

And Laundry Soap for All

Have you seen this ad, “Now 2X concentrated, use half as much to do the same amount of laundry”? These kinds of things make me wonder, as so many things do, how my laundry detergent could be concentrated. Did you ever stop and think about why laundry detergent can be concentrated? I did. What was the other half? Does the new stuff work just as good as the old stuff? What was I spending my money on if now a little bottle that is half as much detergent still cost the same price as the big bottle? I have stayed up nights asking myself these questions.

As I stroll down the standard mega mart laundry isle, I am shocked at the number different kinds of laundry detergents. I stopped counting at 57. I wasn't even done with just the detergents not to mention bleaches, fabric softeners, and “laundry aids”. Seriously it was like a Russian novel – pretty, bright character after character with little or nothing to do with the story. The lowest per unit price (one ounce) I saw was \$.068 to over \$.37. All I could think was. “My God this is expensive and what am I really getting for my money.” I stood there doing the math. Some of these products said you had to use a cup to get the maximum benefit. That was a lot of money down my drain just for sort of clean laundry.

I know from countless experience over the many years of being head mistress of my own home that the cheap detergents don't work on my whites very well. This is a big problem for me; I wear a lot of white. Also the price for doing a load of wash can be as much as a dollar or more. Most people (me included) use much more detergent than we really need, pushing the price per load to budget busting prices. However, when I have used the recommending amount, the results have not been to my satisfaction. So I use more detergent.

So what is in my detergent? If half of the detergent can just go way without ill effect to my clothing then what was that half. In the liquid brands they have lots of water. Therefore, when you buy a liquid detergent you are buying a lot of water. This water has been bottled and transported by truck for your convenience so you don't have to mix it. Now you are going to pay for this convenience and the water and the cost of transporting that water. No wonder liquids are more expensive. I have another problem with liquids; they will stain my clothes blue after so many washings. I like a white shirt– not a funky badly tie-dye blue one.

As for powders, they have all kinds of fillers such as baking powder, washing soda, talc, paper, and other things that may or may not help you clothing to sparkling whiteness. Powders have another nasty bit that leaves me floral. They smell – a lot. Even after being through the washer and dryer my clothes still smell like a funeral home of freshness. Yuk. Lastly, there are also pre-mixed to help you. Convenience seems to be a big buzzword in the dirty business of keeping your clothes clean.

I have a problem. I, like most people in this post-modern world, am really busy and strapped for cash. So what is my solution to this problem? I looked back. I remember my Grandmother making her own laundry soap. She didn't have money for the expensive store stuff and plus she wanted something that would work in cold water and rinse out really well. How did she pull this off? Modern companies want you to think that making your own laundry soap is impossible. But I remembered my Grandmother, if she could do it so could I. Looking to the laundry aid for help I picked up the following.

I got me two bars of Zote soap, \$1.60, ran it through my food processor then let it dry for two days on top of my dryer.

I got me a box of Washing Soda, \$1.99 from the grocery store.

I got me a box of Borax, \$2.16 from the mega store.

I put two cups of Zote shavings in the processor with one cup each of Borax and washing soda. Hit run. After about a minute dump into my empty detergent box. You can use any receptacle you would like. It would be nice if it could seal up as well that way you don't get clumps later on. Repeat till all the Zote is mixed in. Dump 2 Tbs in each load and a little bleach in the white load.

I had about a year of washing powder for somewhere south of \$6.00 bucks and less than 40 minutes of time. As opposed to over \$60 for brand name detergents that started to make me scratch and I had to go get it stand in line at least three times a year. Ah, but does it work?

YES!! And bonus points for:

No blue spots on my cloths.

I don't itch.

I have saved at least \$54.00 in my own pocket.

I have saved all the hauling of all those fillers.

I can smell like anything I want

(By adding a drop or two of essential oil to the powder before I drop it in.)

I have made myself feel more independent of "The Man – The Soap Man."

Do it. Make one batch. See how it works. Save yourself some money, time, and frustration. Get out from under "The Soap Man".