

**FABRIC RINSES** Fabric rinses are special laundry aids which are designed to be used in the last rinsing water.

They aid in the improvement of the appearance and texture of laundered articles. Fabric rinses include laundry blue, vinegar, fabric softeners, and disinfectants.

#### A. Laundry Blues

White cottons can lose their whiteness through use, water, and the yellowing action of soap and alkali in cleansing processes. Laundry blue can be added in the last rinsing water for such fabrics to produce some degree of whiteness.

Today, however, there are modern washing detergents powders which contain ingredients capable of keeping fabrics really white. These detergents such as Omo, Elephant, etc, not only give a blue tint to the white fabric, they also add some brightness.

These have reduced the use of blue for white cotton and linen fabrics. Laundry blue is, however, suitable for some veritable wax wrappers with white and blue or black backgrounds or designs. To use laundry blue:

1. Wash the article normally and rinse thoroughly. Extract as much water as possible.
2. Dissolve the blue thoroughly in water to the desired concentration or shade or depth of colour. Avoid over blueing.

Place the article into the blue solution. Squeeze it in the solution to ensure even blueing. Wring out as much water as possible and dry in a shade.

#### B. Vinegar

This can be added to the last rinsing water because it helps to brighten the colour of some fabrics slightly.

#### C. Fabric Softeners

These are special products designed to be used in the last rinse of a washing process to soften the fabrics and to give them a better handle. Fabric softeners are used as antistatic agents to prevent static electricity, which occurs with man-made fibre fabrics during wear.

For instance, nylon underwears normally cling to the skin during the harmattan. Such fabrics also give out sparks and crackle (small repeated sounds) of static electricity. These occur commonly when two man-made fibre garments are worn together. This static electricity also attracts dust and dirt on to the fabric. Once there, static held dirt is extremely difficult to remove.

Fabric softeners are also used to restore the original softness to babies' nappies, towels, wools, and wool mixture garments. To use fabric softeners:

1. Wash the article normally and rinse thoroughly, ensuring that the detergent is completely removed. Otherwise, chemical reaction will occur between the softener and the detergent. This will prevent the softener from being effective.
2. Mix the softener with water according to the manufacturer's instructions as to the quantities to be used.
3. Place the article into the solutions and squeeze thoroughly to ensure an even distribution of the softener over the article.
4. Then drip dry.

In a solution, the softener is attracted to the surface of the fibres. It coats them with a very thin layer. This coating acts as a lubricant to the fibres. So the fabric becomes supple and soft.

#### D. Disinfectants

Disinfectants are used in laundering:

1. To kill bacteria on bed and table linen, particularly where there is illness in the house.
2. To kill bacteria on a sick person's clothing.
3. To give a pleasant fresh smell to the laundered article.

Examples of disinfectants which can be used with safety on almost all types of textiles are Dettol, Savlon, IZAL, Camel, etc.

How to use:

1. Make up the disinfectant solution to the correct strength with cold or warm water (1 tablespoonful to 1 litre of water or according to manufacturer's instructions).
2. Soak the clothes in the solution for at least fifteen minutes.
3. Wash and rinse in as hot water as possible.

For pleasant smell:

- i. Wash and rinse the article normally.
- ii. Add one teaspoonful of disinfectant to the last rinsing water and rinse the clean article in it. This will not give any disinfection. It will, however, give a pleasant smell to the wash.