

PREVENTING DYE LOSS AND DYE BLEEDING IN WASHING (66)

The dye on many fabrics may bleed, crock off when rubbed or transfer dye when washed due to several reasons. The manufacturer may have failed to properly set the dye or there was poor penetration of the dye into the fabric. There are several steps you can take to prevent or reduce the incidence of these dye problems occurring.

RECOGNIZING PROBLEMS

There are some fabrics that are dyed with fast dyes or dyes that do not bleed. Polyesters, nylons and acrylics possess the most stable dyes. Cottons, linens, wools, rayons and silks often possess dyes that are unstable.

DYE SETTING AGENTS

When washing a dark load you can add one of the following dye setting agents.

- (1) Vinegar-is a mild acid that can effectively be used to set dyes. Add white distilled vinegar in the washing machine basket with your normal mild detergent. Use 1 ounce of vinegar per gallon of water.
- (2) Salt-is also a good dye setting agent. Use one tablespoon of salt per gallon of water in your washing machine. Do not use salt as a dye setting agent when washing silks.

BLUING

When you add a little bluing to your washing machine on dark loads it acts as a re-dyeing agent. I recommend using this especially when washing new jeans and dark colored fabrics. You can use Martha Stewart's Bluing which can be purchased at most supermarkets.

CLASSIFICATION

This means that it is important to assort garments and fabrics correctly as to color. Putting even one dark colored rayon or spandex blended fabric in a light colored load can cause dye transfer onto all the light colored fabrics. The most notorious dye bleeders are reds, purples and black fabrics. Dark garments with a white trim should be washed separately by hand and dark colored denims should be turned inside out to prevent color loss from rubbing and friction.

PROPER WASHING

When washing garments that may bleed it is best to underload the washing machine and use a high water level. This creates less friction and rubbing on the fabric.

Avoid using hot water as this will increase the possibility of dye bleeding and color loss. Do not add any color safe bleaches to a colored load.

CORRECTING BLEEDING

If a white garment becomes stained with dye you can use the following procedure for correction.

- (1) Put a color safe bleach in a pail of warm water. Add 2 ounces of a color safe bleach per gallon of water.**
- (2) Add a few ounces of a mild detergent.**
- (3) Soak overnight.**
- (4) Re-wash using vinegar and a mild detergent.**