

RUST STAINS

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Rust is iron oxide that occurs when metallic objects contact oxygen and water. The metallic object then stains fabrics or surfaces that it has contact with. Sometimes rust can be very obvious such as from a metal buckle, snap or zipper. A form of rust can also occur from a locket or necklace producing a dark stain on the front of a blouse or dress. The stain very often looks like an oil stain but is not removable with ordinary spotting agents. It should also be noted that not all zippers, clamps or other metallic ornaments will rust if the manufacturer properly coated the ornament. There are several home remedies you can use to remove rust as well as agents found in retail stores.

Vinegar and salt-This can be an effective rust removal agent. Vinegar is a form of acetic acid and combines with the salt (sodium chloride) to produce a mild solution of a rust removing acid. This can also be accomplished by using lemon juice and salt.

OXALIC ACID

This is an acid that is used by professional drycleaners to remove rust. This can be obtained from chemical suppliers and some pharmacies. Home Depot sells a product called "Rustaid" which contains oxalic acid. It is the same product that is used by professional drycleaners. When applying oxalic acid to a colored fabric it should be tested for color safety on an unexposed area. Use a q-tip to apply to a stain. Wait a few minutes and rinse off.

RUST REMOVING AGENTS THAT REQUIRE CAUTION

There are some rust removing agents sold in supermarkets that contain sodium hydrosulphate and sodium bisulphate. Some of these products are called "Iron Out" and "Yellow Out". These agents are extremely hazardous to the color on most fabrics. They should only be used on white fabrics. Sodium hydrosulphate and sodium bisulphate are used by professional drycleaners as a stripping agent to remove dye and stains containing dye. It is also used as an antichlor to counteract the effects of household bleach (sodium hypochlorite). For example, if household bleach makes contact with a wool or silk it will cause a yellow discoloration. Using sodium hydrosulphate and sodium bisulphate can often neutralize the effects of the discoloration.