

TABS

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MYSTERIOUS LIGHTER AREAS

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WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Sometimes mysterious hard-to-explain lighter areas of discoloration appear in various places of a fabric. This apparent loss of color can be noticed at any time, before or after dry cleaning or washing.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

This discoloration looks like color loss. Sometimes there will be only one or two spots on a garment; other times it can be more extensive and show up in several areas. In normal indoor light the discoloration is almost imperceptible or even invisible, but outdoors these lighter brighter splotches become quite noticeable. Certain sun-ray light spectrums accentuate the lighter spots. Spots can show up on any fabric or shade but they are most often seen on off-white, beige, tan, khaki, or pastel shades.

WHAT CAUSED IT?

Contact with a liquid containing a fluorescent dye caused these splotches or streaks of discoloration. These fluorescent chemicals are also known as optical dyes, optical brighteners, fluorescent brighteners, and fluorescent whitening agents. Many household items contain fluorescent brighteners, including detergents, cleansers, shampoos, and dishwashing liquids, as well as some specialty home stain removing agents. Accidentally splashing the fabric or having it come into contact with a contaminated surface typically causes this type of discoloration on garments. However, the use of a detergent concentrate or a home stain removal product in an effort to remove stains prior to home washing could cause similar color change or dye damage.



When viewed under ultraviolet light, this ivory skirt has areas that are whiter and brighter due to accidental contact with a liquid containing some type of optical brightener.

CAN IT BE PREVENTED?

If contact with a product containing an optical brightener should occur, the item can be washed before it soaks in and/or dries, lessening or even preventing discoloration. Of course, the best method of prevention is not allowing any liquid containing optical brightener in concentrated form to contact fabrics in the first place.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

This phenomenon is solely due to some mishap during consumer use, transportation, storage, or home care.

IS THERE A REMEDY?

Once any solution containing a fluorescent whitening agent contacts a fabric and is allowed to remain there for a period of time, reversing the color change is unlikely. □