



Maintaining the Home

Dryer Care and Cleaning

Maintaining the Home: Dryer Care and Cleaning

When using laundry products, be careful not to spill them on the exterior of the dryer. Wipe up any spills at once. Most exteriors are painted with synthetic enamel, which can be damaged or removed by chlorine bleach, ammonia, solvents or other chemicals often used in laundering and stain removal. Do not use the dryer top as a worktop for stain or rust removal unless it is protected by a heavy plastic cover. Use the sink instead and follow the remover product label directions exactly including flushing the sink with cold water!

Also, clean the lint filter after each load for efficient drying. If a load is very linty, clean the filter part way through the drying cycle as well. Clean out the exhaust vent system at least once a year and be sure it is not clogged at any time. NEVER vent the dryer into your house; vent outside.

Check labels on garments and other textile items and never dry with heat those items, which warn against such drying because of a fire danger. Never dry items used with solvent or waxes for the same reason.

Check loads before drying to remove any crayons or other items which could soften with heat and stain clothes and/or the dryer.

Follow the manufacturers' instructions in the manual on using fabric softeners in the dryer. Do not use any type they warn against.

Dryer Cleaning

If a crayon gets into the dryer and melts onto the drum, remove as much as possible with a non-flammable household cleaner such as Top Job, Mr. Clean, Soft Scrub, etc. (READ LABEL TO BE SURE). A flammable cleaner could cause a fire in the dryer. Apply the cleaner to a sponge or cloth and wipe the interior. Do NOT spray or pour the cleaner on the interior as it may get inside the dryer. Wipe it off with rags or paper towels. Then tumble dry old rags to remove any residue. Dry the rags until the residue no longer comes off on the rags. A colored stain may remain on the drum.

If a drum is spotted by starched or tinted articles, wipe the interior with a cloth moistened with a diluted bleach solution. Use a sponge or clean cloth, dipped in suds, to remove the bleach solution from the drum. Rinse well and dry.

If a dryer is used to dry unlaundered clothing, such as children's snow pants between outings, wipe the drum with suds and rinse. This will remove any dirt before clean laundry is placed into the machine.

Wipe the door opening occasionally. Clean the exterior with suds and rinse. To protect the finish, polish with an appliance wax.

If you have ever had white clothes come out of a dryer blue it could mean new jeans have been washed and just dried in that dryer. Sometimes dye will come off new blue jeans and dry on the

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inside of the dryer drum and then transfer to the next batch of wet clothes put inside. It's good to check the drum after drying a load of new jeans. If dye coated the dryer, clean it inside with soapy water until no color comes off on the cleaning cloth. Wipe off any soapy residue with a clean wet cloth.

Ink on the Dryer Drum

Use an all-purpose cleaner such as By Pas, Fantastic, or Formula 409 to remove the ink. After the drum is cool, put undiluted cleaner on a cloth or pad of paper towel and rub the area. DO NOT apply the solution directly on the drum. Wipe the drum thoroughly with a damp cloth or paper towels to remove all the solution. Let the dryer stand for several hours with the door open before using, to be sure all the solvent vapors from the cleaner have evaporated into the air, as these are flammable. This should remove most ballpoint or felt-tip marker inks.

This material was adapted from publications produced by Michigan State University. Michigan State publications can be found on the Web at <http://www.msue.msu.edu/msue/imp/mod02/master02.html>.

*This resource is one in a series on **Maintaining the Home** which include:*

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Make a Basic Toolkit for Simple Home Repairs
Selection and Use of Home Cleaning Products
Discovering the Secrets of Successful Storage

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Fireplace and Chimney Care

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