

MONEYWISE

VALUING PEOPLE. VALUING MONEY.

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: CARING FOR YOUR CLOTHING CAN SAVE YOU MONEY

Buying clothing that is easy to care for can save money and time in the long run. Here are a few money-saving tips to consider to extend the life of your clothes.

START WITH QUALITY BASICS

Today's market provides inexpensive clothing that is often cheaply made with lower quality materials. These items can serve their purpose, but don't be tempted to purchase the \$3 T-shirts in every color. Sometimes we're better off buying fewer, higher priced T-shirts that will last longer. Shopping at second-hand stores is a good way to save money on well-made clothing because it's easy to spot items that have held up after repeated wearing and washing.

APPLIANCE CHECKUP

If you own your washer and dryer, refer to the owner's manual for tips on how to keep them in good, working order. For maximum efficiency, don't overload the washer, and keep the dryer filter and vent free from lint. You may be tempted to dry clothes on a high temperature so they dry faster, but the heat can damage clothing. Instead, use a lower temperature and hang a few items to dry while they are still damp. This can cut down on wrinkles, too!



TREAT STAINS TODAY

Stains that have set in for several days are harder to remove. So the sooner you treat a stain, the better. Effective treatment methods depend on the type of stain. For example, oily stains are best removed with detergent and hot water. Refer to the American Cleaning Institute's stain guide at <https://www.cleaninginstitute.org/cleaning-tips/clothes/stain-removal-guide> for more information on how to treat specific stains.



WHEN POSSIBLE, TRY TO FOLLOW THE ITEM'S CARE LABEL.



MEND BEFORE YOU WASH

Extend the life of your clothing by replacing lost buttons, stitching loose seams, or applying patches or decorative stitching over holes. It's best to mend as soon as you notice holes in clothing because washing can make holes larger. Additionally, zipping zippers and unbuttoning buttons before laundering prevents unnecessary fabric abrasion and stress.

SORTING SAVVY

A lot of the “wear and tear” on clothing can occur in the wash. Following care labels and sorting your laundry by color, soil level, and fabric type (and washing these in separate loads) is recommended for best results. Sorting this way helps clothing look newer longer by helping the sensors in the washer clean effectively. It also helps the dryer run most efficiently, which is gentler on your clothing and can save on energy costs. When possible, try to follow the item's care label.

LIMIT LAUNDRY PRODUCTS

Keep it simple with a quality liquid detergent, a basic stain removal spray, and powdered oxygen bleach. Use according to the directions. Detergent pods may seem convenient, but they are usually more

expensive per load, and you're not able to control the dosage. Using a little bit of white vinegar – in place of fabric softener – is an economical way to keep your clothes fresh.

COLD WATER CAUTIONS

Yes, washing everything in cold water may save on electricity, but cold water does not clean everything effectively. Although there are laundry detergents that claim they are formulated to clean in cold water, it's important to note this refers to water that is between 60 degrees F and 80 degrees F. Sometimes our “cold water” washer setting is below 60 degrees F – especially in the winter. In this case, a cold-water setting might not thoroughly clean heavily soiled items.

CHANGE OR WEAR MORE THAN ONCE

Don't just toss your clothes on the floor at the end of the day. Change out of your “nicer” clothes when doing chores or just hanging out at home. You can wear many of your items several times between launderings. Hang up or neatly set aside clothing you can wear again.

RESOURCES

Cleaning Tips. <https://www.cleaninginstitute.org/cleaning-tips/clean-clothes>

Clothing Repair. <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/sites/fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/files/ct-mmb-147.pdf>

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