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# Laundry day

## A fresh-smelling survival guide

By Candace Leigh

One of the banes of urban-dwelling is the inconvenience of simple chores: lugging groceries up six flights, taking the dog down six and, especially, doing the laundry. Though there's little to make it fun, you can suds up efficiently and less painfully.

For those of you with washers and dryers in your unit — congratulations! No one will have to see you in a Yanni concert T-shirt and plaid pants. You are allowed, though not encouraged, to let laundry pile up for a week or two as long as you don't have to go out in public when you've run out of clean clothes.

Attending to other household chores while doing your laundry? Be sure to promptly remove items from the dryer so they're less wrinkled. And don't let the wet stuff sit in the washer. Keep it circulating! It's much better to have clothes ready to go when you're rushing around in the morning, so choose one evening as ironing night. Put in a good movie, pour a

beer, and take care of all the pressing at once.

Save a little cash by using a home dry-cleaning kit. For \$2 to \$2.50 a load, you can spruce up four garments in your own dryer. If you're feeling particularly generous, invite over a laundromat-dependent friend. In exchange for using your utilities, your friend can provide the laundry snacks and DVD or a takeout dinner.

## Have a communal laundry room in your complex?

**You'll get a workout taking baskets up and down the stairs, but you can breathe easier by following these tips:**

- Use an egg timer as a reminder to change loads.
- Pre-sort all of your clothes before you trek, and if there are only a couple of machines, match load cycles. Run two large loads or two small at the same time so that they finish drying at the same time, and you can save yourself extra steps.
- Take along some extra cheapie towels if you need to flat-dry clothing, or if you need to use the line. If the clothing line isn't pristine, you can get marks on your newly-clean duds.
- Don't forget to keep the quarter jar full to avoid a last-minute scramble.

ing gets left behind. (Colorful refrigerator magnets are an easy way to tell your laundry from your neighbor's.)

Mom may have said, "I'm not buying you anything new until you can prove you can take care of what you already have." That includes treating stains and holes as soon as they appear, treating delicate items delicately, and buying high-quality clothing to ensure longer wear.

**Is a laundromat your only option? Don't let it get you down.**

- Try to find a buddy to at least keep you company at the 'mat.
- Take a portable board game, cards, or a good book, plus deli sandwiches and sodas or a not-too-messy lunch.
- The advantage is being able to wash and dry eight loads at once, the disadvantage is folding eight loads at once. (This is where the buddy comes in handy.)
- Keep track of which machines you're using so noth-

**And don't forget:**

- Hand-wash fine items in baby shampoo.
- Turn T-shirts inside out before washing.
- Make sure your pockets are empty before throwing pants in.
- Rub a bar of soap over zipper teeth to keep it pulling smoothly.
- Use petroleum jelly or shortening to remove lipstick from fabric.
- Rub your iron with aluminum foil to remove burnt starch.

**Buck up and get the laundry done — or fill a bag and take it to your mom's.**

