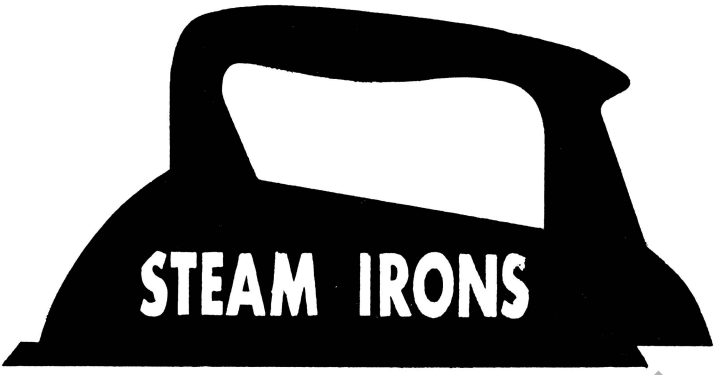

Learn

- HOW TO BUY
- WHAT WATER TO USE
- TECHNIQUES TO USE
- HOW TO CARE FOR THEM

The combination steam-dry iron has become standard equipment in most households. Many individuals away from home, such as college boys and girls or the traveler, use it regularly.

Although we do not expect ironing with steam to produce a crisp ironed finish on starched garments, steam ironing is proving very desirable for an ever increasing proportion of the family laundry.

New man-made fabrics (orlon, rayon, nylon), wrinkle resistant finishes for natural fibers (cotton, linen, wool), and specially designed new laundry appliances all team up to provide the homemaker with "minimum care" garments on which the "touch up" job is easily accomplished by steam ironing. As a greater proportion of the family wardrobe becomes launderable, the steam iron becomes even more indispensable.

Switching the iron easily from steam to dry helps the homemaker provide the proper treatment for all her varied press and iron jobs.

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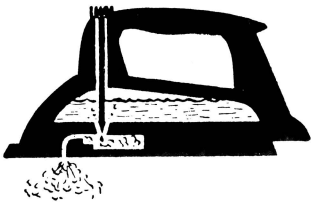
Two Types Available

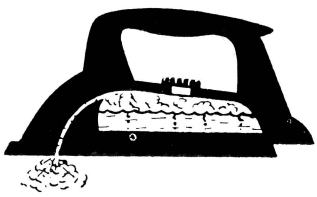
Steam irons are available in flash and boiler types. Because of the construction used, they have certain characteristics of performance and require slightly different care.



In the **FLASH or "drip" type,** the water is converted to steam as drop by drop falls on a heated area and is directed through openings in the soleplate. This type can usually be identified by the fill opening which remains open or because steaming stops when iron is in upright position.

THE FLASH TYPE:

- Converts easily from steam to dry ironing by the flip of a switch.
- Is ready to use as soon as soleplate heats to "steam" setting—1 or 2 minutes.
- Should be filled and left at "dry" setting until heated to prevent water dripping through.
- Steams only when iron is down; stops when iron is upright.
- May be filled when iron is hot or cold.
- Overfilling or tilting point down can cause water spattering.
- May sometimes have the water container as an attachment.
- Should be emptied if dry ironing for longer than 10 minutes and always for storing.



The **BOILER or "kettle" type** has a sealed container for water. When all the water in the container is heated to boiling, the steam is released through tubes to the vent openings in soleplate. Identify this type by the sealed container or tight closing of water-fill opening and by the longer heat-up period—3 to 8 minutes.

THE BOILER TYPE

- Continues steaming while there is water in the iron.
- Must be emptied or exhausted of steam to convert to dry ironing (a smaller amount of water for short steam period prevents having to empty out hot water).
- Some models have different steam settings and provide varying amounts of steam for different fabrics.
- May be less quickly affected by use of hard tap water.
- Should be emptied and left open while it cools. (Emptying and rinsing, rather than boiling dry will reduce sediment deposit.)
- Requires caution in emptying or filling while iron is hot.

When You Buy . . .

Determine your own personal requirements for an iron, then check on these features:

- Is the "feel" of the iron comfortable to you — the weight, bulk, shape of handle, room for hand and insulation of the shell to prevent burning?
- Location and markings of controls for easy and lasting readability.
- Soleplate material, finish, and beveling; nooks for buttons, shape and area of ironing surface.
- How securely balanced is the iron on its heel rest—can water be jolted out in reasonably careful use?
- Wide choice in temperature setting — even lower than "rayon" for new fabrics. Number of markings on dial not as important at temperature range between lowest and highest setting.
- Check number and location of steam vents and channels for spreading steam over soleplate. Note smoothness to prevent harming fabrics.
- What is the capacity of the water reservoir (may vary from 3 to 9 ounces)?
- Of what metal is the reservoir made (stainless steel or brass may corrode less easily than aluminum)?
- How convenient is location and size of opening for filling—will you use a measured amount or is there a water level indicator?
- Can varying amount of steam be obtained for different steam pressing jobs?
- How easily converted from steaming to dry use, or vice versa?
- Is "do-it-yourself" cleaning recommended?
- Will special features be of value to you: "spray sprinkle" for extra dampening—water level indicator—extra long cord—light — left-hand design — color styling or other features?
- Where can repairs or replacement parts be purchased?

"Travel" irons which are light weight, small size, low wattage, and sometimes with handle that folds down are available in a number of different models:

1. Irons without thermostats for dry ironing usually have temperature indicators . . . operate on either AC or DC (sometimes areas in large cities provide only direct current on which an "AC only" iron would burn out).
2. Combination dry and steam irons may be had in flash or boiler types; for AC only, or AC-DC for use in 120-volt electrical service.
3. For "overseas" use, irons are made that will operate on different voltages and frequencies by use of a converting plug. Some countries provide only 240-volt electrical service for small appliances.

To Help You Decide

Weigh the cost and inconvenience of obtaining distilled or demineralized water versus having the steam iron cleaned out more often if you use tap water.

Where you can get distilled water varies with different communities. You may want to check prices at your drug store, commercial laundry or dry cleaner. You'll want to make sure you are not getting water that has been "softened" only.

Small water demineralizing devices sold for home use are effective for varying lengths of time. Depending on the hardness of water, a few pints to ten gallons may be demineralized before replacement of resin cartridge is necessary.

You can make your own easy visual test for any type of water you are considering. Just evaporate by heating two or three cups of water in a glass container. The more residue the less desirable for use in your steam iron.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT CLOGGED VENTS . . .

The "best treatment is prevention." The next best is to have iron cleaned at an authorized service station. (Check with local dealer.) You may ask for an estimate of charges.

Prepared "do-it-yourself" lime or scale removers are used with varying degrees of success. If the treatment is mild enough to be safely used at home, it may be only partially effective. If you use these products it's best to do the job three or four times a year and before clogging becomes serious. When these cleaning acids are used, careful rinsing is essential. Any acid left in the iron can damage fabrics.

The **vinegar treatment** is suggested by some manufacturers. This mild acid is fairly effective in removing calcium carbonate, one of the minerals which collects in the vents and valves. Fill the water container with clear white distilled vinegar and steam for 2 minutes. Let stand overnight, then rinse several times. Expect an unpleasant odor.

Careless home treatment can be more expensive than taking the iron to an authorized service station. Prevention of clogging by use of the right water may be the best time and money saver.

What Water to Use

Distilled	**Yes**	preferred in all models — assures better performance for much longer time.
Demineralized or "Deionized"	**Yes**	is as good as distilled if purchased from druggists or taken from small home demineralizer in good condition.
Soft Tap Water	**Maybe**	from 0 to 6 grains hard can be used for varying length of time before deposits become troublesome.
Hard Tap Water	**No**	can expect clogging of steam passages and valves in direct proportion to hardness of water and hours of use. May be used longer in boiler type steam irons.
Home Softened (Ion-exchange System)	**Maybe**	some home installed water softeners remove only part of minerals—sodium and iron salts may remain. Will not scale steam iron as fast as hard water.
Boiled Tap Water	**Maybe**	some of minerals can be precipitated by boiling.
"Defrost" Water	**Maybe**	if carefully collected may not contain minerals, but may contain volatile oils, odors, etc.
Rain Water	**Maybe**	if secured in clean glass or enamel containers, then filtered through cloth. Varies greatly with weather conditions and collection method.
Conditioned with Packaged Softeners	**No**	minerals have not been removed—expect deposits to accumulate as much or more than with tap water.

Learn These Techniques . . .

A good combination dry and steam iron plus proper techniques of use will give you good results for a wide variety of fabrics. As with other pieces of equipment, how you use the steam iron may be more important than which one you own. Alter your techniques for ironing or pressing according to the characteristics of the fabric and of your iron.

- Know the fiber of your fabric. Some fibers will take more heat and steam than others. Test an inside seam or a fabric sample.
- Keep labels with laundry and pressing instructions—they'll help you determine the best temperature and technique for specific garments—same may recommend "no steaming" or a temperature too low to produce steam. (Dynel, acetate.)
- Protect delicate fabrics with a cheesecloth, muslin or drill press cloth when pressing from right side to avoid fabric damage, shine, or steam iron spattering.
- Keep the iron moving—in any steam iron, only part of the soleplate has a steam area.
- For the slow worker or for the slow, careful job, the temperature control may need to be set at the next lower setting than the one recommended.
- Press with the fabric grain.
- Better results are achieved if wool is not pressed until entirely dry.
- To raise the nap on same fabrics use a piece of self fabric. On others a terry towel under the right side will give satisfactory results. Steam from the wrong side. Or, apply steam to surface of the fabric and use a soft brush to lift the nap.

WHEN YOU IRON **To iron** is to slide and rub the dry, heated iron on dry or dampened fabrics. Usually the weight of the iron is sufficient to remove wrinkles. Additional pressure will produce the "polish" or shine sometimes desirable on table linens or heavily starched pieces.

For crispness, cotton and linen fabrics should be heavily dampened and ironed completely dry with dry iron at high temperature. Iron dark colored fabrics from wrong side to prevent shine.

Some "man-made" fabrics (dynel, dacron, acrilan) require lower temperature than is needed to produce steam in the iron. Use the dry iron at a "warm," "low" or "synthetic" setting for the little touch-up ironing these fabrics may need.

WHEN YOU STEAM PRESS **To steam press** is to apply steam with or without iron-to-fabric contact in a series of lifting motions. Use on garments to remove wrinkles, to form crease lines, to flatten the edges or shape garments during construction. Keep the weight of the iron in your hand and with a raise and lower motion; exert only the pressure needed for the particular fabric. This pressing technique is especially important for knits or soft weaves that stretch, or for any fabric that "shines" because of overheating or pressure.

WHEN YOU STEAM IRON **To steam iron** is to combine steam with the stroking of the iron in contact with the fabric. Use of the dry iron on dampened fabrics or with damp press cloth is also ironing with steam; however, more and more of today's casual "minimum care" garments and household fabrics can be quickly ironed with the steam iron without previous dampening. Expect less crispness than if using a dry iron on dampened fabrics.

Try steam ironing for cottons with wrinkle resistant finishes "permanently" starched cotton, blends of cotton and man-made fabrics.

WHEN YOU SEW

- Know the fiber of your fabric. Pretest temperature setting on a scrap of material and remember heat can build up if you let iron rest on same spot while you maneuver to press a tedious seam or fold.
- Press each seam before crossing with another.
- Use a clapper on wools or heavy materials to force steam through lapel edges, pleats, or seams, to flatten them without damaging or shining the fabric. (Do not use clapper on pile fabrics.)
- Use strips of heavy paper under seam to avoid seam imprints on right side of garment.
- Learn to steam without pressure or movement of iron, then finger press.
- Use a pressing ham, pressing roll or sleeve board for pressing shaped garment areas.

Take Care of Your Iron

- Read, follow and keep manufacturer's instructions for future reference.
- Protect soleplate from scratches—don't iron over pins, snaps, etc.
- Clean soleplate while iron is cool. Use mildest method that will do the job—first a damp cloth, detergent, scouring powder or soap-filled steel wool. Wipe clean. Rub heated iron over waxed paper, then on dry cloth.
- Know capacity and measure correct amount of water to avoid overfilling or overflowing water onto iron.
- Disconnect iron from electric outlet while filling (especially if filling at tap). Keep cord dry.
- When ironing is completed, turn steam switch to "dry" and disconnect cord.
- Disconnect cord from outlet by the plug—not by pulling on cord. Do not wrap cord around hot iron.
- Some manufacturers recommend rinsing out iron with tap water and draining before storing.
- Store in upright position—especially flash types.

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Recommended for use in Missouri by home management Specialists, Extension Division.

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