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JTM's Guide to  
Washing Pet Bedding

## Guide to Washing Pet Bedding

This guide has been designed for kennels, catteries, animal day care centres and animal grooming businesses, so that you can provide the pets you care for with the cleanest, allergy free bedding possible. It will tell you everything you need to know about how to wash pet bedding safely and cleanly; taking you from preparing the bedding for washing through to removing stubborn stains and keeping animals safe in the laundry room.

### Preparing Pet Bedding For Washing

Before you put your pet bedding and blankets in the washing machine, it is important to make sure that any excessive fur or debris is removed from the fabric. The most effective way to do this is with a lint roller or sticky roller. You don't have to remove all the hair, just so that the bedding is no longer covered in excessive fur.

Once you have done this, give the bedding a good shake; if possible do this outside, as it means that any bits of debris or dust will be shaken off the bedding on to the floor and not in your laundry area.

Please Note: If the bedding has been soiled or has become stained with blood, it is advisable to handle the bedding wearing disposable gloves and an apron, since there may be a risk of infection. In addition, any bedding or blankets stained in this way should not be mixed with other bedding to reduce the risk of any cross infection. The blankets should be washed on their own, using either a specialist disinfection detergent or washed on a specialist disinfection wash to remove any of the bacteria. Disinfecting pet bedding is covered in detail later in the guide.



### Stubborn Stain Removal

Once you have removed any debris and fur, you might notice that there are some stubborn stains that need attention. The best way to deal with stains is as they happen, but as this isn't always possible, so if the stain is dried in you will need to scrape away any debris on top of the stain, then soak in cold water for around 30 minutes with a stain remover that is suitable for using on clothes. Then after pre-soaking, you can put it in the washing machine for a wash on a warm, but not hot programme, and if required also include some stain remover in the wash, as well as detergent.



This doesn't guarantee stain removal, but by pre-soaking the stain in cold water, it gives it the best chance of being removed. If the stain isn't removed the first time then you can repeat the process again.

If you have a particularly busy kennels or pet business, then there are some commercial stain removal guns that are available which will remove stains quickly and easily, such as the Krebs stain removal gun. This works directly on the stain and is ideal for removing smaller stubborn stains that are difficult to remove, just by soaking.

## Using the Right Washing Machine

If you are regularly washing pet bedding then small domestic machines aren't the best way of getting great results from your washing. They have been designed to wash domestic items such as clothes and small linens, and whilst they can cope with family pet bedding, they have not been developed to deal with the larger loads of pet bedding that you will be washing on a regular basis.

The best solution for kennels and similar businesses is a commercial washing machine. These machines have been developed to take larger loads and also use specialised gravity drains that can dispose of hair and debris effectively. This prevents the traditional problem found in domestic machines where hair can become wrapped around pumps causing breakdowns.

Commercial washing machines also have specialist cycles, such as disinfection washes which means that any soiled blankets or uniforms can be washed to remove any bacteria or infection and reduce the risk of cross infection onto other bedding. Many of them also have energy saving cycles which reduce water and energy use, saving you money with every wash.



And if you need to dry the bedding there are also plenty of commercial tumble dryers that have been designed to stack on top of washing machines to make the most of the space that you have available. The latest commercial tumble dryers enable most fabrics to be dried as you can set low temperatures to avoid shrinkage.

At JTM Service we have a range of refurbished commercial machines which are perfect for animal care businesses, as you can rent the machine cost effectively on a monthly basis, with no tie-ins, and what's more the machine will be serviced on a regular basis, to keep it up and running. To find out if a refurbished commercial washing machine would be good for you take a look at <http://www.jtmservice.co.uk/commercial-washing-machine-rental>

## Using the Right Detergent

Just as using the right washing machine can have an effect on your wash results, so can choosing the right detergent. Your pet's skin is just as sensitive as human skin, therefore it's important to choose a washing powder that gives good wash results but is also kind on the skin.

Products like Aquados are a good choice as their soap powder comes in pre-measured sachets which dissolve in the wash, meaning that



there is no washing powder to spill or for the pets to breathe in. Their powder is also hypo allergenic and approved by The National Eczema Society, which means it will not cause an allergic reaction or cause any problems for pets with sensitive skin.

By using detergents like this, which are pre-measured and help to prevent allergic reactions you can be sure that you won't use too much soap powder and that the bedding won't cause any skin irritations to the pets you are looking after.

## Loading the Washing Machine

One of the main reasons that you don't get good wash results is that your machine has been overloaded. So when loading a washing machine drum always leave enough room at the top of the drum to comfortably get your hand in and turn it sideways unimpeded.

When the bedding gets wet, this space will increase and "hey presto" you have enough mechanical action for your washing machine and detergent to do their job.



## Keeping The Washing Machine Clean

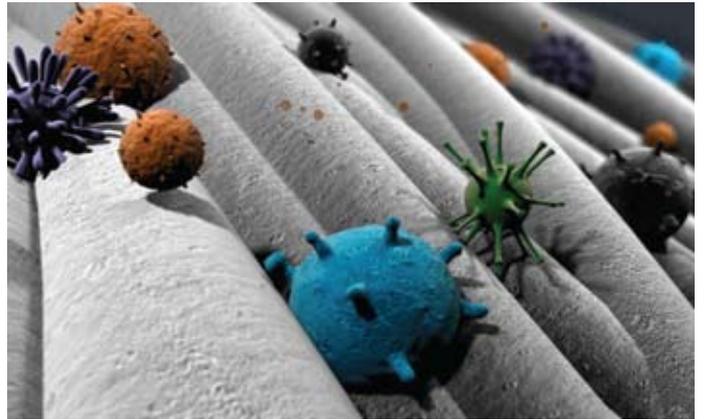
It's a good idea to clean the washing machine door seal after each wash. Make sure that you clean the rim fully as this can be a receptacle for pet hairs and other debris, which can then accumulate and affect the wash performance.

In addition, because pet hair can accumulate inside the washing machine, it is important to run the machine empty at a cycle at 55°C to clean the machine on a daily basis. This will help to flush out any residual pet hair or debris.

## Disinfecting Soiled Bedding

It is important to make sure that any soiled bedding and uniforms are dealt with as soon as they are soiled. The items should be removed using disposable gloves and an apron, and placed in a bucket or trolley that you only use for soiled fabrics. If possible, remove any hair or fur, but it is not essential, and then place the bedding in the washing machine. It should not come into contact with any other bedding and should be washed on its own to prevent any cross contamination.

Depending on the type of bedding, it should be washed on a disinfection cycle, designed to kill any bacteria. This is normally a hot wash of 65°C for 10 minutes or 71°C for 3 minutes within the wash cycle to remove any contamination. If the bedding or uniform can't be washed at these temperatures then a specialist disinfection detergent, such as Fabrix should be used, that can disinfect at temperatures as low as 30°C.



## Keeping Pets Safe in The Laundry Room

If you have a dedicated laundry room, then it can often be a place that pets love to visit, it can be warm and full of strange smells that they will find intriguing. However, there are a few precautions that you can take to make sure that your pets stay safe around laundry appliances.

### Washer and Dryer

Always keep washing machine and dryer doors closed when you're not using them. Sometimes these are nice warm places where cats and small dogs will go to take a nap, so making sure that the doors are kept shut when not in use, means that inquisitive pets can't get access to them.

### Storage of Laundry Products

All detergents should be kept in a locked cupboard, as any stain removers or washing powder are extremely toxic and even if a small amount is licked or breathed in by your pets it can cause severe problems. And although washing sachets are great for using in the wash, they can be quite attractive to dogs and cats as they may think they are a small treat, so make sure they are locked away.





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