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- Health ✓
- Pets ✓
- Services ✓

## How Does Dry Cleaning Work?



### A look at how dry cleaning is done and the benefits of using a professional dry cleaner.

#### Why use dry cleaning?

One of advantages of using a [dry-cleaning service](#) is that the process is gentler on clothing that should not be put through the rigors of a washing-machine cycle. Certain types of fabrics and materials respond better to dry cleaning methods than the more traditional technique of using soap and water. Some examples include silk and satin garments, as well as wool and linen.

Many expensive fabrics will shrink beyond repair and be utterly ruined if put in a washing machine or even if they are hand-washed. The chemical cleaning process used by dry cleaners does a more thorough job of getting out the dirt and stains, as well as retaining the original color with reducing fading.

#### How dry cleaning works

Traditional dry-cleaning methods use a solvent to clean the clothing's fabric. The type of chemical used by a dry cleaner may vary, but many rely on perchloroethylene to do the job. Some dry cleaners are reverting to using safer, more environmentally friendly cleaning fluids, such as liquid CO2 (carbon dioxide).

The process of dry cleaning resembles the steps when using washing machines but on a larger scale. Clothes are loaded into a commercial dry cleaner that uses solvents to remove dirt and stains. The solvent is extracted during the process and then recycled for another use.

#### How to choose a dry cleaner

Several factors should go into your consideration when choosing a service for dry cleaning, including convenience factors such as location and hours. You may also want a service that makes repairs and alterations. If a button is loose or falls off while at the cleaner, the repair should be done free of charge.

The most important factor is whether you like how they handle your clothing. Can they remove hard-to-get-out stains? Do your clothes come back to you crisply pressed?

If you've recently moved and need to find a dry cleaner in your new neighborhood, try searching Angie's List using your address to browse the reviews and ratings of dry cleaners located closest to your home. Some offer special deals or coupons to Angie's List members.

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By Abbey Ketiinq, Angie's List Contributor

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