

Laundry as an Off-Campus NC State Student

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Budget-Friendly Laundry

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.

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- 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.

The Science of Stain Removal

Stain removal involves breaking down or lifting stains from fabric. Knowing the type of stain and the right cleaning method can make the process easier.

Types of Stains

Different types of stains need different treatments:

Protein stains	Stains from organic materials ex. blood, sweat, egg. Use cleaners with enzymes.
Oil stains	Greasy stains from butter, oils, makeup, etc. Use soap or detergents to break up the oil.
Tannin stains	Plant-based stains ex. coffee, tea, wine. Use a mild acidic cleaner like vinegar.
Dye stains	Pigments that discolor fabrics ex. ink, berries. Use special cleaners or bleach to remove.

Helpful Cleaning Ingredients

These ingredients help remove stains:

- **Soap and detergents:** Lift dirt and grease.
- **Enzymes:** Break down tough stains like food or sweat.
- **Bleach:** Lightens or removes color stains.
- **Solvents:** Help dissolve sticky or oily stains.

Temperature and Water Type

Water temperature affects stain removal:

- Cold water for protein-based stains.
- Warm water for food stains to activate enzymes in cleaners.
- Hot water is good for greasy stains, but not on delicate fabrics.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

Here are some common mistakes and how to avoid them:

- Using hot water on protein-based stains makes them set in the fabric.
- Rubbing stains hard can push them deeper into the fabric.
- Using the wrong cleaner for the stain type.

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.

Materials needed

- Liquid laundry detergent
- Powdered laundry detergent
- White vinegar
- Laundry stain remover
- Toothbrush
- Paper towels or cloth
- Dishwashing liquid (optional)

- Salt or baby powder (for fresh stains)
1. Rinse the coffee stain with cold water from the back 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.

- a) Rinse for 10-15 minutes, or until the water runs clear.
2. Apply liquid laundry detergent or dish soap directly to the stain. rub it in with your fingers.
 - a) Rub the soap in gently with your fingers.
 - For fresh stains, let the detergent sit for 3-5 minutes before rinsing.
 - For older stains, soak the garment in cold water for 30 minutes after applying detergent. Gently rub the fabric every 5 minutes to loosen the stain.
 3. 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.
 - a) Apply the paste to the stain.
 - b) Use a toothbrush to scrub the paste 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.

Note: 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.

4. Apply a stain remover to the area and let sit for 5 minutes before washing as normal.
5. Ensure the stain is gone before drying.

Tip: Hold clothes up to a bright light to check for any remaining stain. Repeat treatment steps if stain is not gone.

Avoid machine drying until the stain is fully removed.

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

Removing Oil-Based Stains

Instructions for removing oil-based stains from cotton or cotton-blend fabrics. Acting quickly to remove oil-based stains can prevent clothes from being ruined.

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.

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

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

3. Apply cornstarch or talcum powder generously to the stain to absorb excess oil.

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

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.

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

Clothing Care Labels

Care labels provide information about apparel care and best cleaning practices. Refer to the care label before cleaning your clothes.

Care labels list information such as:

- Water temperature
- Recommended cleaning agents
- Washing instructions
- Drying instructions
- Stain removal methods

Importance of sorting clothes

Fabrics react differently to washing conditions. 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.

Here are the main reasons why sorting clothes is important:

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



- **Preserves fabric quality:** Sorting allows for gentle washing of delicate fabrics and helps prevent shrinkage/damage caused by heavier items.



- **Ensures effective cleaning:** Dirtier clothes need more detergent or a longer washing cycle, while lightly soiled clothes can be washed with a shorter cycle.

Taking a few minutes to sort clothes before washing can maintain the appearance and longevity of your garments.

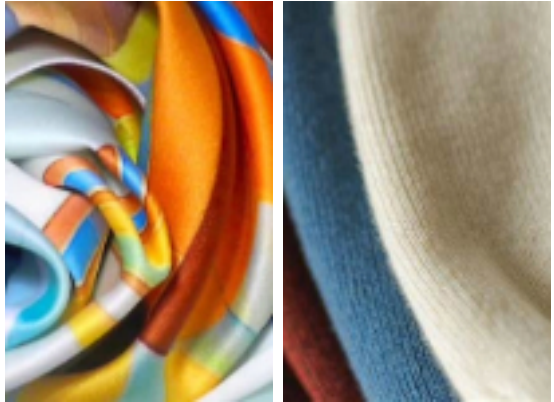

Fabric Types

Selecting the correct washing method is essential to preserve fabric quality and maintain its appearance.

1. Identify the type of fabric.

- a) Required: Determine whether the fabric is natural (ex. silk, wool, cotton) or synthetic (ex. polyester, nylon).
- b) Optional: Find any specific fabric care instructions listed on the care label.

2. Select the appropriate water temperature.

Water Temperature	Suitable Fabrics
Cold	<p>Silk, Wool, Cashmere</p> 
Warm	<p>Cotton, Linen, Polyester</p> 
Hot	<p>Sturdy Cotton & Polyester</p>

3. Follow fabric-specific recommendations for washing.

Tip: Use a gentle detergent for delicate fabrics like silk or wool.

4. 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
	Hand wash

Icon	Description
	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