

Drycleaning Whites

General

One of the easiest ways for a customer to judge the performance of their cleaner is by the appearance of her white garments. The industry, in general, has a reputation for turning whites grey; a reputation that is somewhat deserved. The consumer laundry products industry reflects the importance of this concept with its "which laundry looks whiter" approach to advertising. The consumer perceives that if the whites are clean, the rest of the garments are clean also.

Fabritec plants, with their characteristic high distillation and modern detergent chemistry, generally produce whites well above the industry average. Those licensees who closely monitor their product are rewarded with strong customer loyalty and growth through word of mouth referrals. In this slant we will discuss some of the factors that contribute to clean bright whites.

1. The classification of sheers, fragiles, soft wools, linens and cottons into an "all-white" load is a recommended procedure. White jeans, coats and other durable, more heavily soiled garments should be run in a light load with khaki's and other regular lights. Running sensitive whites and light pastels together reduces the amount of free soil released in the cleaning cycle and eliminates dye bleeding and crocking as a factor. That dress with a white top and navy skirt should be run with the whites if at all possible. The dark area should be tested for bleeding. If the dye is stable, the garment should be netted and run with the whites.
2. Load factor for this all-white load should be 50% of machine capacity or less. Running time can then be reduced, limiting mechanical action. With a high solvent level being used, the solvent to weight ratio is increased, thus, further diluting the free soil that is released.
3. Solvent condition is obviously an important factor. The white load may be run in distilled solvent if the machine configuration and distillation capacity allow. Working solvent may also be used if that tank is closely monitored or if a tank is dedicated to white and light loads. Solvent temperature should be maintained at 75°F to 85°F.
4. The proper amount of Fabritec detergent is essential to producing spectacular whites. The soil removal capabilities reduce the need for prespotting and the possible problems that may result. The soil suspending properties are necessary to prevent redeposition on sensitive fabrics. The optical brightener enhances the results.
5. When spotting, stay on the dry side if possible, do not use steam and clean before the spotter dries. Stamford POG is an excellent choice for collar soil, makeup, grease and ink. Stamford SSS is used for general soil and will not ring or swale. If you must spot on the wet side, flush the spotter out with steam or water and dry or partially dry with air and apply Stamford SSS as a leveling agent prior to cleaning. Some fabrics, for example heavy cotton knits, are extremely sensitive to localized moisture and may develop a grey area where spotted. If possible, wet clean these garments in Stamford Wetclean after spotting. If they must be drycleaned, dry the area overnight. If a hard ring develops, soften it with light steam, apply leveling agent solution and clean.

Some of you may have other methods or procedures that you use to ensure bright whites. If so, we'd like to hear from you. Perhaps this discussion will be of some value as you review your own operation to assure yourself that you're producing the brightest possible whites and pastels. Whites are a yardstick your customer can use to evaluate your service and to reinforce her loyalty to you in the face of increasing competition.