

Fresh as a Daisy Laundry Stain-Removal Chart

Simple, inexpensive, natural supplies for stain removal are effective in removing stains without the indoor air pollution that costly, toxic products produce. Consider the following items for your laundry cabinet (many are also good for general cleaning).

3-percent Hydrogen Peroxide - Acts as a mild bleach and anti-bacterial. Pretest for color-fastness.

Baking Soda - Acts as a mild bleach and gentle abrasive; neutralizes acid-based stains.

Citrus Solvents - All-purpose stain removal; apply before laundering. (Harmful to cats.)

Club Soda - Spray or pour on some fresh stains immediately. Active ingredient is sodium citrate. Check for this on ingredients label at time of purchase.

Cornmeal - Use for absorbing oily, thick messy stains.

Dishwashing Liquid and Hydrogen Peroxide - Mix these together (1/2 teaspoon dishwashing detergent to 16 ounces peroxide). Spray on or soak fabric to remove red wine, urine, fruit stains.

Enzymes - Buy stain-removing enzyme tablets at health food stores. Grind tablet and mix with water to make a paste and cover the stain (for carbohydrate stains).

Freezer - Freeze fabric to harden gum, and candle wax then scrape off with a blunt knife.

Glycerin - Use to soften old, hardened stains. (Find glycerin in the drug store.)

Laundry Detergents - Powdered detergents for oil-based stains, like lipstick, make-up; liquid detergents for most other stains.

Lemon Juice - Acts as a mild bleach and neutralizer for alkaline stains. Pretest for color-fastness.

Rags - Use cotton and linen rags for blotting up stains which work best to absorb moisture.

Salt - Kills sweat bacteria, absorbs liquids, helps break down greasy stains and works as a mild abrasive.

Soap - Use liquid, cake soap or flakes for general stains, except fruit stains. Choose naturally-fragranced soaps.

Sodium perborate - Use powdered oxygen bleach such as "OxyClean for general stains. Use hot water to dissolve powder.

Spray Bottles - Fill and label spray bottles with liquids such as vinegar and hydrogen peroxide. Spray directly on stains.

Sunlight - It's great for whites. Direct sun whitens and sanitizes.

Toothbrush - Use to tamp stains lightly to aid in stain removal. Avoid scrubbing as this damages fabrics.

Washing Soda - Use for heavy-duty stain removal; make a paste with water and apply to stain. Leave for a few hours in a plastic bag to keep paste moist.

Water - Soak blood stains in cold water, use boiling water to sterilize contaminated clothing (kills bacteria and viruses also).

White Distilled Vinegar - Effective for trouble stains, such as tea and coffee; vinegar also deodorizes.

