

Washing

If an article is placed in a wash-basin full of soapy water, it will take quite a long time for the soil to be removed properly, so you need to agitate the fibres by washing. Washing can be done by squeezing, kneading, and rubbing with hand. It can also be done with a washing machine. In a washing machine, the articles are tumbled and rubbed together in the detergent solution. During the washing process, the fibres are flexed and the soil or dirt is gradually removed and held in suspension by the detergent solution, so that it cannot resettle on the article.

Guidelines for Washing

1. Use a soap or synthetic detergent suitable for the type of fabric you are washing. For instance, use heavy duty detergents such as Omo, Elephant, Drum, etc, for white and colour-fast cotton, mild soap such as lux flakes for fine or delicate fabrics and some baby's wears.
2. Wash the cleanest articles before the dirtiest.
3. Change the washing water when it becomes dirty, the lather disappears and the soapy water is unable to hold any more dirt in suspension, so dirt is redeposited on the garments.
4. Grease or oil dissolves more readily in hot water than in cold water; hence hot water is better for washing certain types of fabrics.
5. Use the correct method of washing for the type of fibre as follows:
 - a. Rubbing or friction: For this, hard soap or heavy duty detergent is used and the soap is rubbed on the fabric, which is then rubbed vigorously with hands. This is used for cotton and linen articles.
 - b. Kneading and squeezing: These methods use as soap solution or sud. The fingers gently knead the soapy water into the article. As this is done, the soap cleanses the

article and the washing water becomes dirty. These methods are used for polyester blend, nylon, coloured and printed cotton and, linen articles with colours that are likely going to run.

c. Squeezing alone: Here the article is cleaned by gently squeezing in the soapy water without kneading.

d. Kneading: This is used for delicate materials such as wool, silk, and washable pleated garments containing acrylics, nylon, etc.

Rinsing

This is the process by which dirty lather is washed off the articles, thus leaving the laundered articles clean and soap less. This is important to give the articles a clean colour. The first rinse is better done with hot or warm water, depending on the type of fabric. Rinsing must be continued until the rinsing water becomes clean and soapless.

Boiling

Sometimes it is necessary to boil white cotton and linen articles or colour-fast fabrics. Boiling helps to whiten articles and kill any germs or bacteria in the laundered articles. Boiling is particularly necessary for articles used by the sick. Some fabrics, such as wool, silk, and many synthetic fibre fabrics, such as nylon, should not be boiled.

Procedure for boiling

1. Fill the boiler or a special pot reserved for boiling with cold water.
2. Add a little synthetic detergent if article is still dirty.
3. Add the washed articles or clothes in the boiler or pot.
4. Place the pot on fire to boil. Allow articles to boil for at least ten minutes.
5. Turn the articles with boiler stick or tongs.
6. After boiling, rinse clothes in the normal way.

Optional Treatments (Blueing, Starching, Fabric Softening)

After rinsing, the article can be blued or stiffened or softened as desired. In each case, the normal procedure for each treatment should be followed.

Water Extraction

After rinsing, as much water as possible should be removed or extracted from the article before drying, except for drip-dry garments. Water can be extracted by hand wringing, mangling, gentle squeezing, rolling the garment in a clean absorbent towel or by spinning where a spinner is available. The procedure to adopt depends on the type of fabric being treated.

Water extraction shortens the drying time and reduces the risk of garments being pulled out of shape by the weight of the water they contain.

Drying

Drying can be carried out indoors or outdoors. Each method has its own guidelines, advantages, and disadvantages.

Outdoor drying involves drying the laundered articles in sunlight.

Advantages of Outdoor Drying

1. Clothes dry faster in the sun.
2. Sunshine helps to whiten clothes and gives them some freshness.
3. Strong sunshine can help destroy some disease germs on the clothes, which may have escaped the other laundry processes.

Disadvantages

Sunshine has a fading effect on coloured fabrics, such as veritable wax materials.

Such fabrics should be dried under a shade.

Guidelines for Outdoor Drying

- a. Wipe the line clean before hanging out clothes. Avoid rusty metal lines.
- b. Hang garments the way they are worn. Let them be suspended by their strongest parts.

c. Use clean peg to hold articles.d. Dry heavy knitted articles, such as sweaters, on clean flat surfaces.

Indoor Drying

Indoor drying is common during the rainy season and in some urban areas where people do not have space for outdoor drying. Under these situations people resort to drying their laundered articles in bathrooms, bedrooms, kitchens, porches or verandas, railings or staircases, etc.

Advantages of Indoor Drying

- a. Some coloured articles are best dried indoors.
- b. It may be safer to dry articles indoors in some towns.

Disadvantages of Indoor Drying

1. Articles require a longer time to dry indoors than outdoors.
2. While cotton materials may be attacked by mildew while drying slowly indoors.
3. It is unhygienic and uncomfortable to have wet clothes hanging about in the house, especially during the rainy season.

Guidelines for Indoor Drying

1. Use a clothes horse for indoor drying. It can be put in any part of the house.
2. Keep the windows open when you have wet articles hanging in the room.
3. Extract as much water as possible before hanging the articles indoors.