

FCE Clothing Training 2014

“How to Wash and Whiten Yellowed Pillows”

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Objectives:

Participants will learn why pillows turn yellow, how to care for pillows and pillow cases, and how to wash, whiten and dry one’s pillows.

Materials needed:

Recipe handout for making the whitening solution, example of a yellow pillow and example of a pillow that has been whitened with the solution, and a tennis ball.

Lesson:



How many of you have experienced your pillows becoming yellow over time? This seems to be a very common happening in our homes today.

One of the most common reasons why pillows can turn yellow is sweat. Even when you’re sleeping, your body continues to sweat in order to stay at a comfortable temperature. Depending on the type of fabric your pillowcase is made from, sweat can seep through the fabric. As the sweat dries, it can leave a yellow stain on the pillow. Even if one uses pillow covers underneath the pillow cases, the yellowing can still occur.

How many have tossed a pillow when the yellowing looked bad and purchased a new one? Probably all of us in this room today have done this and the pillow was still perfectly good.

What is the suggested care for pillows and pillow cases?

Pillows should be washed at least twice a year. Often times we only wash pillows when something has been spilled on them. Some of the most common stains on pillows come from chemicals. These chemicals might come from hair and skin products, such as acne lotions or toothpaste that contains oxidizing agents, and may discolor colored sheets and pillow cases.

When using such products, it's safest to sleep on white linens. Always save the care label with every piece of bed linen whether its sheets, or pillows. Some of the tags are sewn into the hems of the pillow cases or the pillow. Always pre-wash your linens before the first use. Separate the



linens from other items in the wash, especially those containing polyester, which tend to create pilling. Avoid overloading the washing machine, which can cause fibers to break down from excessive abrasion and agitation. Use a mild detergent without added bleach. Do not pour detergent directly on textiles. Rather add it to the water as the wash tub fills or dilute the detergent with water, then add linens.

Some other suggestions regarding pillow cases are:

- If you find pillow cases that you particularly love, buy a few extras. Pillow cases wear out more quickly than sheets.
- Iron pillowcases for that fresh, crisp look.
- Change pillowcases at least twice a week in normal climates, more often in hot and humid regions.

How to wash and whiten your pillows?

To make the Laundry Whitening Solution:

Mix together:

HOT HOT HOT water

1 cup of laundry detergent

1 cup powdered dishwasher detergent

1 cup bleach (if you are opposed to chlorine bleach the one could try a natural bleach alternative)

½ cup of borax



First, check the care label to confirm that your pillow (down or synthetic) can be machine washed. Most of these pillows can be washed. Remove the pillow case and any pillow protector. Fill the washing machine about 1/3 full with HOT water, or even add a couple of pans full of boiling water to the washing machine. Add all the ingredients in the Laundry Whitening Solution, or if you are just washing your pillows, add your detergent now. Start the machine and allow it to agitate for a few minutes to make sure all the detergent dissolves before adding the pillows. Once the detergent is dissolved, add the pillows and then allow the washer to fill the rest of the way with HOT water. Try washing two pillows at a time because it will help balance the load when it comes time for the spin cycle. Agitate the pillows for several minutes, then turn the pillows OVER to allow the top side to get the full effect of agitating in the HOT

water. Agitate for several minutes more. Put your machine on the 2nd rinse cycle or just run it through twice manually.



When drying down and feather pillows, use the air cycle. For synthetics, use the low heat setting. Place the pillows in the dryer, add a couple of tennis balls covered in clean socks to FLUFF the pillows as they tumble dry. If it's a nice day, one could also set them outside in the sun to dry.

As you take those pillows out of the dryer, I think most people would agree that those pillows look about a thousand times better. In summary, by making this whitening solution and following the directions, one can sleep on white pillows, and save money on purchasing new pillows in the meantime.

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