



# CARE GUIDE

Modernised instructions for everyday care labels that are frequently misunderstood: Dry Clean Only, No Tumble Dry, Hand Wash Only and temperature recommendations.

Disclaimer: This care guide is created by AEG, explaining the Care Label Project's ambition to educate on and challenge our care habits. The Care Label Project's own care label "Don't Overwash" is not a care label symbol qualified by Ginetex.



## DRY CLEAN ONLY

**55%** USE DRY CLEAN SERVICES FROM TIME TO TIME, BUT ONLY HALF OF THEM ARE SATISFIED<sup>(1)</sup>

Dry Clean Only is put on our most delicate fabrics and garments. While it might get your clothes clean, it's a chemical-heavy process that's both hard on the garment and the environment. Today, one out of three avoid purchasing garments labeled Dry Clean Only because of the hassle. But thanks to recent advancements in washing technology and laundry detergents, it's now possible to use gentler washing cycles, lower temperatures and drying settings to wash some of your Dry Clean Only garments directly in the machine.

Some garments, however, are Dry Clean Only for a reason. They contain details or materials that could change colour or become misshapen if washed at home. Luckily, the chemicals are not your only option; many dry cleaners have started using greener methods such as wet cleaning and carbon dioxide solvents. So, if you have to visit the dry cleaner, make sure to pick one that is environmentally friendly.

### **How can I trust that I won't ruin my Dry Clean Only items by washing them myself?**

Thanks to recent advancements in washing technology and laundry detergents, it's now possible to use gentler washing cycles, lower temperatures and drying settings to wash even some Dry Clean Only garments directly in the machine without ruining them.

### **How can I know which Dry Clean Only clothes I can wash at home?**

Some Dry Clean Only items can be washed at home in a modern washing machine, silk blouses and wool coats for example. However, if the item is made of a very delicate material such as cashmere, fur, sequins or has sewn on pearls and beads it may need to be washed at the dry cleaners.

## TIPS

- : Dry cleaning is a chemical-heavy process, washing at home is gentler on both the environment and the garment.
- : Some Dry Clean Only items can be washed at home using a modern washing machine.
- : Try to steam refresh your clothes to keep them fresh longer in between washes. Doing this, you'll avoid unnecessary

(1) Consumer laundry habits, Ipsos MORI 2016



## DO NOT TUMBLE DRY

**70%** INHERIT THEIR CARE HABITS FROM THEIR PARENTS <sup>(1)</sup>

This care label is often seen as an enforcing instruction leading people to air drying instead. While it's correct for some garments, a lot of sensitive materials such as outdoor and water repellent materials will last longer if they are tumble dried in the right cycle. With most modern technology you can even dry delicate fabrics like silk and wool. Look for tumble dryers marked with the Woolmark certification which let you dry even your finest wool with confidence.

### **Isn't it gentler on clothes to air dry them, than to tumble dry?**

Not necessarily, for instance outdoor jackets can start to lose their water repellency capabilities over time. By tumble drying these garments, the water repellency is reactivated by the hot air and the garments last longer.

### **What should I consider when tumble drying?**

When overfilling the machine, your clothes could easily become tangled, while underfilling is wasting energy, and therefore money. It's also better to use automatic programs rather than timed cycles since the machine can avoid shrinkage by sensing the perfect moisture level in your fabrics.

### **TIPS**

- : Modern tumble drying is very sophisticated and gentle on your clothes.
- : Outdoor wear retains water repellent qualities better when being tumble dried rather than air dried.
- : Even delicate fabrics such as wool, silk and lace can be tumble dried, using the right technology.

(1) Consumer laundry habits, Ipsos MORI 2016



## 30 DEGREES

**THE AVERAGE** LAUNDRY WASHING TEMPERATURE ACROSS EUROPE IS 41°C<sup>(2)</sup>

What most of us don't know is that the temperature labels represent the maximum washing temperature, not the recommended one. Washing at lower temperatures will extend the life of your garments, making them feel new and fresh longer. A lower temperature is also better for your electricity bill - going from 40 to 30 degrees for example can save up to 60% of the energy consumption.

### **If I wash my clothes in lower temperatures will they still get thoroughly clean?**

Yes, with modern technology this is now possible. If you use a modern machine that premixes detergents with water, and also softens it, your clothes get a more thorough clean – even on lower temperatures. Our recommendation is to use 30°C as the standard temperature instead of 40°C, unless the clothes are in close contact with the body or very dirty. This even works for modern workout clothes, that are designed to get clean even on lower temperatures to last longer.

### **Why is it better to wash in lower temperatures?**

Washing in lower temperatures saves a lot of energy and causes less strain on clothes, making them last longer.

### **TIPS**

- : Temperature labels represent the maximum washing temperature allowed, but not always the best recommendation.
- : Use 30°C as the standard temperature instead of 40°C to make your clothes last longer and to save energy.
- : Lower temperature causes less strain on both clothes and the environment.
- : Only underwear, sportswear, bath towels and bed linen need to be washed in higher temperatures.
- : Most modern workout clothes are designed to get clean even on lower temperatures to last longer.

(2) [www.iprefer30.eu](http://www.iprefer30.eu)



## IRONING

**82% ALWAYS** OR AT LEAST SOMETIMES FOLLOW THE CARE LABEL INSTRUCTION WHEN IRONING.<sup>(1)</sup>

Not all garments that have an ironing instruction needs ironing. Instead use the steam program on your dryer to cut down on your ironing time. For the clothes you actually need to iron, start with the garments that require the lowest temperature. This will save you energy, since your iron heats up faster than it can cool down.

When ironing linen use higher temperatures and press when damp. With silk it's better to use a lower temperature iron and preferably a steam function. Don't iron stained or soiled clothes because it will only set stains and drive soil deeper into the fabric.

### **How do I know if a garment would benefit from steaming instead of ironing?**

For sensitive fabrics like silk, or for garments with details like buttons, zippers, etc it is often easier and gentler to use the steam program instead of an iron. If you are using an iron on these type of garments, make sure not to press too hard on the details and use the setting recommended in the care label. Tip: when ironing is needed, the steam can make it easier to reduce wrinkles.

### **TIPS**

- : Don't iron stained or soiled clothes because it will only set stains and drive soil deeper into the fabric.
- : When ironing linen, use higher temperatures and press when damp.
- : All items marked ironing do not need to be ironed, steaming is more gentle on the fabric.
- : For the longevity of your garments, iron only when necessary. Steam technology allows you to reduce wrinkles by up to a third by adding steam at the end of the wash cycle.
- : Steaming clothes relaxes the textile fibres and improves the feeling of the garment.

(1) Consumer laundry habits, Ipsos MORI 2016



## HAND WASH ONLY

**EXTENDING THE LIFE OF CLOTHING** BY AN EXTRA NINE MONTHS WOULD REDUCE CARBON, WASTE AND WATER FOOTPRINTS BY AROUND 20-30% EACH.<sup>(2)</sup>

Many think that hand washing is the gentlest way to clean a delicate garment. This is what we have been taught by our parents and what the care label indicate. But today, with modern machines, this is no longer the case.

Hand washing consumes both time and water, and tends to stress the fibres. When you're washing by hand and rub the garment against itself, you are usually rougher than you think. Instead, choose a gentle cycle with lower washing temperatures on your washer and you'll get the job done without mistreating your garment. In fact, as many as 75% of us hand wash, but only one quarter are satisfied with the result.

### **How can a machine wash be more gentle than washing by hand?**

When you're washing by hand and rub the garment against itself, you are usually rougher than you think. Most garments marked hand wash only will benefit from being washed on a gentle cycle in a modern machine, instead of being exposed to old school hand washing that stresses the fibres.

### **TIPS**

- : Using a gentle cycle can be gentler on fibres than hand washing.
- : Only 25% of the people who hand wash are satisfied with the result. (Source: Consumer laundry habits, Ipsos MORI 2016)
- : Using a gentle cycle instead of hand washing saves time.
- : Buying a new appliance? Look for dedicated silk or hand wash cycles and the highest Woolmark certification.

(2) [www.wrap.org.uk/clothing\\_survey](http://www.wrap.org.uk/clothing_survey), WRAP Valuing our clothes

# CARE GUIDE FOR YOUR MOST COMMON FABRICS

## **COTTON**

Do not wash cotton too hot. Start using 30°C as your standard washing temperature instead of 40°C to save energy and be gentler on your clothes.

## **SILK**

Wash on gentle cycles, and steam to reduce wrinkles.

## **WOOL COAT**

Wash and tumble dry on gentle wool cycles.\*

## **KNITTED WOOL**

Wash and tumble dry on gentle wool cycles.\*

## **JEANS**

Wash on lower temperatures to maintain colour and shape. If jeans are stretched out, a quick tumble in the dryer can help them regain their shape. Make sure to tumble dry with jeans cycle.

\*on Woolmark certified machines