

These are general care instructions that can be used on most diapers. Each diaper manufacturer generally provides their own unique care instructions. We recommend that you also review these specific instructions before use.

## Handy Tips

- Always wash diapers (soakers) a few times before use to increase their absorbency
- Never use fabric softener on diaper soakers, as it decreases absorbency
- Use a zero residue detergent for maximum absorbency. Avoid detergents with natural oils, perfumes, dyes, UV brighteners, and stain guard ingredients as they can lead to leaking, absorbency issues, and stinky diapers. Avoid enzymes as they can cause rashes on babies' skin. We recommend (and sell) Claudia's Choices detergent.
- Stains don't mean your diapers are dirty!
- Avoid using bleach as it can damage the diaper's fibres and elastics and irritate baby's skin. Try vinegar before resorting to bleach. If bleach is required, use very infrequently, use a very small amount, and run an extra rinse cycle before using diapers. A bleach alternative can be used on an occasional basis, but it should contain no ingredients beyond sodium carbonate and sodium percarbonate.
- Sunlight is a natural bleaching agent, therefore line drying can help keep your diapers cleaner
- To avoid detergent build-up use only a small amount of detergent if you are using a front loader or HE machine
- Diaper creams can reduce diaper absorbency. Never use creams or ointments with petroleum or fish oils. If you encounter absorbency issues when using creams, use a disposable liner.

## Dealing with the Dirty Diaper

1. Remove diaper from baby
2. If using a two-part system, remove soaker from cover
3. If using pre-folds, unfold diaper to ensure thorough cleaning
4. If using flushable / disposable liner, remove and dispose. Remember not to flush liners in a septic system
5. Shake excess poop into the toilet. Note that breastfed baby poop is water soluble. It may not slide off your diaper so easily in to the toilet, but your washing machine will be able to handle it fine
6. If using a diaper sprayer, spray excess poop off soaker and in to the toilet
7. Place dirty diaper in pail (see below for pail methods)

## Pail Methods

### Wet-pail (pre-soak) Method (AKA "Poop Soup")

- Best for reduced staining
  - Never soak covers
1. Place a mesh pail bag in to a diaper pail
  2. Add water and a small amount of detergent or oxygen bleach to a level that will accept your diapers and not overflow your pail
  3. After removing excess poop from diaper, place diaper in to pail and let soak

### Dry pail Method

1. Place mesh or nylon bag in to diaper pail
2. After removing excess poop, place diaper in dry bag

## Washing

### Soakers

- Wash the absorbent (soaker) part of the diaper every 2-3 days

### Wet Pail

1. When ready to launder, bring pail to a suitable drain (laundry sink, etc)
2. Remove bag from pail and drain excess water
3. Dump water from pail
4. Place bag back in to pail and transport it to the washing machine
5. Continue at step 1 of “Both Pails” below

### Dry Pail

1. Bring your pail and bag to the washing machine
2. Continue at step 1 of “Both Pails” below

### Both Pails

1. Dump the contents of the bag in to the machine
  2. Turn the bag inside out and toss it in the machine
  3. Run a cold pre-wash (or short cycle with no detergent)
  4. Do a regular wash in hot water with detergent
  5. Rinse diapers in lots of water to avoid build-up of detergent, bacteria, or urine
- Once washed, your diapers should not smell like urine or detergent.
  - If they smell of detergent, wash them again in plenty of hot water and less or no detergent.
  - If they smell like ammonia once your baby wets them, make sure that you are using enough hot water and enough detergent. You may need to adjust the water level in your machine (contact the manufacturer) or “trick” your HE machine to increase the water level by adding one or two wet towels.

### Covers

- Covers can be washed with soakers or by themselves, however covers washed in hot will not last as long, and warm is recommended
- Close all Velcro tabs before washing
- Line dry or dry in the dryer on low heat

### Drying

- Diapers can be line dried or dried in the dryer on medium heat.
- You can soften line dried diapers in the drier for a few minutes.
- Reduce drying time by doing an extra spin cycle and/or throwing a dry towel or dryer balls into the dryer with your diapers

### Pail Care

With either storage method, wipe the pail clean regularly with warm soapy water

## Residues

If your diapers are leaking or wicking or if your diapers are not absorbing properly and are causing a leaky mess your diapers are probably not worn out or defective. Most likely they have a residue problem, which can be resolved. Some diapers made from polyester: PUL, suede cloth, fleece, etc. are more likely to develop residue problems than natural fabrics, such as cotton.

### How do I know if I have a residue? Some things you may encounter:

- Stinky diapers and / or diaper covers
- Discoloured diapers (in the case of synthetic fabrics) or diaper covers
- Non-absorbing diapers
- Leaking diaper covers
- Moisture wicking in to the child's clothes
- Diaper rash

### What causes residue?

- Too much detergent (detergent residue)
- Not enough detergent (urine residue)
- Using a detergent with additives
- Not using enough water to wash the diapers
- Dryer sheets or other fabric softeners

## Detergent Residue

### Signs

- Stinky diapers and / or diaper covers
- Non-absorbing diapers
- Leaking diaper covers
- Moisture wicking in to the child's clothes
- Diaper rash
- Yellow or dinginess of white fabrics

### What's Happening?

Detergent residue is simply a film left on fabric by detergent.

### Prevention

- Use the "correct" amount of detergent and water. This will likely be a trial and error approach. The "correct" amount of detergent with too little water means too much detergent. Increase the water and/or decrease the detergent. Get as much water as you can in to your machine.
- Avoid detergents with additives that leave residue in the fibres. Detergents like Tide, All, and Cheer have ingredients that can cause residue. We recommend checking out Bummi's Detergent Information for a list of detergents at <http://www.bummi.com/media/detergent-information.pdf>.
- Avoid fabric softeners, optical brighteners (often in products claiming "brighter", "whiter", or "cleaner" on the packaging), stain guards, natural additives (such as orange oil, citrus extract, and grape seed extract), and natural soaps (such as castile soap).

### Solving the Problem

Do several hot water washes with no detergent, then throw the diapers and covers in the dryer.

Make sure you are washing with ENOUGH hot water! Increase the water level in the machine or add towels to bulk up the load. Multiple rinses will not work – you must increase the level of water used to wash and rinse your diapers.

## Urine Residue

### Signs

- Strong ammonia odour
- Bad diaper rash

### What's Happening?

Ammonia the body is converted to urea and excreted in urine. Once released, the urea begins converting back to ammonia. Lingering urea in the diaper and certain types of bacteria can speed up and increase the production of ammonia. Detergent enables water to enter the fibres of the diaper and release the soil. If there is too little water or detergent the urine is diluted by not rinsed away. It dries in onto the fabric and remains.

### Prevention

- Use the “correct” amount of detergent and water. This will likely be a trial and error approach. The “correct” amount of detergent with too little water means too much detergent. Increase the water and/or decrease the detergent. Get as much water as you can in to your machine.

### Solving the Problem

- Wash diapers several times in lots of hot water with no detergent, then dry
- Make sure you are using enough hot water – multiple rinses with too little water will not solve the problem

sources:

Bummis Cloth Diaper User Guide available at <http://www.bummis.com/ca/en/care-and-use.php>

Mother-ease Wash Care and Folding Instructions available at <http://www.mother-ease.com/default.aspx?id=31>

## Notes