

Clothing and **pure** **TEXTILES**

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAMMING

Stain Removal Essentials

Garments often become stained before they become too worn to wear. As a general rule, treat the stain as soon as possible and prior to laundering. First, try to identify the cause of the stain to determine the best treatment. If the cause of the stain is unknown, soak the garment in cold water before laundering or applying a stain removal treatment. Following these three simple procedures can extend the life of your garment by giving it a second chance after it becomes stained. For specific stain removal techniques, consult the stain removal guide on the second page of this document.

Pretreating: Stain pretreatment is a method of removing the spot before laundering the garment. Methods include penetrating the stained area with bar soap, liquid detergent, or a paste of water and powder detergent prior to laundering.

Soaking: Soaking soiled garments is an effective way to loosen heavy stains. A washing machine, laundry sink, or bucket may be used to soak garments. A laundry presoak product or detergent should be added and agitated in the water before clothes are added. When a washing machine is used to soak, set the machine on the soak cycle or manually set the machine so that the garments soak for at least 30 minutes. Remember to separate colors from whites to eliminate dye transfer from garment to garment.

Soaking temperature varies depending on which product is used. Consult package directions for water temperatures and exact soaking times. After the garments have soaked, wring or spin the water out of them and launder as usual.

Prewashing: Many washing machines have a prewash setting which agitates and then spins the garments. Refer to the owner's manual for instructions. Add a laundry presoak product or detergent to the prewash cycle then launder garments as usual.

Remember to never use acetone on garments containing acetate, as the garment will disintegrate. Never mix chemicals, especially bleach and ammonia, which can result in toxic fumes. Use chemicals in a well ventilated space.



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CLOTHING AND TEXTILES TO MEET

BASIC NEEDS

STAIN REMOVAL GUIDE

Proteins (Egg, Blood)	Soak for several hours in a solution of 1 teaspoon salt to 3 cups of water. Do not use hot water as this will set the stain. Rinse. Treat with an enzyme laundry detergent.
Grease (Oil, Butter)	Sprinkle the stain with talcum powder and let set for 30 minutes.
Vegetable & Fruit (Juice)	Soak garment in a solution of warm water and one half teaspoon liquid dish detergent. Launder as usual.
Grass	Use a dry solvent to treat stain. Dab area with paper towels, rinse stain with isopropyl alcohol, dab with paper towels, and allow area to dry. Treat with an enzyme detergent.
Red Wine	Rinse stain with cold water. Apply a paste of water and salt on the stain and let stand for an hour. Scrape off salt paste and rinse and launder as usual.
Chocolate	Apply a paste of laundry detergent containing enzymes and water. Launder as usual.
Lipstick	Apply a dry solvent to the stain and blot with a paper towel. Flush with isopropyl alcohol and blot again with a paper towel. Repeat until stain is lifted. Treat with an enzyme detergent.
Wax & Gum	Freeze and scrape off as much material as possible. Use mineral spirits or oil solvent to remove remaining residue. Treat with an enzyme detergent.
Sauces (ketchup, tomato)	Soak garment for 15 minutes in a solution of warm water, one half teaspoon liquid dish detergent and one tablespoon of white vinegar. Rinse and launder as usual.
Ink	Treat stain with isopropyl alcohol. Use a dry solvent to remove excess ink. Rinse in a solution of warm water and one half teaspoon liquid dish detergent and launder in warm water with an enzyme detergent.
Mud	Soak garment for 15 minutes in a solution of warm water and one half teaspoon liquid dish detergent. Treat with an enzyme detergent.
Adhesive Tape	Rub stain with ice to freeze. Scrape residue with a dull knife. Apply stain pretreatment.
Dye Transfer (color bleeding from other garments)	Wash garments as soon as possible but do not tumble dry. Massage liquid detergent into stained area. To wash, add one cup non-chlorine bleach in addition to laundry detergent to the cycle. Another option is packaged dye remover, which can be found at some supermarkets and in craft stores.
Nail Polish	Apply nail polish remover or acetone with a paper towel on the reverse side of the garment. Blot stain and change paper towels frequently. Never use nail polish remover or acetone on garments containing acetate, as the material will melt.
Rust	Squeeze juice of a lemon onto stain and place garment outside in the sun until dry. Launder as usual
Mildew	Fabrics with mildew may be damaged beyond repair. Launder garments with a bleach safe for fabric and the hottest water the garment will bear.

Sources:

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