

in 1 pint of warm water and either sponge or dip the stained article in it. Or sponge the stain with water first, sprinkle the powder on the stain, and work it in well with the fingers. Rinse quickly. If used on colored material, hydro-sulfites are apt to remove the color; so apply the treatment quickly and rinse well in water afterwards. Do not use on weighted silks.

Enzymes will remove certain stains from all kinds of materials. You can buy pepsin, the best known of the enzymes, at the drug store. It softens stains containing albumin (found in blood, gelatin, glues, certain medicines, eggs, milk, and ice cream), so that they wash out in water easily. Pepsin will soften these stains, even after they have been set by heat or alcohol. First be sure there is no soap or other alkali on the stain, or the enzyme will not react. Then dampen the stain with lukewarm water and sprinkle with pepsin powder. Let it stand for half an hour, keeping the spot damp. Or mix the pepsin with water (2 teaspoons to 1 pint lukewarm water) and sponge the stain with it. Sponge or rinse well with water.

Soaps and other soaplike cleaners are helpful in removing grease and food spots, blood, and many other stains. Select a mild soap for washing silks and woolens because an alkaline soap may cause the colors to run and the cloth to become stiff and harsh. Also use a mild soap on all other delicate materials and on cotton, especially on those that are not guaranteed colorfast. If you are washing in hard water, add a water softener or one of the special phosphates—sodium hexametaphosphate or pyrophosphate (sold under brand names)—which prevent the formation of hard-water scum. This scum is caused by the reaction of the soap and the calcium and magnesium compounds in the water. It settles on the clothes in gray or brown specks that are hard to remove.

Synthetic soaplike cleansing or washing agents are now on the market. These are commonly called soapless oils, shampoos, or lathers and may be obtained in powder, chip, or liquid form. They are intended especially for shampooing hair or for washing upholstery, blankets, and sweaters.

These soaplike washing agents have several advantages over soaps. They are mild (not alkaline) and so are excellent for washing silks and woolens and all delicate materials. With them there is less danger of colors running or of materials shrinking or becoming harsh. They suds and lather well and do not form a scum when used with hard water.

There are also special dry-cleaning soaps or benzene soaps, which, added to dry-cleaning fluid, aid in softening the stain and removing the dirt. Or, to soften a heavy grease or wax stain, put these soaps directly on the stain, especially on silk and wool cloth. Then rinse well in carbon tetrachloride, Stoddard solvent, gasoline, or benzene.

Stain-Removal Supplies

Keep all stain removers together on a handy shelf, but out of the reach of children. Label all the jars and bottles; be sure to mark "*Poison*" plainly on the poisonous ones. To have a complete shelf, you will need to keep at least three kinds of cleaning agents—bleaches, absorbent powders, grease solvents.

Absorbent powders—for grease spots or ink stains.

Chalk, corn meal, talcum powder, or cornstarch.

Acetic acid—10-percent solution. (Vinegar is about 5 percent acetic acid and can be used to remove alkalis, to stop the action of Javelle water, and to restore some colors.)

Ammonia water—10-percent solution.

Bleaches

JAVELLE WATER—for white cotton, linen, or rayon only.

SODIUM PERBORATE—for any material, particularly good on white woolens.

HYDROGEN PEROXIDE—a mild bleach for any material.

OXALIC ACID—never use on weighted silk. Label "**Poison**".

HYDROSULFITES—never use on weighted silks.

Pepsin—stain softener available at drug stores.

Sodium thiosulfate, or photographer's "hypo"—removes iodine stain; use with Javelle water to remove chlorine from cloth.

Solvents

TURPENTINE—for paint stains.

DENATURED ALCOHOL—be sure to mix alcohol with 2 parts water when using on acetate rayon or colored material.

CARBON TETRACHLORIDE, GASOLINE, OR BENZENE—for grease and oil stains.

ACETONE OR FINGERNAIL-POLISH REMOVER—for fingernail-polish stains. Never use on acetate rayon or vinyon.

GLYCERINE—for tannin stains; also to loosen or soften other stains.

Washing agents

SOAP.

SOAPLESS SHAMPOOS, OIL, OR LATHER—powder or liquid.

DRY-CLEANING SOAP—to use with dry-cleaning fluid.

WASHING SODA.

Equipment

Cloth, white blotting paper, or cleansing tissues; medicine dropper; glass rod; bowls.