

## **How To... Do Your Laundry**

### **Why you should learn this:**

It is very important to learn how to do your own laundry. At some point in your life, you will be solely responsible for this task, as other people will stop doing it for you. Although you can probably go for a decent amount of time without washing your clothes, eventually you will run out. If you have to start wearing dirty clothes, people *will* notice.

### **How To:**

1. Collect all of your dirty clothes – a basket or some sort of laundry bag is helpful for this step.
2. Bring the clothes as well as laundry detergent to wherever your washing machine is located.
3. Empty the pockets of the clothes, remove any pins, belts etc that might be attached.
4. If any of your clothes have stains of them that you think need to be treated, use a tool such as a “stain stick” and treat appropriately before putting the item in the wash.
5. Separate your clothes in to “lights,” “darks,” and “whites.” This will make a difference in the end, in case any of the colors bleed, you don’t want to end up with a shirt that used to be white suddenly coming out of the wash a pinkish color.
6. Put one of your piles in to the washer, make sure you don’t over load it, don’t stuff or cram the clothes in.
7. Select the cycle and water temperature you would like to use. Cycles will vary by machine, but are generally explained on the washer.
  - a. In general, hot water works best for the “whites” category and anything that is very dirty.
  - b. Cold water works well with “darks” and anything bright that might bleed in the wash.
  - c. If all else fails, just use warm water – this works best for everything else.
8. Press the start button
9. Add appropriate amount of detergent (check the product’s label).
10. Keep track of how long your clothes have been in the washer – remove them as soon as possible after they are done. The longer they stay in the washer, the more wrinkled they will become.
11. Take the clothes out of the washer and move them to either the dryer or a drying rack. Check the labels on the clothes to determine where they should be placed. Some items, especially ones made out of wool can not go in the dryer, or they will shrink. Be careful.
12. Make sure the lint tray is empty, an excess amount can be a fire hazard, and get lint all over your clothes.
13. Insert a dryer sheet.
14. Start the dryer – again, look at the cycles noted on the machine and the labels of the clothes. Some items will say “tumble dry low” or something of the sort. Make sure you follow what these labels say.
15. At the end of the cycle, remove your clothing from the dryer, fold and put away.