



DRYCLEANING INSTITUTE
OF AUSTRALIA

WELCOME TO THE DRYCLEANING INDUSTRY

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Our Mission

The Mission of the Drycleaning Institute of Australia is to promote, foster and develop the drycleaning industry and to support the interests of its members.

Training

DIA On-demand training videos available to purchase at:

www.drycleanersweb.com.au

Face to face training available through:

LDCT

(02) 4954 8065

www.ldct.com.au

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Cardiff NSW 2285



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What is Drycleaning?

Drycleaning is a cleaning process that uses solvents—like perchlorethylene or hydrocarbon—instead of water. While clothes do get wet, they aren't exposed to water's effects, such as shrinking or fabric distortion. For example, a tissue in a washing machine falls apart, but in a drycleaning machine, it stays intact.

The solvent is effective at removing dirt, oil, grease, and many household stains, especially when combined with specialised spotting agents. This makes drycleaning excellent for delicate or structured fabrics that may not handle regular washing well.

Drycleaning also includes pressing and steam finishing, giving garments a smooth, ready-to-wear look with minimal wrinkles. This final step is often considered the most important, as customers expect their clothes to come back looking like new.

It's not just for clothing—drycleaning is also useful for items like curtains, doonas, and cushion covers. Even when garments look clean, drycleaning removes invisible dirt and oils that can damage fibres over time, helping extend their lifespan rather than reduce it.

For more information go to:
www.drycleanersweb.com.au/resources/technical-information/dia-technical-videos



What is Drycleanable?

Start with the care label

Under Australian law, all garments must have *fibre content and care labels*. These labels are the responsibility of the manufacturer or importer and are regulated by the ACCC. For guidance, visit the *ACCC Product Safety website* or *refer to the Drycleaning Institute of Australia's care label guide*.

No care label?

If a garment has no label, speak to a senior staff member before proceeding. Explain any risks to the customer, and if they agree to go ahead, make sure their consent is documented.

Most common fabrics include:

- Natural fibres: cotton, linen, wool, silk
- Artificial fibres: polyester, nylon, microfibres
- Blends: viscose, rayon, acetate

These can usually be drycleaned safely.

Watch for extras

Take extra care with belts, buttons, embellishments, and unusual stains. Always follow care instructions, and for high-risk items, discuss options with the customer and get written approval.

For more information go to:
www.drycleanersweb.com.au/resources/technical-information/dia-technical-videos

Know your Responsibilities

Customer service

Providing great customer service is essential in dry cleaning because customers have choices. They won't care about your business until they see the value you offer, so it's important to make a strong, positive impression from the start.

Clothing often carries emotional significance—people associate garments with confidence, identity, and personal memories. As a drycleaner, you're trusted with these meaningful items, so treating both the clothing and the customer with care and respect is critical.

Mistakes can happen, whether due to drycleaner error, a manufacturing fault, or something the customer didn't notice. Your role is to assess the situation professionally, explain it clearly, and handle it with courtesy.

Under Australian Consumer Law, services must be delivered with due care and skill. If not, customers may be entitled to a remedy, depending on whether the issue is minor or major.

For more information go to:
www.drycleanersweb.com.au/resources/technical-information/dia-technical-videos

Perchloroethylene (perc) Perc in Dry Cleaning

Perc (perchloroethylene) is the most commonly used solvent in Australian dry cleaning plants. It serves multiple purposes—not only as a dry cleaning agent, but also as a degreasing solvent, heat exchange fluid, and a scouring, sizing, and desizing agent in textile manufacturing.

When handled correctly, perc is safe to use in a dry cleaning environment. To support safe practices, the DIA has produced a training video that provides clear guidance on how to manage perc vapours effectively within the plant.

For more information go to:
www.drycleanersweb.com.au/resources/technical-information/dia-technical-videos

EPA Victoria

Due to the nature of perc both in its original state and as a waste product, in all States and Territories in Australia, perc is considered a reportable priority waste by relevant Environmental Protection Agencies (EPA).

What is reportable priority waste? Reportable priority waste is generally hazardous by nature. It is a subset of priority waste and carries the highest levels of controls. This type of waste poses the greatest level of risk to human health and the environment.

It is the responsibility of the shop/plant owner to make sure that their perc waste is being stored and disposed of correctly.

Victoria

The EPA in Victoria has the strongest rules about the management of perc solvent and the disposal of perc waste with the introduction of the General Environmental Duty on 1 June 2021.

General information:
<https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/>

In Victoria, a drycleaning business **MUST** be registered with the EPA and this can be done through their website:
<https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/for-business/permissions>

Dryer safety

One of the main causes of fires in drycleaning plants is spontaneous combustion—when heat builds up in materials (like linen) and ignites, especially if stacked while still hot.

The risk increases in warm conditions and with materials containing oil residues (e.g., cooking, massage, or fish oils). While rare, spontaneous combustion can still happen, especially with oil-based paints, timber stains, and drying oils like linseed.

To prevent fires:

- Cool items before stacking.
- Wash oily fabrics thoroughly in hot water and detergent.
- Store oil-soaked rags flat or in sealed metal containers.
- Avoid bunching hot items after drying.

For more information go to:
www.drycleanersweb.com.au/resources/technical-information/dia-technical-videos