



4. WEAR IT AGAIN SAM

Washing and Drying Clothes Efficiently

WHY ACT?

Typical electric clothes washers and dryers generate 5 pounds of CO₂ per washer/dryer cycle. Do your clothes really need to be washed after one wearing, or will the simple touch of an iron or the removal of a dirty spot allow you to wear them again?

For laundry machine-washed in hot water, 90% of the energy goes to heat the water, while only 10% powers the machine itself. In most cases, washing clothes in cold water gets them just as clean as washing them in warm or hot water, and the CO₂ savings are substantial—about 2 pounds per load.

The new, front-loading washing machines save even more energy by reducing the amount of water—hot or cold—used in each load by about 50%. These washers also have a faster spin cycle than conventional machines, so they remove more of the water from your clothes, reducing the energy it takes to dry them.

CO₂ REDUCTION ACTION

- Wear clothes until they are actually dirty. Hang them up after each wearing to let them air out naturally.
- Use an iron to touch up creases or a wet cloth and a little soap to get a spot out when the rest of the garment is clean.
- When you wash your clothes, be energy-efficient by doing full loads and using cold water for washing and rinsing.
- Dry full loads or use a clothesline instead.
- Separate loads for fast- and slow-drying clothes and use moisture or automatic settings rather than the timer.

TIME & MATERIALS

- A few minutes to iron, remove a spot, or hang clothes up to dry.
- An iron, wet cloth, soap, clothesline, drying rack, washer, and dryer.