

How to buy and launder

Durable Press

with Soil Release

LIBRARY

Thanks to the Michigan State Extension Service for much of the information used in this leaflet.

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Durable press clothes appeal to consumers because they remain fresh looking and wrinkle-resistant during wear. They retain their smooth look and sharp pleats and creases when properly laundered.

In durable press clothes, check for:

SMOOTHNESS — no set-in wrinkles or packaging wrinkles.

COLOR — no streaks or blotches of color.

FLAT SEAMS and DETAILS — puckered stitching lines will appear even more so after laundering.

NO ODOR — odor indicates excess resin or improper curing of finish.

FIBER CONTENT — at least 50% polyester fiber to give enough strength to the fabric.

FIT — new seam lines and creases will never be as permanent as the old so alterations are a problem.

During wear and use you may find that durable press clothes:

- Are warm because fabric is non-absorbent.
- Irritate the skin. (If so, wash or dryclean new durable press clothes).

- Have an odor because of excess chemical resin left in the fabric.
- Wear out faster than similar nondurable press clothing.
- May need touch-up ironing depending upon the quality of fabric and finish and laundry procedures used.

And above all:

Soiling and staining are major concerns.

Nevertheless, you may like the service and convenience of durable press clothing well enough to cope with the soiling and staining problems.

You may need to experiment to find the laundering method that does the most to solve your soiling and staining problems. You want the clothes cleaned and also restored to their original appearance (no wrinkles, smooth seams, sharp pleats and creases). You may have to settle for less somewhere, because one laundering method cannot satisfy all requirements.

Soiling problems

Durable press clothing is used for much general wear, and as such is worn often — perhaps too many times — before it is laundered. Durable press finishes tend to pick up soil from the air and from contact with the wearer. Is washing sometimes postponed because the clothes tend to “look” fresh for a longer time?

Soil can also be picked up and redeposited on clothes during the laundry process. Durable press finishes are especially susceptible to oily soiling. If oily soil is not removed during laundering it tends to build up on a fabric and cause graying or a grimy look, especially in areas like collars.

Treat stains before washing and drying

The soil release finish on durable press is designed to enable such clothing to release soil, release stains, and prevent soil from redepositing during laundering. Soil release is an aid, but proper laundering helps to make its promises come true.

- The older the stain the more difficult to remove.
- Sponge oily stains with a safe cleaning fluid before laundering.
- Sponge grimy collars and cuffs with a full strength detergent solution before laundering.
- Sponge aged stains with a full strength detergent solution for an hour or more before laundering.

Laundrying methods — which do you choose?

PRE-SOAK

Special enzyme-type pre-soak and detergent laundry products will remove some protein, starch, and fat stains that would not be removed by regular detergents and bleach. Such laundry aids will whiten some clothes. They seem to be more effective on all-cotton fabrics.

HOT WATER

Heavily soiled clothes need hot water to come clean. Hot water is said to release oily stains more effectively.

SHORT WASH PERIOD

A short wash period (usually no more than 5 minutes) with slow agitation prevents wash wrinkles and cleans sufficiently if durable press clothes are washed frequently.

SEPARATE LOADS

Washing white clothes in separate loads, similar colors together, similar degrees of soiling together prevents transfer of color, lint, and soil from one article to others.

SMALLER LOADS

Small washer and dryer loads prevent wrinkling. Don't overcrowd the washer or dryer so that clothes are compressed too much.

MACHINE DRYING

For tumble-dry wrinkle-free garments, use medium heat setting. Clothes should be completely dry to restore their permanent press memory. Remove as soon as dryer stops. Ideally, dryer should have a "cool down" period or permanent press cycle setting.

(BUT) Overnight soaking and even repeated soaking with enzyme-active products may be necessary. Is this pattern consistent with keeping laundry within reasonable personal time and energy limits? Regular detergents and bleach will be just as effective as enzyme-type products with some stains.

(BUT) Hot water may spread a large, heavy oil stain further into the fabric and the heat may actually set the stain. Sponging the oil stain with a safe cleaning fluid could be done first. Hot water may put wash wrinkles into the fabric.

(BUT) Heavily soiled clothes may require a longer wash period at the expense of greater wrinkling.

(BUT) The family wash normally handles clothes collectively to some extent, but care instructions of ten assume individual handling of garments.

(BUT) Time, energy, money, and equipment factors are important in determining how many different washer and dryer loads are realistic for you.

(BUT) Without a dryer, line drying often requires touch-up pressing. Drip-drying is messy, requires adequate space and may still require touch-up. Do you have the equipment to get the best results?

Convenience, not cure-all

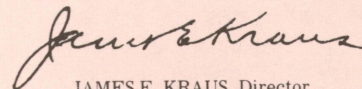
Durable press with soil release offers convenience in laundrying, but is no cure-all for laundrying problems. Effectiveness of the soil release on durable press is influenced by the fabric, kind of soil and stain and length of time stain has been on fabric. Most new durable press fabrics will have soil release finish.

Your satisfaction depends upon fabric quality and finish, which you can't easily evaluate when you buy. It also depends on clothing care and laundrying procedures, which must balance THE RESULTS YOU WANT with the COMMITMENT YOU CAN AND SHOULD GIVE TO CLOTHING CARE.

Cue for consumers

There is often a 'credibility gap' between the promotion (advertising) and the performance (what really happens) of any new product or fabric treatment. A period of trial, in which the consumer often takes part, precedes product improvement and the best use to which it is finally adapted. When a new development comes along, consumers may choose to "try it and see" or "wait and see." Individual and family use and care provide the final test and evaluation of a clothing product.

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