

In a recent article that I read in the Port St. Lucie newspaper stated that white shirts are the new fashion trend for the upcoming season. The white shirts will be used for business wear, casual, dress and formal wear. There are important things that you should know in order to keep your white fabrics white.

IMPORTANT FACTS

White is actually a color. Manufacturers bleach fabrics white and impregnate it with a fluorescent dye. Fluorescent dyes are optical brightness that converts invisible ultra-violet light to visible light. Therefore the white fabrics reflect additional brightness. The following procedures and recommendations should be followed when washing white fabrics.

- (1) Do not use excessive detergent. Detergent which is left in the fabric will dull the fabric.**
- (2) When using any bleach use less rather than more. Using too much bleach will cause white fabrics to yellow. When too much household bleach is used on white cotton shirts the fabric can actually deteriorate.**
- (3) Neutralize bleach after use. Household bleach or sodium hypochlorite does not rinse out of fabrics. It requires the use of household vinegar in the rinse water. The vinegar will remove the last residue of bleach by an acceleration process.**
- (4) Neutralize all color safe bleaches which are alkaline in nature. If these bleaches are not neutralized the fabric will turn yellow especially when pressed. Use white distilled vinegar in the rinse water for neutralizing.**
- (5) Line-dry-Do not hang white fabrics out in the sun to dry. The rays of the sun can over oxidize the fabric causing it to yellow.**
- (6) Bluing-You can obtain some bluing in the supermarket . One brand that is sold is called Mrs. Stewart's. A small of bluing used in the rinse water will increase the whiteness of a white fabric. Bluing creates an optical illusion by hiding yellowing and graying. Follow manufacturers instructions on amounts to use.**
- (7) Over-night bleaching-Increase the whiteness of a fabric by soaking garments in a color safe bleach. Color safe bleaches contain sodium percarbonate or sodium perborate which is ideal for over-night bleaching. Do not use regular household bleach or sodium hypochlorite. Put 2 ounces of a color safe bleach per gallon of warm water in a plastic pail. Add a little detergent to this mixture and then immerse garment. Cover garment with a towel so it remains constantly wet and submerged in the water. Let garment soak over-night and then rinse in plain water followed by water containing white distilled vinegar. (1 ounce per gallon of water). Then wash garment in a routine manner.**

(2)

STORAGE

Do not store white garments in a plastic bag. A plastic bag traps air causing fabrics to oxidize and yellow. Do not store garments in a soiled or dirty condition. Soil and staining sets up ideal conditions for oxidization and yellowing.