



Getting started with your new diapers and or covers.

Please try on fitted diapers and covers before washing them. No matter how great everyone else thinks they are they will only work for you and your baby if they fit well. All cloth diapers will shrink a little after washing and drying. If you have purchased a bunch of diapers or covers, just wash and try one out before you commit to washing (and keeping) the entire order. We would rather exchange the diapers or covers for ones that work for you rather than you getting stuck with a bunch of stuff. We only accept unwashed, unused items for exchange though.

All diapers and liners need to be washed and dried at least twice prior to use or they will not be absorbent! – Unbleached or natural diapers need to be washed more in hotter water to get them to absorb properly. Try dropping a few drops of water on your diapers. If the water does not absorb immediately, they are not ready for use and need to be washed again.

Most covers can be used without washing first. The exceptions are the Fuzzi Bunz. The fabric finish needs to be washed off of the fleece in order for moisture to pass through easily to the diaper inside.

How to care for cloth diapers and wraps.*

Think of washing diapers as a science experiment. The variables are your water, the detergent and your baby. The minerals and hardness of your water may vary from day to day. What your baby eats changes from day to day. Fortunately you probably won't need to change how you wash diapers each time. But if you have been happily washing diapers for a while and they now they smell bad or don't look as clean any more, it may be time for a change. There are an infinite number of combinations of variables that will make up a wash load of dirty diapers. It's not too hard to find the best way to wash your diapers.

All-in-Ones, Fitted Diapers: Wash and dry your new diapers a couple of times before using them or they will not absorb much, fasten the tabs before washing if the diapers close with velcro. Unbleached (natural) diapers need to be washed at least four times in hot water with detergent before they are ready to use, they will continue to get more absorbent for the next few washings. After they get "used" dump out any solids into the toilet and toss the diaper into the diaper pail. The fitted diapers and Kushies AIO diapers can be presoaked in cold water and 1/4 cup of baking soda or vinegar (close the fasteners before soaking). Don't soak them for extended periods of time. The Bumkins AIO's should not be soaked. When I am ready to wash, I dump the pail into the washer and run a cold rinse cycle. After the rinse cycle I run a complete wash cycle with detergent (just about any detergent will work) with some baking soda in warm water. You can use almost any detergent. Most detergents with bleach alternative clean well and wash away any bacteria in the wash load. I do not recommend Dreft or any of the made for baby detergents. They leave a fabric softener type coating on the fabric. Then I run an extra wash cycle with no detergent or additives to get out all of the detergent (I have found that it is best to use half the amount of detergent that is recommended). A leading cause of diapers not being absorbent enough is detergent residue. Don't use any fabric softeners, it will probably irritate your baby's bottom, it will harm the waterproofing on the All in One Diapers and it will reduce the absorbency of the diapers. Also, never use bleach or pure soap (e.g. Ivory Snow). Bleach is bad for the diapers and your baby's bottom and the soap will leave a fatty residue behind which will leave the diaper less absorbent. Dry AIO diapers and Classics on low. Fitted diapers can be dried on medium. Give the AIO's and fitted diapers extra time in your dryer. If you are washing Kushies flushable or Gerber liners, remember not to put the liners in the dryer. If you do line dry, put the diapers in the dryer for a couple of minutes to fluff them up. --I have noticed that some of the Bumkins AIOs say wash hot, dry hot and that others say wash cool, dry low. I recommend the wash cool, dry low method. The Bumkins or any AIO that uses a fabric coating for waterproofing will last a lot longer with more gentle care. If you still have stains when your diapers come out of the washing machine use stain stick or spray on the diaper, then toss it back in the diaper pail. If you put them in the dryer with stains, they will be harder to remove. The diaper should come out cleaner the next time.

Prefolds: Your new diapers look and feel stiff. Wash and dry your new diapers three times before using them and they will quilt up into thick fluffy diapers. They will shrink most after the first two washes, and slightly more for a few more washings. The unbleached diapers have to be washed with detergent in very hot water; you can also pour some boiling water over them. Wash them with detergent right after they get in the boiling water. Please be careful when using and transporting boiling water and remember, you are doing it at your own risk. If you have a smaller capacity washer, don't overload it with unbleached diapers when you are getting them set up, they need some room to agitate. They have a light wax coating on the threads that need to be removed for them to work well. Soaking them overnight with detergent may help also. Unbleached diapers take longer to shrink than the bleached diapers and may have some fuzz on them for the first few months of use. After they get used, dump out any solids into the toilet and toss the diaper into the diaper pail with some vinegar. When you are ready to wash, toss the diapers in the washing machine and run a cold rinse. After the rinse cycle I run a complete wash cycle with detergent with some baking soda in hot water (if you need your diapers to smell better - such as after a bout with some nasty stomach illness - let them soak in detergent overnight). You can add some baking soda - it helps to whiten the diapers and neutralize urine. Vinegar can be added to the rinse to help break down any detergent that remains in the diapers. I have used one of the enzyme (PetZyme) cleaners with really good results. I added about a tablespoon to a warm wash. Follow that with a hot wash or hot rinse (you need to get the

enzymes out of the fabric). You can use almost any detergent. Most detergents with bleach alternative clean well and wash away any bacteria in the wash load. I do not recommend Dreft or any of the made for baby detergents. They leave a fabric softener type coating on the fabric. Then I run an extra wash cycle with no detergents or additives to get out all of the detergent. Don't use any fabric softeners, it will probably irritate your baby's bottom and it will reduce the absorbency of the diapers. I dry prefolds and on hot. If you are washing Kushies flushable or Gerber liners, remember not to put the liners in the dryer. If you do line dry, put the diapers in the dryer for a couple of minutes to fluff them up. If you need to, prefolds can be bleached. I only recommend bleaching every four to six months. Just make sure you run the diapers through another wash cycle to get the bleach out. Constant bleaching will reduce the life of the diapers.

Diaper covers: Don't store the used covers in the same pail with the used diapers. The elastic and waterproof laminates will last longer. Wash them every two or three days to help keep stains and odors at bay. Your velcro covers will stay good looking and work better if they are washed separately from the diapers. Lint from the diapers always gets stuck in the velcro, both on the hook and loop parts. Lint may also be attracted to the fabric of the Fuzzi Bunz. It does not impair the functionality. When enough wraps get dirty, I toss them in the wash on gentle with warm water and a tiny bit of detergent. They usually go in for another rinse to get all of the detergent out. After they are done I hang them to dry. If they get stained, use a stain stick or prewash spray. Leave it on for 30 minutes and wash. You will need to repeat this a few times to get the stains out. Never use bleach, fabric softeners or pure soap on your covers. Don't dry your wraps in a hot dryer. The Proraps, Fuzzi Bunz and Bummi Super covers can handle a warm dryer, but the best way to dry your covers is just hang them to dry. They will last longer. Fuzzi Bunz take a few hours to dry when hung, the rest dry in about half an hour. Have you ever noticed red marks around your baby's legs, but the cover did not seem to be that tight? There is probably some detergent residue in your covers. Run them through a wash with no detergent to get it all out. Covers with thicker fabric are more likely to have this happen.

Training Pants: Wash and dry at least once before using. They should be washed and dried the same as the All in Ones. Turn them inside out for better cleaning. Turning them inside out before putting them in the dryer will help them dry faster.

Washable Liners: Washable liners can be washed the same way as prefolds. Unbleached liners will need to be washed at least four times in hot water before use.

Using Fuzzi Bunz Stay Dry System: You can use a prefold folded in thirds the long way or on thirds the short way if the diaper is too long. There is no right or wrong way to fold the diaper. Make sure that the legs and waist are snug. The snaps do not have to be snapped on the same number snap on both sides. Make sure that the diaper is placed all the way to the front of the pocket near the snaps. If you are having a wicking problem, the diaper is too wet and needs to be changed more often. For nighttime add a Kushies washable liner or two to your 4x8x4 diaper. Two prefolds will be too bulky and interfere with a good fit. Once your Fuzzi Bunz has been used as an All in One system, they need to be washed. To keep odors at bay, wash at least every two days. Separate diapers from Fuzzi Bunz (the top back of the diaper will hardly ever be wet or dirty) Keep Fuzzi Bunz in a dry pail (just as any cover - no extended soaking) with your other covers. Try not to wash with velcro covers. The velcro will wear on the Fuzzi Bunz fabric.

*This is what works for me and it may not follow the manufacturers instructions, please check the washing instructions that come from the manufacturers for more information. Experiment until you find the best method for you. I hope that you enjoy cloth diapering as much as I do!

If you can't seem to wash that smell out

⌘ It is best to wash your diapers every two or three days. If you can't do a complete wash cycle with your prefolds, run them through a cold rinse and stick them back in the pail for washing later. All-in-Ones and Classics really need to be washed at least every three days.

⌘ Detergent needs to be completely rinsed out each time (this goes for covers also). Detergent build up will trap old odors and that wonderful smell will be released when your baby pees. It will also decrease absorbency. Only use half the recommended amount of detergent for one wash cycle and run the diapers through a complete cycle without any detergent or additives. Check the diaper load when you haven't added any detergent. If there is foam on top, the diapers have detergent built up in them. Run them through another cycle until there is no foam on top.

⌘ Dry those diapers out in the sun with a short trip in the dryer afterwards.

⌘ If you are using vinegar or baking soda, try a couple of loads without. If you are not using vinegar or baking soda, try a couple of loads with.

⌘ Diaper covers with a lingering odor can be soaked for a hour or so with some baking soda in the water. (Not recommended with Bumkins, Bummi Original or Bummi Whisper Pant)

Check any diapers or covers with snaps to make sure they are intact. Loose snaps can be a choking hazard.