch the **self-cleaning cycle** (if your model has one). This procedure removes any residues of the last wash and cleans the washing machine. You should choose the longest cycle available and add some soda (in tiny quantities) to clean the entire drum.

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### Cleaning the washing powder drawer

**Clean the washing powder drawer often:** how often do we remember to do this when the washing machine has ended its cycle or before launching a new one? Not as often as we should! Actually, this is an extremely important step as it ensures that the washing powder or liquid is used as effectively as possible and that laundry is always clean and scented. Cleaning the drawer prevents mould forming in the intricate workings of the machine, where residues of washing powder can stick. It also ensures that all the powder is used and doesn't become encrusted in the drawer. One tip is to remove the drawer and clean it with bleach for 10 minutes, before rinsing it well

# 6. SAVING MONEY



Here's the chapter we have all been waiting for: how to save money on our laundry. Obviously, apart from choosing our washing machine carefully, there are also other tricks we can use in the washing phase. Below you will find a list of these and some alternatives to standard washing practices which can help you to save money on your laundry.



## **BICARBONATE**

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Bicarbonate, which is also a natural deodorant, can be used instead of the usual chemical stain removers when treating white fabrics made of natural fibres (a solution consisting of 1 part water and 3 parts bicarbonate). Rub on to the stain, but not too hard, leave to act for an hour and finally wash normally in the washing machine. It can also be used as an additive with the washing powder or liquid of your choice (half a cup is enough), or with some bleach to intensify the brightness of whites.

## **CHOOSING WHEN TO DO THE LAUNDRY**

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Some electricity companies specify in their bills that you can save money by using energy in certain specific time bands, such as the weekend and from 7 o'clock in the evening until early the next morning. So it is a good idea to do your laundry at these times as you could save up to approximately 20% on your electricity bill. Remember that many washing machines have a function which allows you to programme the cycle start time.

## **THE RIGHT WEIGHT OF LAUNDRY**

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Only put the washing machine on when it is full, but not overloaded: leaving it empty can be a waste, but filling it too full can lead to your laundry retaining traces of washing powder (which can cause itching and strong allergies, especially if the washing powder contains strong chemicals) and obviously the need to repeat the cycle to remove these. Remember that some washing machines have a function that recognises the size and weight of the garments inside and automatically adjusts water and electricity use to suit the load.

## **CHOOSING THE PROGRAMME**

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Always choose your washing programme in line with the instructions in the booklet and on the label of the garments you need to wash, but most of all, be careful not to overdo it with excessively high temperatures. Sometimes a low temperature wash is sufficient to get the results you want.

## **AFTER THE WASH**

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Take great care when hanging out washing just unloaded from the washing machine. This should be done tidily, flattening out folds and creases, folding sheets in half and hanging up shirts on clothes hangers. These small tricks will save you time and energy when it comes to ironing the laundry. Indeed, some garments may not need to be ironed at all, or take only half the usual time

## **DON'T DRY LAUNDRY ON RADIATORS**

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Even if your radiators are on, you should not dry your washing on them. This reduces the heat released into the home, causing us to turn them up, and then often ruins the fibres of garments due to the direct contact with heat. Drying clothes on radiators is therefore not recommended.

## **AN ALTERNATIVE TO FABRIC SOFTENER**

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A very common alternative to fabric softener is 100 ml of white vinegar, which prevents limescale from forming and softens the fibres without polluting the environment.

## **ONLY PRE-WASH IF NECESSARY**

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In most cases, the pre-wash cycle is unnecessary, so why use it? Anyone concerned about the environment and eager to save money should avoid pre-washing clothes unless specifically recommended.