

How to Care For Your Jeans



Left to right: New, David's, Han's.

WASHING JEANS & HOW JEANS FADE

Does this sound familiar? You bought your first pair of raw denim jeans. You wore them every day for weeks. Over time the need to wash them became more and more pressing. Your partner and friends started to avoid you in public. You looked online for help. Next thing you know, you're considering freezing your jeans, wearing them in the shower, or jumping in the ocean!

They're just jeans. Trust us, it's not that complicated.

This article aims to provide two simple methods for washing your jeans. One method using a washing machine, and one without. We've also included pictures showing our E8 Super Slim Tapered Indigo Selvedge jean in three different states: raw, machine washed and hand washed. We know this isn't exactly scientific

research. We simply want to illustrate that your jeans can look amazing no matter which approach you take to jean care.

Before we jump into the techniques, here's a quick summary of the three jeans.

We'll add captions under each pic to help identify each pair:

- A brand new pair of E8 jeans, made of sanforized (pre-shrunk) unwashed raw denim.
- Han's E8 jeans. He's worn them daily for about 1 year, and has machine washed them around 10 times.
- David's E8 jeans. He's worn them around 175 times, and has hand washed them around 3 times.



Left to right: New, David's, Han's.

WASHING LIQUID OPTIONS

Independent of which washing technique you use, there are a few different washing liquids we recommend. All of these options look after the indigo in your jeans, keeping them darker for longer.

- Mr Black Denim Wash: We've been big fans of Mr Black Denim Wash for some time now — it's how we care for our personal jeans. We're excited to be offering it in our shop!
- Dr Bronner's Pure-Castille Liquid Soap: An organic option available at many organic grocery stores. We like the tea tree scent.
- Woolite Darks: A mainstream solution for preventing fading and shrinkage.



Left to right: New, David's, Han's.

WHEN TO WASH

It's usually recommended that you wait until you've worn a new pair of jeans for six months before washing. This equates to roughly 180 wears. This just isn't realistic. In that time your jeans will be covered in all kinds of fun things including spilt beer, road muck, muddy paw prints and baby food. Your jeans will likely become unbearably smelly before you achieve 180 wears. Given this, we advise you wash your jeans as soon as the smell becomes too much.

Worried that this will impact the fades, whiskers and honeycombs that are developing on your jeans? Fear not, each and every time you wear your jeans, you're furthering your fingerprint on them. Washing will not erase it. Plus, all of the dirt, oils and grime on your jeans acts like sandpaper, breaking the jeans down.

If you want to postpone the need to wash your jeans, you can also use one of the following products to help with the smell:

- Mr. Black Denim Refresh: Mr Black Denim Refresh is the best way to minimise how often you need to wash your jeans. We're excited to be offering it in our shop!
- Febreze: A popular solution for controlling odour.

You may also run into situations where you get a small stain on your jeans, but they aren't ready for a wash yet. Simply spot clean with a very small amount of dish soap, water, and a dark towel or sponge.

Washing as little as is necessary is a good thing. First, you help look after the environment. Each wash uses tens of litres from our fresh water supply. Second, denim is a workwear garment — it's intended to work hard and be worn hard.

Third, the longer you can go without washing, the stronger your jean fingerprint will be.

Worried that your jeans will lose indigo? That's the joy of denim. Indigo does not penetrate the yarns fully, so it will inevitably fade with wear and washing. If you cannot embrace this, you may want to look into denim dyed with "reactive dye," a non-indigo substance that retains its colour even with wear and washing.



Left to right: New, David's, Han's.

HOW TO HAND WASH & DRY

Why hand wash? Your jeans retain more of the starch put in them by the mill, making your fingerprint more pronounced. Darks will be darker and lights will be lighter.

Ok, time for instructions. David opts for the hand wash & dry technique. You can see how his E8 jeans have evolved using this technique. They've been washed ~3 times and worn ~175 days.

1: Turn your jeans inside out. Though this technique doesn't have machine agitation, turning your jeans inside out helps protect the indigo (warp) threads from abrasion.

2: Find a big bucket (ex: Tubtrug), or your bathtub. You'll be soaking your jeans in this.

3: Fill your bucket or bathtub with just enough water to submerge your jeans. Don't use any more than you need to. Warm or cold water is fine. You may get less vertical shrinkage with cold water, but no matter what, your jeans shouldn't shrink more than 3% in the length (roughly 1").

4: Add a small amount of your washing liquid of choice to the water & mix. You're only washing one garment so take that into your dosage calculations.

5: Lay your jeans flat in the tub, or gently push them into the bucket.

6: Agitate your jeans gently in the bucket or tub to loosen up any grime.

7: If your jeans are floating in the tub, you can use empty glass bottles / cups to help keep them submerged.

8: Wait 45 minutes. When you come back, the water is going to be greenish-brown. This is normal.

9: Empty the bath or bucket, then give your jeans a quick rinse to get out the washing liquid.

10: Roll-up your jeans in a (dark) bath towel to soak up excess water.

11: Hang your jeans outside in the sun & wind to dry. Do not put them on a radiator to dry as this will ruin your leather patch.



Left to right: New, David's, Han's.

HOW TO MACHINE WASH & DRY

Why machine wash? Your jeans will soften sooner, show off their bright blue tones, and have a more homogeneous look.

Can't be bothered with a bucket? Don't want a blue soap-ring in your tub? Han opts for the machine wash & dry technique. His jeans have been washed ~10 times and worn for ~1 year.

1: Turn your jeans inside out. You want to minimise abrasion to your indigo (warp) threads, Since both washers and dryers tumble your clothes, When inside-out, the white (weft) threads take any abrasion.

2: Set your washing machine settings to:

- Use the minimum amount of water necessary & look after our environment!
- You don't need hot water. Wash at 30 celsius maximum. You may get less vertical shrinkage with cold water, but no matter what, your jeans shouldn't shrink more than 3% in the length (roughly 1").
- Choose a cycle that minimises tumbling and spinning to keep your jeans darker for longer.

3: Add your jeans and washing liquid to the washing machine. You're only washing one (or more) garments so take that into your dosage calculations.

4: Wash.

5: We still recommend hang drying your jeans in the sun & wind if possible. If not, set your dryer as such:

- Use the lowest heat setting you can. High heat will damage your leather patch.
- Choose a cycle that minimises tumbling and spinning to keep your jeans darker for longer.

6: Take your jeans out before your dryer cycle is finished. You don't want to fully dry the jeans as this may cause creasing. Creases in indigo denim cannot easily be reversed.

7: Want to iron your jeans? That's ok! Your fingerprint should still be set in the jeans if you wash them infrequently enough.



Left to right: David's, New, Han's.