

# LAUNDRY ME RIGHT

Doing so will make your garments last longer.  
WALTER SIM finds out how to treat your clothes right

**A**mp up your sartorial quotient by paying more attention to wardrobe maintenance. After all, you will not look your best if you step out of your house in a creased or stained shirt.

Plus, that little bit of extra care will extend the longevity of your garments, whether they were bought off the rack or made to measure.

According to Mr Jeff Walmsley

## URBAN MAN

of British laundry company Jeeves, which has three outlets here, men in Singapore have "a seeming apathy" to basic wardrobe maintenance.

The chief executive of Singapore and Malaysia operations for Jeeves adds that

most Singaporean men are fashion-conscious.

"It's only right they should be receiving the best possible cleaning advice to preserve their investment," he said.

Mr Walmsley and the head of Jeeves Singapore's cleaning facility, Mr Iain Weir – who has more than three decades of experience – offer a handy guide on getting the best out of your dress shirts, pants and suits.

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### JEEVES, THE BOUTIQUE LAUNDERETTE

Founded in London in 1969 as a boutique launderette, Jeeves has, over the years, built a strong reputation as the go-to cleaner for celebrities and British royalty.

The company holds a Royal Warrant from Britain's Prince Charles and his wife, the Duchess of Cornwall. The honour, which Jeeves was granted in 1980, is conferred to companies with a trading relationship with the royal household.

Unlike most cleaners, which use the toxic perchloroethylene, Jeeves uses eco-friendly liquid silicone, which is derived from sand, to keep clothes looking newer longer.

Jeeves was launched here in April and has three outlets: at Cluny Court, River Valley and East Coast, as well as an 8,000 sq ft cleaning facility in Jurong. Prices have been set competitively against other market players here. As a result, Singapore is now one of Jeeves' most affordable outposts in the world.

Free home pick-up and delivery services are also available for orders above \$40.

## CARE TIPS

### FOR DRESS SHIRTS

Always apply cologne or aftershave on skin and allow it to dry before putting your clothes on to prevent the alcohol-based substance from staining your clothes.

### Dealing with stains

The four main principles to observe when dealing with pesky stains are:

- **Age:** The fresher the stain, the easier to remove.
- **Heat:** The hotter the temperature the stain has been exposed to, the more difficult it is to remove it.
- **Type of stain:** Dry cleaning is much more effective on oil-based stains than water-based stains.
- **Type of fabric:** Violent rubbing can damage some types of fabric.

If you stain your clothes when dining out, do not reach for water or rub the stain hard. Rather, blot it lightly with an absorbent paper towel – one in front and one behind the garment. Rubbing the stain will only damage fibres in silk or polyester garments, which can result in white patches which can be seen from certain angles under light.

Take the shirt to the cleaners as soon as possible – no later than two days after the staining.

Alert your cleaners about the stain – even if it now looks invisible. Certain water-based stains, such as champagne, may vanish under normal light, but they contain sugars that can oxidise and leave unsightly yellow marks over time, just like what you see on a half-eaten apple. Improper treatment with heat can also set impurities and make them more difficult to remove.

### DIY treatment for stained white shirts

It is generally safe to use oxygen bleaches to remove stains. Do not use chlorine bleach, though. White shirts come with optical brighteners which make them appear pure white – this is especially evident under ultraviolet light. But the brighteners are easily removed by chlorine bleach and your shirt may turn yellow after a few washes.

### When washing clothes

The four factors to observe when washing clothes are:

- **Duration:** The longer, the better.
- **Heat:** The hotter, the better.
- **Mechanical action:** In general, the harder the scrubbing or tumbling, the better – as opposed to letting the garments soak in water.
- **Additives in detergents:** Use only brands that cater to the material that is being washed. It is generally safer to use brands that carry the label "safe for silk".

### Some tips

- Always use a mild liquid detergent as it will dissolve better than powders.
- When washing, separate coloured garments from white ones.
- Do not twist or wring the garment as this can distort seams. Lightly massage the fabric instead.

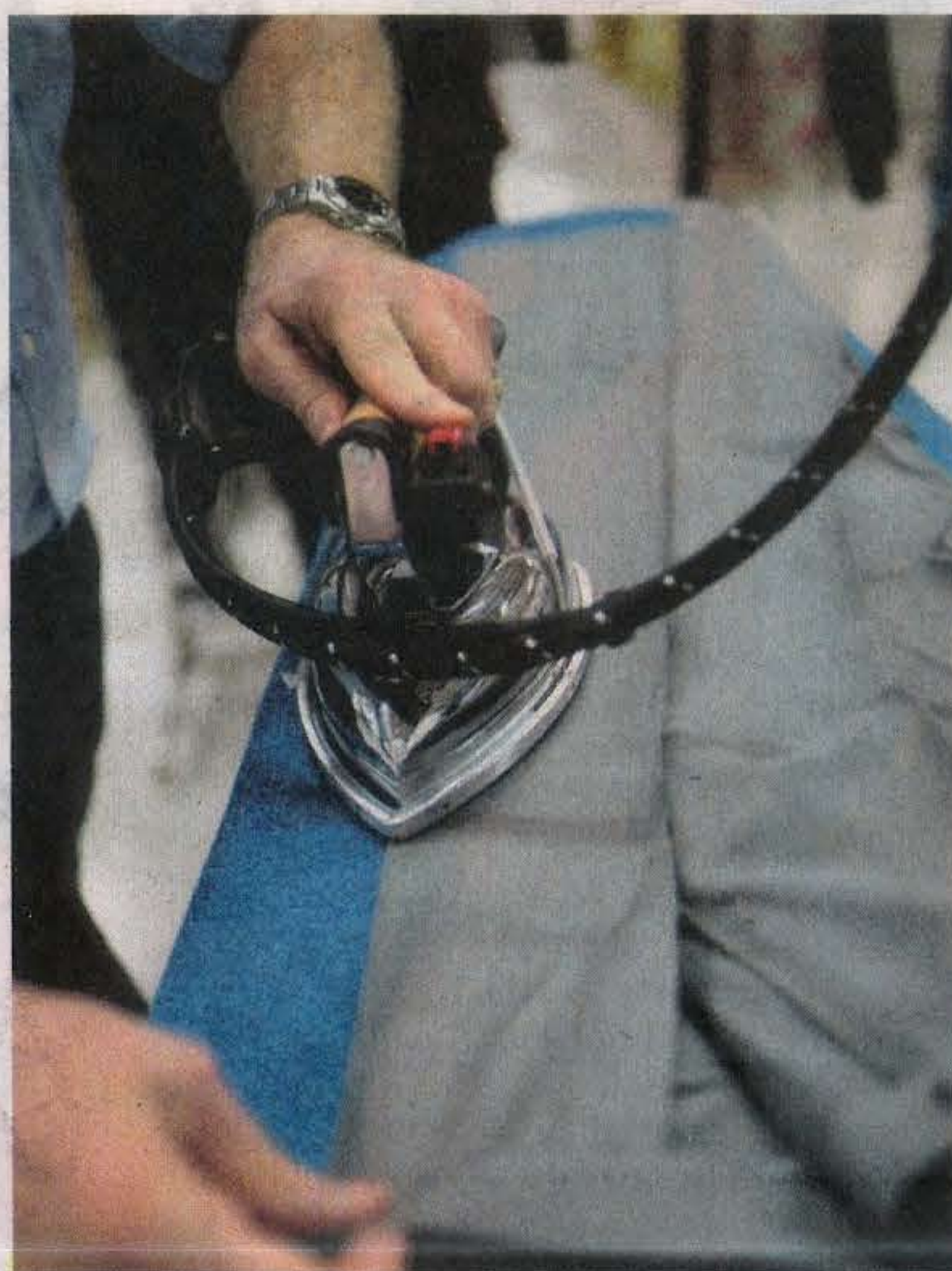


PHOTO: MARK CHEONG FOR THE STRAITS TIMES

- Observe if any colour loss occurs. If this happens, immediately apply acidic white vinegar to counteract the alkaline detergent and stop the colour run. The smell will disappear after a few hours of drying.
- If you are concerned, test before you clean. Dampen a piece of white cloth with the cleaning agent and press it hard against a small part of your garment for about 30 seconds to see if any colour runs.
- Rinse your clothes at least twice. Gently squeeze, rather than wring, the soap water out in between rinses.
- Hang to dry.

### How to iron

- See the care label for the iron temperature.
- To get garments extra crisp when ironing:
  - ◆ Lightly dampen the garment with a spray mist – the finer, the better.
  - ◆ With your shirt slightly moist, use a dry iron with no steam to press your shirt in the following sequence: collar, the yoke and shoulders, cuffs, sleeves and then the body.
  - ◆ Move the shirt away from you at all times. This will allow the ironed part to cool as it goes over the ironing board, while you work on the area nearest your body. If you pull the shirt towards you, you may end up creasing it with your body.

### FOR DINNER JACKETS

Read the care label for maintenance tips. Not all dinner

jackets need to be dry-cleaned – cotton jackets, for instance, can be safely laundered at home.

### How to maintain the shape

Use a moulded hanger to maintain the garment's shape. Enclose the jacket in a breathable cloth bag, or use acid-free tissue to keep out dust. Store away from direct sunlight in a clean, cool, dry environment.

### Touch-up at home

Jackets can be further touched up at home by using a domestic iron:

- Hang your jacket vertically.
- Activate the "extra steam" function on your iron
- Lightly apply the steam to the jacket, with a small gap in between your iron and the jacket. Do not press directly.

### FOR DRESS PANTS

#### How to iron

- Check the care label to identify the proper temperature required.
- Lay pants flat, full length, with the waistband at the wider end of the ironing table.
- Centre the creases to the middle of the pants.
- From the narrow end, work your way up to the waistband (as shown on left).
- Hang with a clip hanger, folded at the knees.

### OTHER TIPS

■ Read the care label of all garments to ensure the best treatment for your clothes. Some common symbols include:

#### Wash (with the symbol of a tub of water)

- ◆ If a number is indicated in the tub, it refers to the maximum temperature of water the fabric can be soaked in.
- ◆ The more bars indicated below the tub, the gentler the treatment needed.

#### Bleach (a triangle)

- ◆ A pair of slanted lines in the triangle means only oxygen agents can be used.

#### Iron

- ◆ The number of dots refers to your iron's temperature setting; the more dots, the higher the temperature.
- ◆ Most home iron brands use these dots as their temperature settings.

#### Dry clean (a circle)

- ◆ Take your garment to a professional laundry service.

■ Do not tumble-dry clothes unless in a hurry. Hang up your moist garments to dry instead. The heat and mechanical action of dryers can cause shrinkage, destroy the fabric and set any invisible stains.

Dryers, however, can result in a slightly softer feel compared to natural drying, and are recommended for bedlinen and towels.

■ Ensure that garments, especially stained ones, are thoroughly cleaned before storage to prevent impurities from oxidising over time.