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Simply Back to Basics
"Providing Customized Solutions for Life Situations"

Get it Together! Keep it Together! Let Linda Help!

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Linda's Organizing Tip for March 2008:

March into the Laundry Room and Take Charge!

You can set up a step by step, easy to follow system in your laundry room for maximum efficiency. Your children can each do their own laundry, and things can run very smoothly. Here is the basic process. Please note that some modifications may be needed for this to work in your family. The last two pages of this document include detailed laundry washing instructions that can be posted in your laundry room.



1. Setup the Environment:

- Give each family member 2 (of the same) laundry baskets. Stack them together and keep in the bedroom or where they undress. Label each basket with the person's name. (Two people can share if they share the same room and they want to). One basket will be brought down to the laundry room with dirty clothes and wait for clean clothes to bring back up. The other will continue to collect dirty clothes in the room. When one is empty, stack it underneath the other.
- Place a thin folding table in the laundry room. I like this one from Target: <http://tinyurl.com/2nr3wo>
- Set up a rod to hang up clothing. It can be as simple as a bar from the rafters or a self-standing laundry rack such as this one: <http://tinyurl.com/38cun3>
- Place a clock in the laundry room.
- Clear everything out of the laundry room that is not needed for washing/drying, folding or ironing.
- Place the detergent, spot remover, dryer sheets, etc. in easy reach of the washer and dryer.
- Hang up the ironing board/iron, if desired: Here is a page with sample holders: <http://tinyurl.com/2n2rru>. A good one is also available at Target in the household area, but not pictured online.

2. Set up the Schedule:

- Determine a day of the week for each person to do their laundry. For example, I do mine and my husband's darks on Wednesday and Lights on Saturdays; all Sheets and Towels on Sundays. My two kids do their laundry together (a load of lights and a load of darks) on Saturdays or Sundays.

3. Post the Process:

- Using the instructions below as a model, tailor to your needs or use "as is". Make sure you go through the process once yourself, following the instructions to make sure they are correct for your machines/laundry room. Glue onto bright tag board and hang with Velcro or double side tape on the wall.

4. Teach the process:

- Using small steps, teach your family the process, modeling and guiding while going along. Give positive reinforcement and praise for success. I suggest starting at the end of the process (with folding and putting away), practicing a week or two, and after that step is mastered, adding the previous step. Depending on the ages of your children you may need to adjust the learning rate accordingly. Even very young children should be able to do many of the steps with your help.

5. Celebrate Success:

- Be sure to tell your family how much help they are providing by doing their part. Use a "team" analogy to emphasize how each person contributes to the success of the family system.

I would love to hear if you try this system and how it works for you!

******* Don't forget to start collecting your hazardous waste for the upcoming collection at ECC North in May. I will post a link on next month's tip for more info. *******

If you need help with organizing, simply call Linda.

***These tips are for sharing!
Please forward to others interested in organizing ideas.***

I welcome all feedback about these articles. Please feel free to e-mail me anytime.
Unsubscribe by sending me an e-mail with "No Thanks" in the subject line.
Previous month's tips can be viewed at www.simplybacktobasics.com.

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I would appreciate an e-mail saying how the info was used. Thank you.**

Sort

- Bring Laundry to laundry room.
- Separate Light and Dark Colors.
- Turn pant legs and shirt arms Right Side Out.
- Empty Pockets (tissues, pens, \$, etc.).
- Un-ball socks and put socks in bags.

Wash

- Close washer.
- Turn left knob to reset, then to High.
- Pull right knob out and rotate to 14 minutes
- Set middle knob to Warm/Cold.
- Push in to start washer filling.
- Pour detergent up to line on cup and add to water.
- Add sorted clothes to $\frac{3}{4}$ full. Close washer.
- Check time and return in one hour.

Dry

- Put clothes in dryer.
- Clear out lint trap.
- Turn left knob to Timed Dry 60 minutes.
- Push knob on right in to begin drying.
- Check time and return in one hour.

Fold/Hang

- Hang all shirts.
- Hang or fold pants.
- Pair socks from bags.
- Take baskets upstairs and put away.