

Laundry Symbols

Practical skills

What the shapes on a care label mean, grouped by the machine they refer to.

Each basic shape names a process. Dots mean temperature, bars mean gentleness, a cross means do not.

The five shapes

Tub of water — washing

Triangle — bleaching

Square — drying

Iron — ironing

Circle — dry cleaning

Washing

1 dot 30°C · 2 dots 40°C · 3 dots 60°C

One bar under the tub — reduced agitation

Two bars — very gentle

Hand in the tub — hand wash only

Drying

Circle in a square — tumble dry

1 dot low heat · 2 dots normal

Square with a line — line dry

Square with three lines — drip dry

Square with a horizontal line — dry flat

Ironing

1 dot — up to 110°C, synthetics

2 dots — up to 150°C, wool

3 dots — up to 200°C, cotton and linen

Crossed lines under it — no steam

A cross through any symbol means do not. That is the one to check first on anything you care about.