



CLEAN THIS

## COLD-WEATHER GEAR

If your winter outerwear is looking as dingy as the snow piled up in parking lots, it's time for a little TLC.

BY LESLIE CORONA



## Coats

Labels are there for a reason! No matter what your coat is made of, read the tag for laundering instructions. In general, though:

**DOWN & POLY FILL PUFFERS** can typically go into the washing machine. (Apply stain remover first, if needed.) Cut way back on detergent—use less than a tablespoon, as too much can clump up the filling—and add a rinse cycle to remove soap residue. Toss your puffer into the dryer on low heat along with a few tennis balls, which will tumble and break up lumps.

**FLEECE JACKETS** are usually fine in the machine. Washing them solo in cold water can prevent lint, and line-drying (or drying on low heat) helps them last longer.

**WATERPROOF PARKAS** should be washed in cool water and line-dried; heat can ruin the waterproof lining. A gentle detergent made for waterproof gear (like Nikwax Tech Wash, right) can help preserve the coat's water resistance.

**WOOL COATS** almost always require dry cleaning. If you get a fresh stain, blot it with a terry cloth towel to absorb as much as possible, then take the coat to a pro.

## Boots

They're made for walking, yes. But slushy, salt-sprinkled paths can take a toll. Before wearing a new pair, check if the boots were pretreated. If not, consider spraying them with a water and stain repellent.

**SUEDE FOOTWEAR** should get a pass with a stiff brush right after wearing—lingering salt can damage the material, causing it to stiffen. After brushing, sponge on a solution of 50 percent water and 50 percent vinegar, then dab it off. Keep applying the solution until the boots dry clear. Salt can be stubborn, so if all else fails, bring the boots to your dry cleaner.

### WASHING 101

Always check the care label first. Empty pockets, close zippers and snaps, and inspect for holes. Turn garments inside out, and skip fabric softener, which can damage some materials.

**RUBBER WELLIES & LEATHER BOOTS** should be cleaned first with a water-dampened cloth, then the water-vinegar solution if needed.

## Gloves, Hats & Scarves

Congrats on not losing them! Now keep them in tip-top shape.

**SYNTHETIC FABRICS**, like fleece, can be laundered in cold water. Because these items are small, place them in a delicates bag to prevent them from snagging or getting lost.

**FAUX-FUR ACCENTS** (think: lined gloves) can also go into the wash. Air-dry them, though—dryers might ruin the texture of the faux fur.

**CASHMERE** should probably be given to the pros, but you can hand-wash it in a pinch. Soak the item for 30 minutes in cool water with a gentle detergent, rinse gently under the faucet, then press out the water—don't wring! Let air-dry.

**KNITS** made of cotton are safe in the washer and dryer. (Air-dry to avoid shrunken hats. But skip the radiator—it can lead to mold.) If an item is a blend, like wool and acrylic, hand-wash using the cashmere method. Then lay the pieces flat to air-dry.

**LEATHER GLOVES** with stains can get dabbed with that water-vinegar mixture.

## Tools for the Job



**NIKWAX TECH WASH**  
\$11; rei.com



**WATER AND STAIN REPELLENT**  
\$20; reshoevn8r.com



**TIDE RESCUE LAUNDRY STAIN REMOVER**  
\$5; walmart.com



**LAUNDRY DELICATES BAG SET**  
\$15; grove.co

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