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Eco Laundry 101: How to Wash Clothes Naturally

Natural Stain Remover, Laundry Soap, Fabric Softener, and More!



Have you ever taken stock of your normal laundry system? Is it full of toxic chemicals that poison the planet and endanger the health of your family? If you don't know how to tell eco laundry products from the toxic ones, read on to discover our guide to natural laundry soaps, stain removers, and more!

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What Eco Laundry Products Should NOT Contain

Many brands available at the local grocery store are full of chemicals that disrupt normal endocrine system function; contribute to diseases like cancer, immune system dysfunction, or asthma; and add a big burden to the planet by poisoning rivers, lakes, and oceans. So start by knowing how to recognize the not-so-green laundry soaps and fabric softeners because of the toxic ingredients they contain.



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- **No bleach!** Chlorine bleach (aka sodium hypochlorite) is bad on so many levels we don't have enough space to tell you about them all, but the primary evil is how it contributes to dioxin formation—one of the most dangerous creations of humanity! (1) Optical brighteners like benzene are also bad. (2)
- **Quit washing with surfactants, phosphates and pesticides:** Surfactants like alkylphenol ethoxylates (APEs) (3) and phosphates. (4) Also cut out pesticides—yes, some laundry detergents contain them! (5)
- **Avoid toxic fabric softening chemicals and fragrances!** These

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- **Avoid toxic fabric softening chemicals and fragrances:** These include benzyl acetate, A-Terpineol, and Chloroform. (6) And stay away from softeners that are fragranced as these will only pollute your indoor air.
- **Cut out stain remover toxins:** Stay away from benzene, toluene, xylene, methylene chloride, monoethanolamine, parabens, and sodium hypochlorite (bleach). (7)

As always, if there's no ingredient list on the packaging, put it back on the shelf until you can confirm (by emailing or phoning the manufacturer) what it's made of. Opt instead for an eco laundry option that includes a complete list of ingredients.

And don't forget the animals in your green routine! Seek out laundry solutions that are kind to non-human creatures of our planet, too by choosing products with these logos:



Leaping Bunny Logo



Certified Vegan Logo

How to Choose Natural Laundry Soap and Natural Fabric Softener

Here's a guide to helping you choose eco laundry products or making your own for a much greener wash-up routine.



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1. **Whiten naturally:** You can use simple things like lemon juice, hydrogen peroxide, borax, and the sun to naturally whiten your laundry. Eco-friendly

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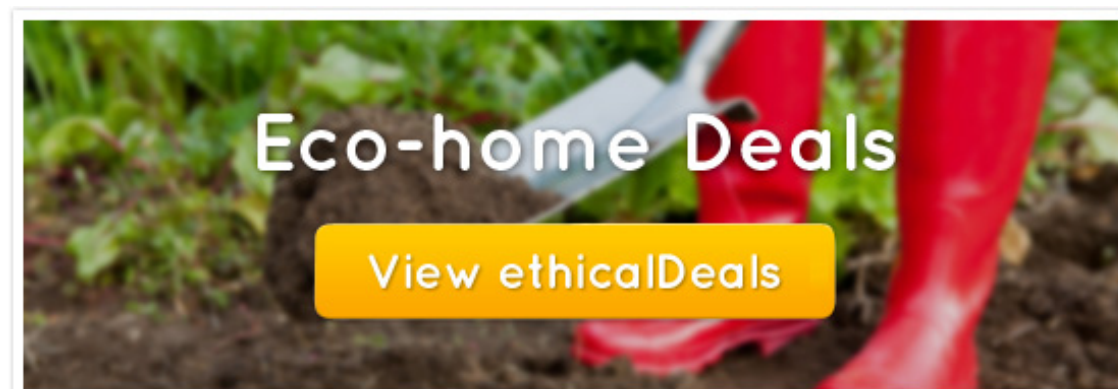
commercial whiteners are also available.

2. **Wash naturally:** Choose natural laundry detergents like [soap nuts](#) or commercially-made brands free of the toxins listed above. Or go for your own DIY laundry detergent using borax, washing soda and essential oils for an inexpensive, eco-friendly way to launder your clothes. (8)
3. **Remove stains naturally:** Try making your own homemade stain removers with club soda, corn starch, or hydrogen peroxide, or buy natural stain removers that eschew the ingredients you should avoid. (9)
4. **Soften naturally:** Consider using a super simple recipe to make your own fabric softener with vinegar, baking soda, and essential oils, or look for eco-friendly fabric softeners made with natural ingredients. (10)

Not only will these eco laundry tips help you protect the planet and your family, they'll save you money and will probably extend the life of your clothes, too!

Limited Time Offer!

Use sudsy berries to wash your clothes naturally with this week's ethicalDeal: **\$15 for 2 x 500g bags of eco-friendly, natural laundry soap nuts - does 300-400 laundry loads!** from Blum Distribution. Conveniently delivered to your door via Canada Post. Special offer only available until September 13, 2013. Get it before it's gone!



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About the author:

Maryruth has been seeking the keys to environmental justice—both at home and at work—for over a decade. Growing up adjacent to wild spaces, Maryruth developed a healthy respect (and whimsical appreciation) for things non-human, but her practical mind constantly draws her down to earth to ponder tangible solutions to complex eco-problems. With interests that range from green living to green business, sustainable building designs to organic gardening practices, ecosystem restoration to environmental health, Maryruth has been exploring and writing about earth-matters for most of her life. Of special interest is the subject of ecopsychology and the role the natural world plays in the long-term health and well-being of humanity. You can learn more about Maryruth's work by [visiting her site](#).

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