

# How to Wash & Re-waterproof Waterproof Jackets, Rain Jackets, Pants & Gear

Waterproof gear is expensive. It's a big investment to get a nice rain jacket or pair of pants, the sort of investment that makes you want to take as good of care as possible of your gear. But what's the point of owning nice gear if you don't use it? And no matter how careful you are, your [waterproof coat](#) is going to get dirty eventually. So how should you wash your waterproof jackets & gear? And if it starts to lose its waterproof coating, how can you waterproof a jacket or pants so that they repel rain as well as it did when it was new? We've put together this guide to simplify caring for, washing, and rejuvenating your waterproof gear. It's really not that hard to do, and with the right information, you can keep that coat or pair of rain pants working well for many years to come. These steps and processes are applicable to all types of waterproof gear, helping you wash everything from your rain jacket to your ski or snowboard pants and jacket.

## How to Wash Waterproof Jackets, Rain Jackets, Ski or Snowboard Jackets & Pants

1. Check all the pockets.
2. Leave all zippered pockets open in the washing machine and dryer.
3. Make sure any velcro flaps are closed.
4. Always wash technical outerwear on its own.
5. Don't overload the machine - only run about half a load at a time.
6. Never use laundry detergent, use a detergent designed for waterproof materials.
7. Run your regular wash cycle with warm water.

When you buy any piece of waterproof gear, your first move should always be to read the tags. Every manufacturer will recommend specific processes to take care of their gear. That way if they're using any proprietary materials or technologies, they can recommend procedures that won't damage them. In the absence of specific instructions, follow the steps laid out here.

Before you put anything in your washing machine, check all the pockets. It's bad enough having a marker or some food go through a normal load of laundry, it's much worse when it's an expensive piece of gear that gets ruined. Leave all zippered pockets open, but close the main front zipper, in the washing machine and dryer. Otherwise they

can sometimes fill with water and make the gear hard to dry. Make sure any velcro flaps are closed so they can't snag on anything in the washer.

Always wash technical outerwear on its own, never mix it with a random load of laundry. Oils from your other clothes can actually leave your jacket more dirty than before. And don't overfill your washing machine. About half full is a good call. Use warm water on your regular setting.

The most important rule is to never use normal laundry detergent on waterproof gear. Laundry detergent is designed to break down grease and oils, and the DWR coating looks a lot like grease to detergents. So use a [Nikwax detergent](#) that's specially designed for waterproof gear. It will be gentle on the DWR, and still clean the pores of the membrane.

## What Detergent to Use for Washing Waterproof Jackets & Clothing

Choosing the right detergent is super important when washing waterproof jackets and clothing. As we mentioned above, make sure to make the right choice. Traditional liquid laundry detergents can damage the membrane, or strip the DWR entirely - leaving your rain jacket no longer. Normal powdered laundry detergents are preferable, but the safest option is to use a laundry detergent specifically made for washing waterproof clothing like rain jackets, and ski or snowboard jackets.