

Optimists Alumni Uniform Care

PROPER CARE IS IMPERATIVE

* * * PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!! * * *

Laundering

It is not necessary to wash uniforms before wearing them. All garments are washable, unless otherwise stated. However, this does not mean that careful care and repair are not necessary.

Jackets and Bib Pants:

- *Always wash whites with whites and darks with dark colours.*
- *Avoid washing bib pants and jackets together! Never wash in hot water!*
- Jackets and bib pants are made of completely washable polyester-gabardine. Machine wash and dry on the gentle / knit cycle, but **do not overload machines**. Launder 4 to 6 pieces at a time.
- **Do not use liquid fabric softener on uniforms!** If a softener sheet is required, use only one (1) sheet per dryer load (see drying directions below.)
- If a stain does occur, sponge with water or treat with an appropriate product before it has time to set and before laundering. (See stain removal “Quick Reference” Guide). You may use “Spray and Wash” and other **non-chlorine** stain removers when washing. **Use only non-chlorine detergent!** Many detergents are harsh and have a bleaching ingredient that will cause even colourfast fabric to migrate.

NOTE: Always test wash one garment before doing the entire set. Water in different regions of the country can sometimes react differently in combination with different detergents and the fabrics.

- A multi-coloured jacket must be washed with care! As a precaution, colour can be set and bleeding prevented by soaking two-colour garments in salt water (1/4 to 1/2 cup per wash load depending on load size) or white vinegar water **the FIRST time the garments are washed**. Or use Carbona’s “Dye Magnet”, a dry treated material. This product may be found at most drug stores, fabric centres, and supermarkets picks up any excess Colour. Follow manufacturer’s instructions.
- If discolouration should occur, Carbona’s “Colour Run Remover” or Rit Dye’s “Rit Fabric Treatment Colour Remover” will help remove migrating colour. After using one of these products, wash the garment again and this **generally** will remedy the problem.
- **Dry garments completely before storing.**

- **Caution: Do NOT use a hot dryer setting!** A hot dryer setting will remove the press. Use a cool setting. When dried on a cool setting, uniforms will require very little touch up. **Remove them from the dryer and place on a hanger immediately. Steam pressing shoulders and collars is required to retain their proper shape and appearance to renew the heat bonded interfacings.** Touch up pressing on pants may be desired occasionally, or the **pants** may be professionally pressed after several washings and drying.

Garments or Pieces with VELCRO:

- Make certain the hook side of the Velcro is **not** exposed when laundering uniforms to avoid a ‘picking’ of the fabric. If a jacket has both the hook (hard side) and loop (soft side) of Velcro, **hook pieces together evenly so the hook side is not exposed.**

Extended Shoulders (Wings) and Collars:

- If jackets have extended shoulders or wings, fold them back onto the shoulder during washing and drying. Also do this when transporting uniforms. Folding allows them to hold their shape much better. Steam pressing shoulders and collars is required to retain their proper shape and appearance due to heat bonded interfacings.

Baldrics and Gauntlets:

- **Hand wash** baldrics and gauntlets made from specialty or **unique fabrics** (i.e. sequin, luster chrome, luster brass, etc.). These **must be hand-washed** in cool water then towel dried to remove excess water. They should lie flat to dry. Wash sequin as little as possible and **always** wash in **cold** water.
- Wash ploy gabardine baldrics and gauntlets on a gentle cycle and dry on a permanent press setting in a dryer observing all laundering instructions previously provided for this fabric type. **Make sure to hook the Velcro closure together when laundering in a machine to avoid picking of fabric.**

Vest and Cinch Belts:

- All back belts on vests and cinches have a six-inch elastic with a layer of stretch fabric. These items are to be **hand washed and then flat dried** because continued drying in a dryer will eventually destroy the elastic.

Sleeves:

- Adjust-a-Cuff Option:
 - Adjust the snaps placed at different increments inside the sleeves to eliminate sewing sleeve hems.

Pants:

- Length
 - FJM suggests a hem of 2 to 3 inches to hang properly.
 - If you are preserving fabric for future alterations, keep no more than six inches which can be folded over to create a 3 inch hem.

Bib Pant Sliders:

- Sliders on bib pants are heavy durable plastic. If shoulders are still too long after adjusting, the strap can be cut shorter and re-sewn in the back.
- Before determining pant length, adjust the shoulder straps to achieve proper crotch position. Pants should not hang unreasonably low in the crotch area. These uniforms are designed to have the hem come as closely as possible to brushing the top of the shoes. Therefore, members should have their band shoes on when being fit.
- Have members put on the bib pants wrong side out with their band shoes on. Seams can be adjusted easily if necessary and the hem should be pinned / marked to the top of the shoe.
- **Pant Suggestion:** To ensure pants stay in place and rest on the top of the shoe, elastic stirrups may be added in the following manner:

Add 9" of 1/2" to 3/4" elastic (black or white). Place each end of the elastic 2" up from the bottom of the pant leg securing it on the inside of the pant leg at the in-seam and side-seam. This will keep the pants sitting on top of shoe properly. If elastic is placed too low it will give the appearance of hugging the foot. ***Wear the elastic over sock and inside shoe.***

Adjust-A-Pant Option Fitting:

- Each pant leg has snap adjustments located on both the inside and outside leg seams. The last 2 are male snaps which fold up to meet 1-12 female snaps. Use male snaps to create a firm anchor at the hem's edge.
 - Adjust the shoulder strap; have members try the pants on wrong side out then fold up the hem and snap to the desired length.
 - After the hem length has been determined, the member should remove the pants without unsnapping the new hem length.
 - Press the new hem into place and the pants are ready to go, CAUTION: Avoid pressing with high heat and DO NOT press over the snap area as high heat will melt the snap imprint onto the outside of the garment.
 - If the hem is very short (2-3 inches), the hem may need to be tacked slightly between the snapped hem to help hold the crease in place.

Additional Length Options:

- Move female snap tape or add more if a desired length is not obtainable.

Cleaning / Maintenance:

- You can launder pants with snap tape left in place so that the length sizing does not have to be repeated each time uniforms are laundered.
- At the end of the season, store pants clean with hems unsnapped.

Note: Due to the ease of hemming, it is suggested that all members' uniforms be evaluated each year. Members who have changed in height will then continue to march with the best possible length and look.

General Alterations of Garments

- Sleeve and pant hems can be changed per directions above.
- Side seams-can be altered, but *leave at least ½ inch seam allowance* after alteration
- Centre back seam can be taken in or let out on the jackets, but the zipper will have to be removed first and reinserted
- A press cloth dampened with a 50/50 white vinegar and water solution will help, to set a new hem crease or remove an old as needed.