

# FACTS for consumers



By Bernetta Kahabka  
Extension Specialist in Clothing



## DURABLE PRESS with SOIL RELEASE



**D**urable press clothes appeal to consumers because they remain fresh looking and wrinkle-resistant during wear. They retain their smooth look and sharp pleats and creases when properly laundered.

In durable press clothes, check for:

**SMOOTHNESS** — no set-in wrinkles or packaging wrinkles

**COLOR** — no streaks or blotches of color

**FLAT SEAMS and DETAILS** — puckered stitching lines will appear even more so after laundering

**NO ODOR** — odor indicates excess resin or improper curing of finish

**FIBER CONTENT** — at least 50% polyester fiber to give enough strength to the fabric

**FIT** — new seam lines and creases will never be as permanent as the old so alterations are a problem.

During wear and use you may find that durable press clothes:

- Are warm because fabric is non-absorbent.
- Irritate the skin. (If so, wash or dryclean *new* durable press clothes.)
- Have an odor because of excess chemical resin left in the fabric.
- Wear out faster than similar nondurable press clothing.
- May need touch-up ironing depending upon the quality of fabric and finish and laundry procedures used.

And above all:

Soiling and staining are major concerns.

Nevertheless, you may like the service and convenience of durable press clothing well enough to cope with the soiling and staining problems.

### LAUNDERING DURABLE PRESS

Durable press clothing is used for much general wear, and as such is worn often — perhaps too many times — before it is laundered. Durable press finishes tend to pick up soil from the air and from contact with the wearer. Is washing sometimes postponed because the clothes tend to “look” fresh for a longer time?

Soil can also be picked up and redeposited on clothes *during* the laundry process. Durable press finishes are especially susceptible to oily soiling. If oily soil is not removed during laundering it tends to build up on a fabric and cause graying or a grimy look, especially in areas like collars.

### SOIL RELEASE

The soil release finish on durable press is designed to enable such clothing to *release soil*, release stains, and prevent soil from redepositing during laundering. Soil release is an aid, but proper laundering helps to make its promises come true.

### TREAT STAINS BEFORE WASHING and DRYING

- The older the stain the more difficult to remove.
- Sponge oily stains with a safe cleaning fluid before laundering.
- Sponge grimy collars and cuffs with a full strength detergent solution *before* laundering.
- Sponge aged stains with a full strength detergent solution *for an hour or more before* laundering.

## TODAY'S LAUNDERING

Today's laundering has a two-fold purpose:

1. Getting clothes CLEAN (free from soil).
2. Keeping their original APPEARANCE (unwrinkled fabric, sharp pleats and creases).

Can we expect the maximum of both objectives in the same laundering process? Most often a compromise has to be made.

## CUE FOR CONSUMERS

*There is often a "credibility gap" between the promotion (advertising) and the performance (what really happens) of any new product or fabric treatment. A period of trial, in which the consumer often takes part, precedes product improvement and the best use to which it is finally adapted. When a new development comes along, consumers may choose to "try it and see" or "wait and see." Individual and family use and care provide the final test and evaluation of a clothing product.*

## LAUNDRY METHOD CHOICES — WHICH DO YOU CHOOSE?

### PRE-SOAK

Special enzyme-type pre-soak and detergent laundry products will remove some protein, starch, and fat stains that would not be removed by regular detergents and bleach. Such laundry aids will whiten some clothes. They seem to be more effective on all-cotton fabrics.

**(BUT)** *Overnight soaking and even repeated soaking with enzyme-active products may be necessary. Is this pattern consistent with keeping laundry within reasonable personal time and energy limits? Regular detergents and bleach will be just as effective as enzyme-type products with some stains.*

### HOT WATER

Heavily soiled clothes need hot water to come clean. Hot water is said to release oily stains more effectively.

**(BUT)** *Hot water may spread a large, heavy oil stain further into the fabric and the heat may actually set the stain. Sponging the oil stain with a safe cleaning fluid could be done first. Hot water may put wash wrinkles into the fabric.*

### SHORT WASH PERIOD

A short wash period (usually no more than 5 minutes) with slow agitation prevents wash wrinkles and cleans sufficiently if durable press clothes are washed frequently.

**(BUT)** *Heavily soiled clothes may require a longer wash period at the expense of greater wrinkling.*

### SEPARATE LOADS

Washing white clothes in separate loads, similar colors together, similar degrees of soiling together prevents transfer of color, lint, and soil from one article to others.

**(BUT)** *The family wash normally handles clothes collectively to some extent, but care instructions often assume individual handling of garments.*

### SMALLER LOADS

Small washer and dryer loads prevent wrinkling. Don't overcrowd the washer or dryer so that clothes are compressed too much.

**(BUT)** *Time, energy, money, and equipment factors are important in determining how many different washer and dryer loads are realistic for you.*

### SOIL RELEASE DURABLE PRESS

clothes offer convenience, not a guaranteed cure-all for laundry problems. The fabric, the kind of stain and soil, and the length of time the stain has been on a fabric also influence the effectiveness of SOIL RELEASE on DURABLE PRESS. Your satisfaction depends upon the quality of the fabric and finish

which you can't easily evaluate when you buy durable press clothes. It also depends on clothing care and laundering procedures which must balance:

THE RESULTS YOU WANT  
with the  
COMMITMENT YOU CAN AND SHOULD GIVE  
TO CLOTHING CARE