01 / THE EVERYDAY ROUTINE

One load, step by step.

Use this routine for ordinary washable clothes, sheets and towels. Special precautions come first.

1. **Set up before you lift.**
Have detergent, care labels and a clean return basket ready. Keep the path clear and use a stable work surface. Get help with wet laundry when strength or balance is limited; an occupational therapist can tailor the setup. [27]

2. **Handle and contain gently.**
Use gloves for body-fluid-soiled items. Avoid shaking or holding them against your clothes. If washing cannot start immediately, contain wet soiling to prevent leaks and keep it away from clean items. Wash as soon as practical; containment is temporary. [2]

3. **Read labels and check belongings.**
Check accessible pockets for tissues and valuables; never blindly search a bag that may contain sharps. Sort by care needs, color and soil. Set aside nonwashable/special-care pieces. For loose medication patches or needles, use page 7. [4,22,23]

4. **Treat the actual stain.**
Choose a starting approach on page 3. Follow the product instructions; test a hidden area when directed. Never pretreat clothes while someone is wearing them. Set a timer; page 4 lists product-specific examples. [4,6,7]

5. **Measure and load.**
Use detergent suited to the washer, including HE when required. Dose for concentration, load and soil. Leave room for movement. Extra detergent can leave residue and worsen rinsing. [5,11]

6. **Run the appropriate full cycle.**
Choose a temperature and full cycle the textile and product both allow. A rinse is not a wash; a quick cycle may not suit the soil. There is no universal household temperature or cycle time. [1,5]

7. **Inspect, then dry completely.**
Check for visible soil and remaining stains. Repeat a compatible stain treatment before tumble drying if needed; do not keep escalating chemicals. Dry at the item's permitted setting. Clean the dryer lint filter before use. [1,4,25]

8. **Reset for the next person.**
Wash hands after dirty-laundry handling, including after glove removal. Clean baskets as needed; put away only fully dry items. Mark unfinished laundry clearly so the next helper knows its status. [1,2]

DO ALL LOADS NEED TO BE SEPARATE?

Not automatically. CDC permits mixing ordinary laundry from a sick person with other items; HealthLink BC advises separate loads for body-fluid-soiled linen. Heavy soiling and infection/treatment plans need their applicable instructions—not a universal rule. [1,2,16–18]