

Hello Summer. Goodbye Stains!

We are in the midst of the sights, smells and splatters of summer. Picnics, summer camps and s'mores make fond memories, but don't let the stains last a lifetime, too. The American Cleaning Institute shares these tips below.

Chocolate. When this stain strikes, gently scrape off any excess chocolate. Once you get the item home, soak it in cool water. Then pretreat it with a prewash stain remover and launder it in the hottest water you've got.

Barbecue Sauce. Working from the back of the stain, flush it with cold water. Next, pretreat it with a liquid laundry detergent, using an up-and-down motion with a soft brush to break up the stain. Rinse it well. Then sponge it with white vinegar and rinse it again. Repeat, treating the stain with liquid detergent, then with white vinegar until you've removed as much stain as possible. Pretreat with a prewash stain remover and launder with bleach that's safe for the fabric. If the stain remains after laundering with bleach, rub in liquid laundry detergent and soak in warm water for up to 30 minutes. Launder again.

Watermelon. This falls into that mysterious category of "invisible stains." The drips dry up and the stain seems to disappear. But if left over time, it'll oxidize into a pale yellow or brown spot. To keep this from happening, launder the item in the hottest water that's safe for the fabric.

Grass. Pretreat grass stains with a prewash stain remover or rub liquid laundry detergent into the stains. Launder, using the hottest water that's safe for the fabric, and chlorine bleach, if safe for the fabric. For dirt stains, brush off as much residue as possible. (If the dirt is actually mud, let the mud dry completely before brushing it off.) Then follow the same procedures as for grass stains.

Ice cream. Pretreat or soak stains using a product containing enzymes. Soak for at least 30 minutes – longer if the stains are old. Launder, using the warmest water that's safe for the fabric.