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with...
**Queen of
 Clean®**
Linda Cobb

You've got questions, she's got the answers. Here's how to handle your most common laundry problems.



What do I do when my laundry smells bad?

Do you have a front-loading washer? These often fail to get rid of all the water behind the spin basket, leaving a dirty scent. To freshen things up, run a complete cycle with just hot water and a capful of the citric acid cleanser Smelly Washer (\$17; smellywasher.com). If you just need to remove a mildew scent from clothes, rewash them with a teaspoon of Odorzout (\$15; 88stink.com).

How do I get rid of all the lint and pet hair on my clothes?

Put down your lint roller. And forget about pressing "repeat" on your washer and dryer until it comes out (it won't). Take a yard of cheap nylon net (\$1; joann.com) and throw it into your wash with the fuzzy items. Instead of spreading all over the place, the lint and hair will head straight for the net.

How can I keep new dark clothes from fading?

Dump 1 cup table salt into cold water in the washing machine, soak items for a few hours to set the dye, then rinse. Wash all darks inside out with gentle detergent, and mix new darks with faded ones—their dye will redeposit on the older clothes.

What do I do when dye spreads from one item to another?

Bleach won't help you erase fugitive color. Try Carbona Color Run Remover (\$3; createforless.com), or the quilters' favorite, Synthrapol Sizing and Dye Remover (\$2; benfranklincrafts.com), which is made for delicate fabrics. **wd**

[TIP TALK] by Janet Sobesky
**THE LOWDOWN
 ON LAUNDRY**

When I was young we had a laundry chute in our house. I thought all you had to do to wash clothes was throw them down the chute. I was shocked when I realized there was a lot more to it than that. Whether you use a chute or a laundry basket, doing the wash can be time-consuming. Follow these basic tips and you'll get your clothes done with a minimum of muss and fuss.

PREVENT PROBLEMS

- While you're sorting, turn pockets inside out and remove any lint, tissues or crumbs and any objects that can stain such as pens or crayons.
- Fill a squeeze-top bottle with detergent to pretreat spots. It's easier to control the amount of detergent you use with a smaller bottle.
- If you've got drawstring pants or shorts, tie the ends of the string together so it won't slip out in the wash.
- Keep a small sewing kit near the washing machine. Mend any rips, tears or loose buttons before putting clothes in the wash.
- To test whether a fabric is colorfast, mix 1 tablespoon detergent and 1 cup cold water. Put a small amount in an inside seam. If any color comes off, the garment will run. Handwash or dry-clean instead.
- Pretreat dirty collars and cuffs by rubbing stains with shampoo. Scrub gently with an old toothbrush.

WASHING WONDERS

- If color transfers from one piece of clothing to another, don't dry it. Instead, immediately rewash with a small amount of bleach (if it's safe for the fabric). It should clear up after a few washings.
- To prevent pilling and snags, especially in knitted, permanent-press, quilted or textured fabric, turn garments inside out before washing.
- Avoid wrapping large items like sheets or towels around the agitator. If they become tangled, they won't wash properly and can put stress on the gears of the machine. Put them on one side of the tub instead.
- Don't put towels, rugs or other linty items in the same load with dark or synthetic items that pick up lint.

HANDWASHING

- Use a small plastic bucket when you need to soak items for any length of time. It frees up the sink for the rest of the family to use.
- Wash small delicate items by putting them in a large jar filled with warm, mild soapy water and shake gently.
- If you put too much soap in the sink and the suds seem to take forever to go down the drain, sprinkle a little salt on them. They'll disappear in seconds. **wd**