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Machine, not Miracle

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LIGHT PEARLY-TONED grey gets the fashion vote as one of this spring's most important colors—except when it's "automatic washer" grey. You may take time and effort to plan your misty-grey spring outfit, but do you plan equally as much to get the most out of the washer in your dorm or sorority, to avoid having your white socks turn grey and your white sheets grimy-looking?

In order to get your clothes as white and dashing as possible, you must treat the automatic washer with care and use it to the best advantage.

Pretreat before washing

"Pretreating before washing" is one magic phrase that, if practiced, will get your clothes and any washer to produce that whiter-than-new look you always want.

The automatic washer is no exception. You have to help it do a good job by first soaking or bleaching your white clothes and those that are extra-dirty.

Another means to cleaner clothes, and the biggest advantage of the automatic washer, is more frequent washing. If you change linens more often (things which don't need ironing), you can get clothes cleaner with less work. It's easy to put in a load of clothes before you go to an hour lecture or to dinner and have them ready when you get back. There's no need to wait till Saturday when the line of waiting people is long.

Check washer load

When you begin the actual washing process, you should check your washer-loading habits. The specification sheets for most washers say you can put in 8 to 9 pounds of clothes per load. Tests have shown, though, that all automatics will do a better job of removing soil if they are loaded with slightly less than 8 pounds.

When washers are overloaded the sheets often are not pulled down into the water for the most effective washing action. If the machine is too solidly loaded, the cleaning action—agitation—may be almost entirely stopped. Free movement of the water through the cloth weave is essential for soil removal.

Your method of sorting clothes is another key to cleaner clothes. Tests made on soil removal when different combinations of items are washed together show a load of all small pieces washes well, but one of all large items—sheets, towels, washable blankets—is not at all satisfactory. The most practical method is to have all your loads composed of some large and some small pieces.

Now the detergent! It is necessary in some automatics to use a synthetic, low-sudsing detergent. If you use a soap or high-sudsing detergent, the suds will billow up and cause a buffer action which is detrimental to soil removal. You should check to see what type of detergent the manufacturer of the washer you're using recommends.

Using a syndet, rather than a soap which sometimes clogs the washer with curds and scum, prevents needless trips by the repairman.

You can keep the washer in better shape if you clean the drain trap each time you use the washer. Lint and dirt will clog it and impair the efficiency of the automatic unless it is cleaned frequently.

Every new product has its critics, but each year since 1941 when the automatic came on the market, there is less fault-finding with the automatic. When you treat a washer properly—as a machine, not a miracle—it will do the job for which it was intended.

When you load a washer, whether at home or school, you should make certain it is not overloaded. All automatics wash better with a load of slightly less than 8 pounds.