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# Making Wash Day Less Hectic



*Save time and energy for the  
things you want to do*

**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE COLLEGE  
EXTENSION SERVICE  
C. Larsen, Director  
Brookings, S. D.**

# MAKING WASH DAY LESS HECTIC

by

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Many homemakers look upon washing as drudgery. The family, reacting to this attitude, and to the conditions which produce it, have come to dislike wash day.

What are the things which make wash day unpleasant? Disorder of house and person; interference with personal activities; poorly planned and served meals; excessive heat, moisture and odors; fatigue and self pity.

## Wash Day Attire

Wash day attire has much to do with the drudgery attitude. Is there real economy in wearing a ragged dress saved for the purpose? If one feels the necessity of a special wash day dress a plain, comfortable and becoming one which will help maintain self respect should be provided. Water proof percale, oil cloth or rubber aprons make serviceable dress protectors.

## Scheduling Wash Day

A cooperatively planned program which schedules wash day to best fit into the family's scheme of living is a factor in relieving the feeling of interference and disorder.

Monday is growing in disfavor as wash day. After the Sunday interlude when general work is suspended, family members often have work which requires their immediate attention. If Sunday has been a day of rest, recreation and sociability, the house will be in more or less disorder and the food supply depleted. Washing on some other day of the week permits time to mend the work clothes discarded Saturday night. It allows for advance planning and preparation of appetizing food which will make the family welcome the wash day dinner.

## Dividing Wash Day Responsibilities

When making the work program, the laundry processes should be analyzed and the responsibility for each phase definitely accepted. Each member should remove pins, matches, and nails from garments and turn pockets wrong side out before putting them into the laundry bag. Soiled clothes and room linen should be taken to the sorting place at the time scheduled. Garments should be mended prior to wash day.

## Wash Day Order of Work

Wash day order of work depends on the distribution of responsibilities and place of washing. If there is a separate laundry room and someone to take care of the breakfast table, feed the chickens, and do the other routine jobs, the washing may be started at once. If the same person must do the routine work and the washing, the routine work should be done first. If the laundry work must be done in the kitchen it is very important that it be delayed until the breakfast dishes are washed and preliminary preparations are made for dinner.

## Sorting Clothes

Clothes should be sorted in a clean place where the process will not interfere with the other activities. If possible, avoid doing it in the kitchen, dining room or living room. When the laundry has to be done in the kitchen the dining table well protected with a sheet may be used as a sorting surface. Do not strew things over the floor while sorting. Strew-

ing soiled clothes about is one of the practices which makes the family hate wash day.

Instead of thinking how disagreeable the job is, devote thought to efficiently cutting down on the time required to do it. Sort the clothes as described in Farmer's Bulletin No. 1497, page 25, or into such groups as careful checking has proved the most satisfactory. Place the sorted clothes by washing machine lots into laundry bags. Let a portion of the

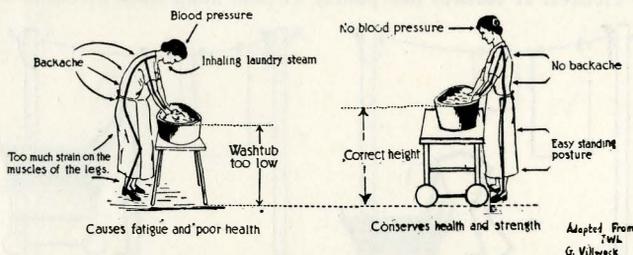


Fig. 1.—A home-made utility cart

clothes protrude from each bag to show the content and determine the order of putting them into the wash. If the bag is of fast color it may be washed with the lot.

Commercial laundries find it time and energy saving to put small things which can be washed together in cheese cloth bags. They remain in the bags throughout the washing, rinsing and wringing processes. Clothes to be starched should be washed and rinsed together if possible.

#### Arranging and Adjusting Equipment

Good arrangement, repair and height adjustment of laundry equipment are time and energy saving factors. Arrangement of washing equipment in a kitchen is shown on the cover page. Good arrangement for the home laundry is shown in Farmers' Bulletin No. 1497, page 3, Fig. 1. A home-made utility cart (Figs. 1 and 2) strong enough to support the boiler or tub can be used in many ways to make wash day easier.

#### Keeping Up the Suds

Laundry men have discovered a decided decrease in expense when softened water is used for both washing and rinsing. It is difficult to keep up the suds if the water is not softened before soap is added. Good soap is a factor in time, energy, and cost economy. Neutral powdered soap is convenient, economical and efficient for the machine. It dissolves completely producing a good suds with no expenditure of energy.

Dirt from the clothes is held suspended in the water when the soap balances the dirt in quantity sufficient to produce a good suds. When a suds "goes back" because of an insufficient quantity of soap, excessive dirt, or lowered temperature, the dirt which was held in suspension will settle into the fabric. Elements in the dirt may combine with others in the water forming compounds more difficult to remove than the original dirt.

#### Thorough Rinsing

The importance of thorough rinsing cannot be over estimated, yet it is the process most commonly slighted. Clothes rinsed free of soiled water and soap wear better and are more comfortable and pleasant. Skin irritations are sometimes caused from poorly rinsed clothing. Hot softened water and agitation of the clothes in the first rinse is necessary to secure the best results.

### Eliminate Bluing

Bluing is used to counteract the yellowness in clothes which is often due to traces of dirt, accumulation of soap curds or action of alkali from repeated washings. The blue dye combines with the yellowness producing a gray white. Clothes thoroughly washed and rinsed keep white without bluing. Eliminating the bluing process conserves time, energy and the clothes. If clothes are poorly rinsed, soap may combine with the

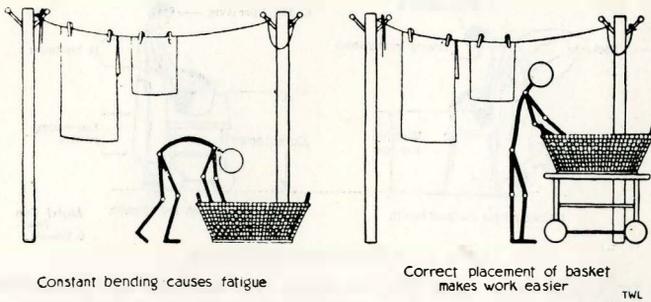


Fig. 2.—Why carry clothes to the line?

bluing producing rust like spots. Some materials absorb bluing more readily than others and become too blue if not given proper attention.

#### Clothes to and From the Line with Ease

Many find it difficult to get clothes to and from the line easily. Why carry the heavily loaded basket when it might be wheeled? A child's wagon, wheel barrow or utility cart (Fig. 2) are good solutions to the problem. A pulley arrangement which enables one to hang clothes and take them from the line without leaving the porch is another time and energy saver.

#### Hanging Clothes so as to Simplify Ironing

Well organized washing leaves like things grouped together. Systematic hanging of clothes eliminates sorting for ironing. Clothes should be given a sharp flip, pinned straight and taut on the line and given a stretch and downward pull to further free them from wrinkles. Flat pieces should not be hung by the corners. They should be placed over the line on the straight of the material. Garments should be hung by bands or shoulders. Dresses may be placed on non-rust hangers and pinned to the line. Clothes should be hung so that the wind will blow through them rather than against them.

The systematic folding and placing of like clothes together when removing them from the line helps to simplify the preparation for ironing. Some pieces may be removed and folded for ironing while still damp. This is not time and energy saving if it requires special attention and an extra trip to the line.

NOTE—This circular is prepared for use with Farmers' Bulletin No. 1497.

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