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How To Help Your Dry Cleaner

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YOUR DRY cleaner can be your wardrobe's best friend—and yours—if you cooperate with him. He plays a major role in keeping you the poised immaculate person you want to be by removing the spots and stains from your wardrobe. But his job is made easier, and you're more satisfied, when you follow these tips that dry cleaners offer:

1. Check for loose buttons before sending your garment out. Remove any which might be broken. Some cleaners take off the more fragile buttons, but it is best to be on the safe side.

2. Empty your pockets. Although the cleaner goes through all pockets, he may miss something. One woman left a lipstick in her coat pocket. It slipped through a small hole and down into the lining. When the lipstick melted, it ruined not only her coat, but other garments as well.

3. Examine your garment for rips and tears. Have them mended before sending the garment to the cleaner.

4. Tell your cleaner about leather linings or other fabrics that require special treatment.

5. Find spots and stains and point them out to the cleaner. If he doesn't see a stain until after the cleaning process is finished, the heat and moisture will have set it and made it much more difficult, sometimes even impossible, to remove.

6. Tell him what caused the stain. It will save the cleaner time and you'll get your garment back that much sooner. If he doesn't know what stain it is, he starts with plain water or a neutral solvent. This may loosen the stain so it can be flushed out but if that doesn't help, the fabric is not damaged. From that point he works by experience and process of elimination.

7. Don't delay—have your garment cleaned immediately, for heat and time tend to set a stain. Don't wear a garment too long before cleaning and expect it to come back looking as if it were new. A dress with just a few spots can be cleaned more easily than a badly stained one.

8. Check for other services your dry cleaner may offer. Some do moth-proofing or dyeing. Many will put a shower-proof finish on your garment that will not only keep water from soaking in readily, but will keep stains from penetrating the fibers and make dark or fuzzy fabrics shed lint.