How to Remove Tough Clothing Stains

You may be amazed at how specialty spot removers can work to get the toughest stains out of clothing or table linens. With a little patience, and the right product, you may be able to remove nail polish, marker, candle wax, rust, tough food and beverage stains and even color that bleeds onto white clothing into the wash. Before you throw out an item of hopelessly stained clothing, try these steps first.

1. **DON'T WASH IT**
    - You want to catch a stain before it goes through a wash and dry cycle – the heat of the dryer can set most stains. If that happens, try a solvent made to remove set in stains.

2. **CHOOSE A SPOT REMOVER**
    - Use a cleaning agent made for the type of stain that you have. The product label on each spot remover will be very specific to the type of stain you have.

3. **PRETEST THE CLEANER**
    - Always pretest a cleaner where it won't show if discoloration happens.

4. **APPLY THE CLEANER**
    - Lay the stain side down on a white cloth or paper towel. Never use patterned or colored cloth, the dye can transfer. Apply your treatment to the stain and let it soak in.

5. **BLOT AT THE SPOT**
    - With another towel, dab at the stain from the back. Don't rub at it – you can damage fibers and work the stain in deeper. Work from the edge of the stain toward the center. These techniques help prevent a stain from spreading. As the stain transfers to the towels, keep shifting to a clean spot until there's no more spot transferring to the cloth.

HELPFUL TIPS:

- If you have rust stains on clothing, look for fabric-safe rust cleaner. Don't use bleach – it will react with the rust and make a stain worse.
- If a red item sneaks in with your white laundry, a dye grabbing cloth can transform pink clothes back to white. These are also good for getting brighter whites.

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NOTE: Always follow manufacturer's recommended safety precautions and instructions for the products you use.