

Why your dry cleaned garments still smell of perspiration after dry cleaning



New clients often ask us why their dry cleaned garments still smell of perspiration after they're returned by the dry cleaner?

Our answer is quite simple: Your dry cleaned garments still smell of perspiration because they haven't been professionally cleaned.

Perspiration smell = not cleaned

Your dry cleaner returns your "cleaned" garments. You might have been told that they've been cleaned. They may appear to have been cleaned. But you know that they sure don't smell like they've been cleaned!

Here's why....

First, you have to know a little about dry cleaning — at a very conceptual level.

The vast majority of stains fall into one of two categories: oil-based stains and water-based stains.

Oil-based stains are stains such as butter, salad dressing, steak juice, body oil, creams and lotions.

To remove an oil-based stain, the garment must be pre-spotted/flushed with steam and completely hang dried. **Prior to being dry cleaned.**

Dry cleaning should then emulsify or dissolve the residue of the oil or grease stain that hasn't been flushed out with steam during pre-spotting.

About 10% of all visible stains a cleaner encounters are oil-based stains.

Water-based stains are stains such as soda, juice, champagne and **perspiration**.

To remove a water-based stain, the garment must be pre-spotted/flushed with steam and completely

hang dried, and/or wet cleaned and completely hang dried. **Prior to being dry cleaned.**

About 90% of all visible stains a cleaner encounters are water-based stains.

And here's where the problem arises.

You can dry clean a garment with a water-based stain such as perspiration as many times as you wish. More often than not, that stain won't "move" with dry cleaning alone.

Conversely, you can wet clean a garment with an oil-based stain as many times as you wish. More often than not, that stain won't "move" with wet cleaning alone.

Now you know that

- Perspiration — a water-based stain — cannot be removed by merely tossing your garments into a dry cleaning machine.
- Perspiration — a water-based stain — must be removed by a skilled stain removal technician. Prior to being dry cleaned.
- The vast majority of cleaners skip the stain removal process entirely.
- Their "stain removal technician" (a term we use very loosely) merely loads and unloads the dry cleaning machine and hopes that the perspiration will miraculously disappear.

So what's an ordinary cleaner to do?

Employ skilled stain removal technicians to remove the perspiration stains prior to dry cleaning?

No. That's way too expensive.

Take the time, at the very least, to flush and dry the underarm areas and/or crotch areas of each and every garment prior to tossing them into their dry cleaning machine?

No. That'll cripple their in-by-9:00-out-by-5:00, picked-up-on-day-1-delivered-on-day-3 "production system".

Increase their turnaround time so they will have the time "to do the job right"?

No. They're convinced that same day in-store service, next day in-store service and 3 day pickup and delivery service is absolutely critical to their business survival.

Increase their prices to accommodate the labor investment required "to do the job right"?

No. They're petrified their customers will defect to a lower priced cleaner down the street.

Instead of taking the time to pretreat your garments correctly and to remove all perspiration stains prior to dry cleaning, **they resort to twisted logic.**

It goes something like this ...

We know we need dry cleaning solvent or fluid to emulsify or dissolve oil-based stains, and moisture to remove water-based stains. So why don't we just add or inject moisture into our dry cleaning machine during the "wash" cycle.

This way we'll kill two birds with one stone: the dry cleaning solvent or fluid will "take care of the oil-based stains" and the moisture will "take care of the water-based stains".

Voila! Problem solved. With absolutely no investment of time, effort or skill. And absolutely no impact on their sacrosanct in-by-9:00-out-by-5:00, picked-up-on-day-1-delivered-on-day-3 "production system".

But there are problems...

- **It just doesn't work.** Which, of course, is why your dry cleaned garments still smell of perspiration.
- **It's extremely reckless.** Because moisture in a dry cleaning machine is the single most important contributor to the shrinking of garments. And to the bleeding of water soluble dyes on "dry clean only" garments.

True quality cleaning involves the application of care, judgment, skill, experience and time.

Unfortunately for ordinary cleaners, there are no simple, shortcut solutions to anything involving garment care. And that includes removing the perspiration smell from your garments.



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RAVE FabriCARE, based in Scottsdale, Arizona, cares for fine garments, household textiles and accessories and serves clients in the USA and Canada and in other selected countries throughout the world. Stu is the author of various Position Papers, White Papers and Ebooks on these subjects, all of which are available from ravefabricare.com/downloads/free-stuff. He is an evangelist for true quality cleaning and is a contributor to and editor of True Quality Cleaning, RAVE FabriCARE's blog.



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