How to Clean a Shower Curtain or Liner

Fresh, mould-free curtains and liners — without damaging the fabric or the plastic.

Quick clean	5 minutes (weekly spray)
Deep clean	30–45 minutes (monthly)
Replace liner	Every 6–12 months, if stained, stiff or smelly
Difficulty	Easy — no special products needed

SAFETY — PLEASE READ FIRST

- Never mix vinegar with bleach — or with any bleach-based cleaner. It creates harmful fumes.
- Never hot-wash or tumble-dry a plastic, vinyl or PEVA liner — heat warps, melts and stiffens it.
- Never iron a plastic-backed curtain or liner.
- Work in a ventilated bathroom and wear gloves when treating mould or pink stains.

First: What Type Is It?

Check the label before you start. **Fabric curtains** (cotton, polyester or a fabric outer with a plastic backing) can usually go in the washing machine. **Plastic, vinyl or PEVA liners** must be washed by hand — never in a hot machine wash. If a fabric curtain has a plastic backing, treat it like plastic: wash cool and air-dry only.

What You Will Need

- Normal laundry detergent (for fabric curtains)
- Baking soda (bicarbonate of soda) — 1/2 cup
- White vinegar — 1/2 cup for the rinse (fabric only), plus a spray bottle of 1:1 vinegar and water
- Mild dish soap (for plastic liners)
- 3% hydrogen peroxide (for mould or pink stains)
- 2 clean towels (to balance the machine load)
- A soft sponge or cloth, and an old toothbrush for seams and rings
- A bathtub or large basin, for hand washing
- Rubber gloves

Method 1 — Fabric Curtain (Machine Wash)

1. Take the curtain down and remove all rings and hooks.
2. Shake it outside or over the bath to remove loose dust and hair.

3. Put the curtain in the machine with **2 clean towels** — they balance the load and gently scrub the fabric as they tumble.

4. Add your **normal detergent plus 1/2 cup of baking soda**. Wash on a **gentle cycle at 30–40°C**.

5. Add **1/2 cup of white vinegar to the rinse only** — never to the wash with the detergent, so it can soften and freshen the fabric properly.

6. Take it out straight away and **air-dry**: hang it back on the rail with the bathroom door open, or hang it outside out of direct strong sun.

7. Do NOT put a plastic-backed curtain in a hot dryer, and do NOT iron it — heat damages the backing.

Method 2 — Plastic, Vinyl or PEVA Liner (Hand Wash)

1. Take the liner down, remove the rings, and lay it in a clean bathtub.

2. Fill the tub with **warm water, 1/2 cup of baking soda and a few drops of dish soap**.

3. **Soak for 30 minutes.**

4. Scrub both sides with a soft sponge or cloth, and use an old toothbrush along seams, folds and the bottom hem where scum collects.

5. For stubborn soap scum, spread a paste of **3 tablespoons of baking soda mixed with 1 tablespoon of water** on the marks and leave it for **10 minutes**, then scrub and rinse.

6. Rinse well with clean warm water, shake off the excess, and hang it back up to air-dry. Never use a hot dryer on plastic.

Mould and Pink Stains

Pink stains are usually bacteria and soap-scum build-up; dark spots are usually mould. For either, spray or dab **3% hydrogen peroxide** directly on the stain, leave it for **10–15 minutes**, then scrub gently and rinse well. Repeat once if the stain is still visible. Wash your hands and gloves after handling mouldy fabric, and ventilate the room. If a liner stays stained, stiff or smelly after two treatments, replace it.

Keep It Clean Between Washes

- **Weekly spray (5 minutes):** spray the liner and the bottom of the curtain with a **1:1 mix of vinegar and water**, leave for 5 minutes, then rinse or wipe. This stops soap scum and pink build-up.
- **After every shower:** pull the curtain fully closed so it dries out, and run the fan or open a window.
- **Monthly deep clean:** follow Method 1 or Method 2 above, depending on the material.
- **Replace a plastic liner every 6–12 months** if it is stained, stiff, torn or still smells after cleaning.

Tick-Off Checklist

Tick each step as you finish it.

- ■ Checked the label — fabric or plastic liner identified
- ■ Rings and hooks removed
- ■ Curtain shaken out over the bath or outside

- ■ Fabric: washed gentle at 30–40°C with 2 towels, detergent + 1/2 cup baking soda
- ■ Fabric: 1/2 cup vinegar added to the rinse only
- ■ Plastic: hand-washed in the tub with warm water, 1/2 cup baking soda and dish soap
- ■ Plastic: soaked for 30 minutes
- ■ Baking soda paste (3 tbsp + 1 tbsp water) left 10 minutes on soap scum
- ■ Mould/pink stains treated with 3% hydrogen peroxide for 10–15 minutes
- ■ Seams, folds and bottom hem scrubbed
- ■ Rinsed well with clean warm water
- ■ Hung up to air-dry (no hot dryer, no iron on plastic)
- ■ Weekly 1:1 vinegar-water spray done (5 minutes)
- ■ Monthly deep clean done
- ■ Plastic liner replaced if stained, stiff, torn or smelly (every 6–12 months)

Safety Reminders

- Never mix vinegar with bleach or bleach-based cleaners.
- Never hot-wash, tumble-dry or iron a plastic, vinyl or PEVA liner.
- Never add vinegar to the wash cycle with detergent — rinse only, for fabric curtains.
- Wear gloves and ventilate the bathroom when treating mould.

Notes