

Laundry as an Off-Campus NC State Student

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How to save money doing laundry at home

Learn budget-friendly laundry tips to save money on water, energy, and detergent while ensuring your clothes are clean and well-maintained.

As a student, laundry expenses can add up quickly. Here are some practical tips to save money while making the most of your resources.

- Wash full loads only
 - a) Only wash full loads of laundry to save water, detergent, and energy.

Attention: Overloading machines reduces cleaning effectiveness.

- Use cold water
 - a) Use cold water to save energy and help prevent colors from fading.
- Choose affordable and efficient detergent
 - a) Buy cheaper store-brand detergents.
 - b) Use concentrated detergents that require less per wash to save money over time.
- Air dry clothes

- a) Air dry clothes on hangers or racks to save energy and make your clothes last longer.
- Skip fabric softener
 - a) Fabric softeners are an additional and unnecessary cost.
- Clean your washing machine regularly
 - a) Run an empty cycle with vinegar once a month to remove buildup.
 - b) Clean machines operate more efficiently, cleaning clothes in less time.

Removing Coffee Stains

Different types of fabrics may require different cleaning approaches, as they can react differently to stain removers and washing techniques. These instructions can be used when washing cotton or cotton-blend clothes.

The following materials are needed:

- Liquid laundry detergent
- Powdered laundry detergent
- White vinegar
- Laundry stain remover
- Dishwashing liquid (optional)
- Oxygen bleach laundry detergent (optional)
- Salt or baby powder (for fresh stains)

- Toothbrush
- Paper towels or cloth

1. Rinse the coffee stain with cold water from the backside of the fabric.

Tip: For fresh stains, apply salt or baby powder to absorb excess coffee before rinsing. Allow the powder to sit for a few minutes, then rinse.

2. Continue rinsing with cold water for 10-15 minutes, or until the water runs clear.
3. Apply liquid laundry detergent or dish soap directly to the stain and gently rub it in with your fingers.
 - For fresh stains, allow the detergent to sit for 3-5 minutes before rinsing.
 - For older stains, soak the garment in cold water for 30 minutes after applying detergent, gently rubbing the fabric every 5 minutes to loosen the stain.
4. Optional: If the stain remains, create a paste using powdered laundry detergent, water, and white vinegar. Apply the paste to the stain and use an old toothbrush to scrub it into the stain.

CAUTION: Test the paste on a hidden area of the garment to ensure it does not discolor the fabric before applying to the stain.

- a) For fresh stains, apply salt or baby powder to absorb excess coffee before rinsing. Allow the powder to sit for a few minutes, then rinse.

5. Apply a stain remover spray or gel to the area and let it sit for 5 minutes before laundering as usual.
 - a) Optional: If it's available, use an oxygen bleach laundry detergent as the stain remover for enhanced stain-lifting power.
6. Look at the stain before drying to ensure it has been completely removed.

Tip: Hold clothes up to a bright light to check for any remaining problems. If any hint of the stain remains, repeat the treatment steps.

Air-dry the clothes to prevent heat from getting any other stain. Avoid machine drying until the stain is fully removed.

For pure white clothing with lingering stains, mix 1/4 cup chlorine bleach with 1 gallon of water, soak for 5 minutes, rinse thoroughly, and then wash as usual.

Removing Oil-Based Stains

Instructions for removing oil-based stains from cotton or cotton-blend fabrics.

Materials needed:

- Heavy-duty laundry detergent
- Enzyme-based stain remover (spray or gel)
- Cornstarch or talcum powder
- Soft-bristled brush
- Dull knife, spoon

- Small bowl
- Paper towels or napkins
- WD-40 (for set-in stains)

1. Remove excess oil from the fabric

- For fresh stains without solid residue, blot the area with a paper towel or napkin.
- For solid residue, gently lift it with a dull knife or spoon.

2. Optional: For older or set-in stains, apply a small amount of WD-40 with a cotton swab.

3. Generously apply cornstarch or talcum powder to the stain to absorb as much oil as possible.

4. Allow the powder to sit on the stain for about 15 minutes to fully absorb the oil

5. Brush the powder away with a soft-bristled brush.

6. Pretreat the stain with an enzyme-based stain remover spray or gel.

Note: If an enzyme-based remover is unavailable, use heavy-duty liquid detergent and work it into the fabric with your fingers or a soft-bristled brush.

7. Let the stain remover sit on the stain for at least 15-30 minutes to allow enzymes to break down the oil.

8. Wash the clothes in the hottest water recommended for the fabric, using the recommended amount of heavy-duty laundry detergent.

9. Examine the stained area after washing.

Attention: Do not use a dryer until the stain is fully removed. Air-dry if unsure, as heat can set the stain permanently.

Tip: Act quickly to prevent oil stains from setting, as this makes them harder to remove.

Attention: Do not rub the stain without a cleaning solvent, as this can push oil deeper into the fabric.

Attention: Always confirm the stain is removed before using a dryer, as heat can make the stain permanent.

Importance of sorting clothes

Clothes made from different fabrics react differently to washing conditions. For example, natural fibers like cotton and wool are prone to shrinkage in hot water, whereas synthetic fibers like polyester are more heat-resistant. Sorting clothes before washing helps prevent damage, preserves fabric quality, and maintains colors.

Sorting clothes by color and fabric type is an essential step in the laundry process. Proper sorting prevents color bleeding, fabric damage, and ensures that each item is washed at the optimal temperature and detergent setting.

Here are the main reasons why sorting clothes is important:

- Prevents color bleeding: Washing dark or bright colors with whites can cause color transfer, leading to staining and dulling of lighter clothes.



- Preserves fabric quality: Sorting by fabric type, such as delicates and heavy items, allows for gentle washing of delicate fabrics and helps prevent shrinkage and damage caused by rougher items.
- Ensures effective cleaning: Heavily soiled items may need more detergent or a different washing cycle, while lightly soiled clothes can be washed with a shorter or gentler cycle.


By taking a few minutes to sort clothes before washing, you can maintain the appearance and longevity of your garments, saving time and money in the long run.

Fabric Types

Choose the best washing method based on water temperature and fabric type.

Select the appropriate washing method to preserve fabric quality and maintain its appearance.


- Identify the fabric type you are washing.
 - a) Required: Determine whether the fabric is natural (e.g., silk, wool, cotton) or synthetic (e.g., polyester, nylon).
 - b) Optional: Consider any specific fabric care instructions provided on the label.
- Choose the appropriate water temperature.

Water Temperature	Suitable Fabrics
Cold	Silk, Wool, Cashmere 

Water Temperature	Suitable Fabrics
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Water Temperature	Suitable Fabrics
Warm	Cotton, Polyester
	

Water Temperature	Suitable Fabrics
Hot	Sturdy Cotton, Polyester

- Follow fabric-specific recommendations for washing.
 - Required: Use a mild detergent for delicate fabrics like silk or wool.
 - Optional: Air dry or use a low heat setting for sensitive fabrics to avoid damage.

Laundry Icons for Washing Clothes

Clothing tags include instructions for best care practices. These instructions are shown through universal icons.

Table 1: Machine Wash














Icon	Description
	Machine wash
 	Wash with cold water
 	Wash with warm water
 	Wash with hot water
	Wash on a gentle cycle

Table 2: Wash

Icon	Description
	Do not wash

Icon	Description
	Hand wash
	Do not bleach
	Bleach as needed
	Non-chlorine bleach only

Laundry Icons for Drying Clothes

Clothing tags include instructions for best care practices. These instructions are shown through universal icons.

Table 3: Dry










Icon	Description
	Tumble dry
	Do not dry
	Low heat
	Medium heat
	High heat
	Permanent press
	Gentle cycle

Table 4: Dry Clean

Icon	Description
	Dry clean
	Do not dry clean icon