

Stain Removal ~ House and Home

Ballpoint pen / ink

For cotton and polyester: Apply glycerin to stain and let sit 10 minutes, then treat with gentle liquid laundry detergent, such as Ivory Snow, and water. Rub until suds form, then rinse. Machine wash in warm water.

For washable silk and wool: Same as cotton and polyester, but do not rinse—dab water until suds are gone. Take to a dry cleaner if stain remains.

Candle Wax

For cotton and polyester: Scrape off hardened wax with a dull knife. Stretch fabric over a bowl. Carefully pour boiling or very hot water over the stain from a height of about one foot. Air dry. If stain remains, place garment stain-side down on an old towel. Place another towel on top. Gently press a warm—not hot—iron over the towel. Wax residue should melt and transfer to bottom towel.

For washable silk and wool: Scrape off hardened wax with a dull knife. Place garment stain-side down on an old towel. Place another towel on top. Gently press a warm—not hot—iron over the towel. Wax residue should melt and transfer to bottom towel.

Chalk

For cotton and polyester: Shake or gently vacuum garment to remove loose particles and chalk dust. Place garment stain-side down on an old towel or paper towels. Gently dab rubbing alcohol on the back of the stain. Chalk residue should transfer onto bottom towel. If stain persists, pre-treat with liquid dish soap (such as Dawn) and machine wash according to garment care label.

For washable silk and wool: Shake or gently vacuum garment to remove loose particles and chalk dust. Apply a gentle liquid laundry detergent, such as Ivory Snow, and let sit 10 minutes. Apply small amount of water and rub until suds form. Flush with cool water and air dry. If stain persists, take garment to a dry cleaner.

Crayon

For cotton and polyester: Place the garment stain-side down on a towel. Spray the back of the stain with WD-40. After five minutes, flip over and spray front of stain. Rinse in cold water. Rub liquid dish soap, such as Dawn, into stain and rinse again. If stain persists, apply a commercial stain-remover appropriate for the fabric. Machine wash with ½ cup baking soda along with usual detergent.

For washable silk and wool: Do not attempt to clean at home. Take to a dry cleaner.

Gasoline

For cotton and polyester: Do not put items stained with gasoline or other flammable materials into a washing machine. Check washing machine warning labels (usually located inside the lid) for instructions specific for your washing machine. If stain is still wet, cover with baking soda to absorb moisture and odor. Brush off excess. Rinse the garment in cold water to dilute the stain. Rub liquid dish soap, such as Dawn, into the stain. Mix a solution of ½ cup liquid laundry detergent with bleach alternative per 1 gallon of water in a plastic bucket. Add 1 cup baking soda to neutralize odors. Soak garment for 30 minutes. Discard solution appropriately, as you would gasoline. Rinse garment again in warm water. If stain and/or odor remains, hand wash in warm water with liquid laundry detergent and baking soda.

For washable silk and wool: If stain is still wet, cover with baking soda to absorb moisture and odor. Brush off excess. Flush stain with cold water. Apply liquid dish soap, such as Dawn, and let sit for 10 minutes. Flush with water again. If stain does not begin to fade, take garment to a dry cleaner.

Glue

For cotton and polyester: Using a dull knife, scrape off dried glue. Use glycerin to loosen up remaining residue and scrape off. Rub liquid dish soap, such as Dawn, into any remaining stain and machine wash.

For washable silk and wool: Same as for cotton and polyester, but take to a dry cleaner if stain remains.

Grease (automotive)

For cotton and polyester: If stain is still wet, cover with baking soda to soak up moisture. Brush off. Rub in liquid dish soap, such as Dawn. Machine wash using half the recommended measurement of detergent, and half liquid dish soap (such as Dawn). Repeat steps as necessary. Add more baking soda to neutralize any odor.

For washable silk and wool: If stain is still wet, cover with baking soda to soak up moisture. Brush off. Rub in liquid dish

soap such as Dawn. Let sit 10 minutes. Flush with cool water. Take garment to a professional if stain persists.

Mildew

For cotton and polyester: Make a paste of lemon juice and salt. Be careful—this may cause discoloration on some fabrics. Cover stain with paste and let sit 15-30 minutes. Rinse. Machine wash according to garment care label.

For washable silk and wool: Using an eyedropper, apply a half-vinegar half-water solution to the stain. Let sit 10 minutes. Flush with water. Take garment to a dry cleaner to completely remove stain.

Paint (oil-based)

For cotton and polyester: Apply turpentine and blot with towel to absorb residue. Flush with water. Rub in liquid dish soap, such as Dawn, and let sit 10 minutes. Machine wash according to garment care label. Repeat as necessary.

For washable silk and wool: Apply small amount of liquid dish soap to the stain. Let sit 10-15 minutes. Scrape off paint flakes and soap with dull knife or fingernail. Flush with water. If stain does not begin to fade, take garment to a dry cleaner.

Paint (water-based and acrylic)

For cotton and polyester: Gently apply laundry detergent and warm water to stained area with a sponge. When paint has softened, scrape off with a dull knife. Rinse and repeat as necessary, then machine wash according to garment label.

For washable silk and wool: Same as for washables, but do not machine wash—air dry. If stain persists, take garment to a dry cleaner.

Pencil

For cotton and polyester: Pre-treat stain with liquid laundry detergent. Machine wash according to garment care label.

For washable silk and wool: Apply small amount of gentle liquid laundry detergent, such as Ivory Snow. Let sit 10-15 minutes. Apply small amount of water and run gently until suds form. Flush area with cool water. Take to a dry cleaner if stain remains.

Rubber cement

For cotton and polyester: Rub off as much as possible with fingers. Apply small amount of paint thinner to stain. Let sit 30 minutes. Pre-treat with liquid laundry detergent. Machine wash according to garment care label.

For washable silk and wool items: Rub off as much as possible with fingers and take garment to a dry cleaner.

Soot

For cotton and polyester: Shake off excess soot—do not rub. Pre-treat with liquid laundry detergent with bleach alternative. Machine wash in warmest water safe for fabric with water conditioner and detergent with bleach alternative.

For washable silk and wool: Do not attempt to clean at home – take garment to a dry cleaner.