

Instructions for laundering washable products

Washable pads and pants can be re-used many times over months or even years. However, they tend to become stained over time (like any underwear) and careful washing is important.

You are always recommended to follow the manufacturer's instructions to get the best use out of your products. These are usually found on the label attached to the product and / or the packaging.

Although washable pads and pants can be washed in a similar way to your usual laundry, there are some important differences. These are set out below along with helpful user tips.

General points about laundering washable pads and pants:

- Turn pants and all-in-ones inside out for washing and drying
- If pre-soaking small pads, place them in a mesh washing bag in the soaking container for easy transfer to the washing machine – don't forget to empty them out of the bag as they go into the machine.
- If the pad has hook and loop tabs, close them on each other to stop the tabs adhering to other items.

Pre-wash:

- Pre-washing or soaking your pads in cold water before they go in the washing machine can help to reduce staining and improve the lifespan of the product.
- Here is a list of solutions which have been suggested by pad manufacturers / product users for soaking pads to reduce stains and to whiten the fabric:
 - Stain removing, sterilizing or diaper sanitizing products
 - White distilled vinegar (2-3 tablespoons per bucket)
 - Bicarbonate of Soda (1 tablespoons per bucket)
 - Tea Tree or Lavender essential oil (5 drops)
 - White vinegar may also soften terry towelling that has become hard after multiple washes

Caution: Some people may develop skin irritation when wearing pads that have been soaked in these solutions.

Washing



- Washable pads can be hand washed but machine washing is preferable.
- They can be washed with your regular household laundry or separately – this is personal choice.
- They can be washed in single colour or mixed-colour loads depending on the colour of the pad and how colourfast other items are.
- **Temperature** - most manufacturers recommend washing temperatures of 30 or 40 degrees. Hotter washes can be used but are not necessary and the hotter the wash the more quickly the fabric is likely to deteriorate. Some manufacturers recommend washing bed/chair pads at higher temperatures e.g. 70 degrees. This is not necessary if the pads are for a single person's use only.
- **Detergent** – You are advised to:
 - **Use only non-biological detergent** to help keep fabric soft
 - **Not add fabric conditioner** or use any detergent that contains fabric conditioner (cationic surfactants) as this can reduce the absorbency of the pad.
 - **Not use bleach or sterilizers** (as indicated by the cross over the black or white triangle).
- Bed pads are large items and can be very heavy when wet, so make sure they have had a fast spin to make them manageable when removing from the machine.
- Every now and then, run the pads through an extra rinse at the end of the wash to remove excess powder which can build up in the fabric.

Drying



- Washable pads can be air dried or tumble dried on a low heat.
- Air drying is better for the pads although it takes longer and may be hard to do discreetly.
- Air drying outside can take advantage of bleaching by the sun - although air drying inside is fine too!
- Some manufacturers recommend that cotton or mainly cotton products are only air-dried as tumble drying may shrink them.
- Other body-worn pads and bed/chair pads can be tumble-dried. However, this can take some time and tumble-drying uses a lot of electricity and is therefore relatively expensive.
- Most washable products have a built-in waterproof layer. This can deteriorate over time especially if products are repeatedly tumble dried at high temperatures.
- Bed/chair pads that do not have an integral waterproof backing (for use with a plastic under sheet) dry more quickly than those with an integral waterproof backing.
- Tumble-dry on low temperatures to minimise damage to the fabric long-term.

Other instructions



Washable pads are not suitable for ironing or dry cleaning.

If you have any queries about how to care for your washable pads, you should contact the manufacturer.