



Guide to Washing Cloth Diapers

Before You Start – Very Important!

Wash your diapers in hot water with a small amount of zero residue detergent before first use to make them absorbent. If your diapers are made of unbleached fabric, you will need to wash and dry them at least three times to remove their natural oils and waxes (wash other products separately). Test your diapers' absorbency by pouring a small amount of water onto one. If the water beads at all, you will need to wash again.

Please check carefully the washing instructions for the product you have purchased as they may differ from these.

Diaper Storage

Dirty diapers and diaper covers can be stored dry in a diaper pail for 2-3 days before washing. Lining your pail with a washable bag can make transport to the washing machine easier.

- Remove diaper and cover from baby. Flush away Bio-soft liner or shake off excess poop into the toilet. You can skip this step if your baby is exclusively breastfed, as the poop will wash out easily.
- Put wet or soiled diapers in the pail, to be stored until laundry day. Dirty diaper covers can go in the pail too (never soak them!) Secure any velcro type tabs by sticking them to the fold back tabs (on the inside back of the diaper cover or diaper)

Washing Diapers

Unfold your diapers before washing, and separate any liners or inserts. Nylon diaper covers (such as the Bummi Original or Whisper Pant) will need to be washed separately by hand or in a cool wash cycle.

- Run a cold pre-wash (or a short cycle with no detergent).
- Do a regular wash in hot water with zero residue detergent (stick to the lower end of the recommended amount if you have a front loader or HE machine.) If you are using anything other than zero residue detergent, use a maximum ½ of what the detergent package tells you to use (1/4 if you have a front loader or HE machine.)
- Rinse diapers in lots of water to avoid build-up of detergent, bacteria or urine.
- Dry in the dryer or outside on a clothesline - sunlight is a natural brightener and disinfectant! Reduce drying time by doing an extra spin cycle and/or throwing a dry towel or dryer balls into the dryer with your diapers. 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 detergent. If they smell like urine, either straight out of the wash or once your baby wets them, make sure that you are using enough hot water and enough detergent.

You may need to adapt your washing routine to your washing machine, water supply etc. Always check the care instructions on the label of your products, and follow manufacturers' washing guidelines if they vary from these.

Soaking

Do not soak diapering products – except for cotton prefolds, (they have no elastic, velcro, laminate or snaps!) To soak prefolds, dissolve a very small quantity of oxygen bleach in half a pail of water. Your diapers can be soaked for up to 4 days. Make sure your pail fastens well for safety's sake. On washing day, dump your pail contents into the washing machine, spin out liquid and wash as usual along with your diaper covers.

Stains

Stains don't mean your diapers are dirty! A cold pre-wash helps keep stains from setting- but if you do have unwanted stains, try drying wet diapers in direct sunlight. Please do not use chlorine bleach. A small amount of oxygen bleach in your wash is okay if it contains no additives and is well rinsed.

Front Loaders & HE Machines

Since your machine uses so little water, set your water levels to high to make sure your diapers are cleaned and rinsed properly. You can also increase water levels by tossing a wet towel in the wash with your load to make it heavier. An extra rinse is also recommended.

Washing Products

Choose a detergent that does not contain any of the following additives, as they can create residue problems, which will lead to leaking, diapers that do not absorb properly, and stinky covers.

- Fabric softeners
- Natural oils
- Perfumes
- Dyes
- UV brighteners
- Stain guard ingredients
- Enzymes

Bummi's recommendations for safe washing products are:

Sensi-Clean and Sport-Wash (www.atsko.com)

Charlie's Soap (www.charliesoap.com)

Country Save (www.countrysave.com)

Allen's Naturally (www.allensnaturally.com)

Mountain Green Baby Free & Clear (www.mountaingreen.biz)

* Seventh Generation Delicate Care (www.seventhgeneration.com)

* Nature Clean Powder or Liquid (www.naturecleanliving.com)

* Claudia's Choices (www.claudiaschoices.ca)

* Wonder Wash (www.wonderwash.net)

If you decide to use a bleach alternative (always sparingly!) for prefold soaking or occasional stain removal, it should contain no ingredients beyond sodium carbonate or sodium percarbonate. We recommend:

Oxy-Boost Oxygen Bleach (www.oxyboost.com)

* Nature Clean Oxygen Bleach (www.naturecleanliving.com)

* BioVert Oxygen Bleach (www.prolav.com)

*easy to find in Canada

Troubleshooting

If your diapering system is the right size and absorbency for your baby, you shouldn't have any problems with leaking. If you do, make sure that:

- You have done all the pre-washes necessary for your diapers, and they have reached full absorbency (water absorbs on contact with fabric – no beading!)
- Your prefold diaper is not tucked under the flap on the inside front of the diaper cover
- The diaper is completely tucked into the diaper cover around legs, back and belly (any bit of fabric peeking out can cause wicking of moisture onto clothes)
- You are not using ointments containing petroleum or fish oils
- If using any diaper cream such as zinc oxide, you are using a liner to protect the diaper from the cream
- The diaper cover fits snugly and you are using the correct size of diaper and cover for your baby. Even the best diaper cover will not work if your diaper is not absorbent enough.
- You are changing your baby's diaper often enough. Newborns need to be changed about every 2 hours!

Detergent Residue

If your diaper covers leak right through, you likely have a detergent residue problem. You will need to "strip" your diapers by doing several hot washes with no detergent, and adjust your washing routine. Other signs of residue are smelly or yellowed diaper covers, and diapers that do not absorb properly. Please see our sheet on detergent residue for more information.

**If you have any questions about washing and caring for your Bummi products, or are having problems with your diapering system, please do not hesitate to contact us!
We would be more than happy to help you figure it out!**

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