

# Glossary of Technical Terms

John R. Brick  
U.N.X. INCORPORATED  
1-800-827-8422



- Alkali** A substance that produces a high pH in water. Alkalis break up soils and enhance a fabric's ability to release soils.
- Bath** In a washing machine, this term refers to the quantity of water being used to perform a specific step in the wash formula (e.g. "suds bath" or "bleach bath").
- Chemical Action** Chemical action is the cumulative effect of all chemical products used in a laundry which may aid in removing soil from fabric.
- Decolorize** The action of a bleaching agent in making a stain "disappear" by removing the color.
- Destainer** A bleaching agent, usually either chlorine bleach or oxygen bleach.
- Detergent** An agent or blend of chemicals that aids in the removal of soils from fabrics by lowering the surface tension of the water as well as suspending and emulsifying soils. (Also Surfactant).
- Emulsify** The action of dispersing one immiscible liquid in another (e.g. oil in water).
- Extract** The act of spinning fabric items in a laundry machine so that centrifugal force will "sling" the water out of saturated cloth.
- Kinetics** The process of heat intensifying the chemical action.
- Laundry Chemistry** The interaction of chemical products used in the laundry with fabrics being washed, soils to be removed and the water in which the fabric is being washed.
- Mechanical Action** Any type of physical action upon soiled fabric that may aid in the removal of soil. In a washing machine, this term refers to the tumbling of fabric items.



Please see Reverse for Additional Terminology.



<b>pH</b>	The scale which designates the degree of acidity or alkalinity of a solution. On this scale, 7 is neutral, 14 is maximum alkalinity, and 0 is minimum acidity.
<b>Pre-Treatment</b>	Any type of action, chemical or mechanical, which is performed prior to washing fabric items with the intention of increasing performance in the washing machine.
<b>Preventative Maintenance</b>	The action of checking the status of equipment and chemicals to spot potential problems before they develop.
<b>Procedures</b>	All actions carried out in the laundry with the intention of producing a quality finished item (free from soil, stains, and wrinkles).
<b>Residual Bacteriostat</b>	Refers to the ability of an article to prevent or inhibit growth of bacteria which come in contact following treatment with a bacteriostatic antimicrobial, and retains this "kill property" for an extended period of time.
<b>Residual Self-Sanitizing</b>	Ability of an article to kill 99.9% of the microorganisms which it comes in contact with and retains this "kill property" for an extended period of time.
<b>Self-Sanitizing</b>	Is the ability of an article to kill 99.9% of the microorganisms which it comes in contact with following treatment with an antimicrobial substance.
<b>Softener</b>	A chemical added to the final bath in a washing machine for the purpose of improving the feel of a fabric.
<b>Sour</b>	An acidic agent used to neutralize the natural alkalinity of water and residual alkalinity from the washing process. This item produces a low pH in water in order to bring the pH to 6 (the level which provides greatest comfort for humans).
<b>Stain Repellant</b>	A substance that coats the fibers of a fabric and slows the penetration of stains and soils into those fibers.
<b>Temperature</b>	The measurement of amount of heat contained in a substance. In laundry, this term refers almost exclusively to the water temperature in a washing machine.
<b>Time</b>	When used in laundry, this term refers to the time allowed for chemicals, heat, or mechanical action to act upon soiled items.
<b>Wash Formula</b>	The set of instructions a washing machine uses to determine the amount of water, temperature of water, chemicals, and how much mechanical action (via time) to use for each bath. The Wash Formula also instructs the machine in how many baths to use the order of the baths, and other functions, such as extracting.