

# Dryer Sheets

If you like your clothes to smell fresh when they come out of the dryer, know that the “fresh” smell your clothes soak up from conventional dryer sheets actually comes from a harmful chemical additive. If you don’t smell the “fresh” scent, it’s because a “masking” chemical was used to cover it up. Try these nontoxic dryer sheets instead.

½ cup white vinegar

1 cup water

15–20 drops essential oils of your choice  
(orange, lemon, and lavender are good options)

1. Combine ingredients in a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid.
2. Place several washcloths or cut-up T-shirts in jar to saturate.
3. Put one cloth into each load in the dryer.
4. Once dry, place the cloth back in the jar to remoisten.



**Cleaning Laundry Isn't Clean:** The average American family washes eighty pounds of laundry a week, and—if they're using conventional products—the toxins from their laundry spill into the water table and move into the air. Here's a sampling of some of the harmful chemicals in laundry detergent and dryer sheets:

- **Nonylphenol ethoxylates (NPEs):** These disrupt endocrine system functioning, may harm fetal development, and may cause organ dysfunction. They've already been banned in the European Union and Canada but persist in the US.
- **Linear alkyl benzene sulfonates (LAS):** When they are produced, they release carcinogens and toxins such as benzene into the environment. There is evidence they may also promote the growth of colon cancer cells.
- **1,4-dioxane:** This is a solvent that may irritate the skin, eyes, and respiratory tract, as well as cause damage to the liver and kidneys. It's now considered by scientists to be a contaminant of real concern due to its prevalence in groundwater, but, unfortunately, cleaning it up is difficult due to its chemical properties.