

Wash and care

Cloth pads and period underwear

To wash your cloth pads and period underwear, rinse with water until it runs clear – do this immediately after use if possible, or at the end of the day. Store them in a dry pail/basket with air flow until ready to wash in your regular laundry load. When ready to wash, follow these tips from Clean Cloth Nappies³:

- > Use an adequate amount of good strong detergent since these are heavily soiled items
- > Use warm or hot water
- > Ensure you have good agitation (by loading your machine correctly)
- > Use a long cycle

Menstrual cups and discs

Your cup or disc will come with cleaning instructions, however in general:

- > Sterilise before the start of your cycle
- > Rinse with water when emptying between uses
- > At the end of your cycle, clean with regular soap and water, and sterilise before storing⁴.

This flyer was developed in partnership with Cloth Nappy Workshops Melbourne.

www.clothnappyworkshopsmelbourne.com.au

References

- 1 *Environmental impact of menstrual hygiene products*, Bulletin of the World Health Organisation (2024)
- 2 <https://www.cleanup.org.au/period-waste>
- 3 <https://cleanclothnappies.com/cloth-pads>
- 4 <https://www.menstrualcupsaustraliaonline.com.au>

Reusable menstrual products guide



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179 Maroondah Highway, Ringwood

Discover the range of reusable period products so you can enjoy the cost saving, convenience and environmental benefits!

Reduce waste

Did you know that a person can expect to use around 10,000 disposable menstrual products in their lifetime? Most of these end up in landfill¹ where they can take 300-500 years to decompose, if ever². By switching to reusable menstrual products you can avoid contributing to this waste associated with managing your period.

Save money

The amount of money you can save by switching to reusable period products depends on the frequency, heaviness, and duration of your period. It's estimated that a person will spend around \$100 a year to manage their period. Next month, take note of how many disposable products you use and the cost, and you will be able to work out how much you typically spend in a year.

Comfortable and convenient

Cloth pads and absorbent period underwear flex with your body making them comfortable to wear. When menstrual cups and discs are inserted correctly, you won't feel them and because they are reusable, you'll never run out making them super convenient! With so many options, you're bound to find a product that suits your needs, budget and body.



External options

If you currently use disposable pads, you might consider switching to an external product such as absorbent period underwear or cloth pads.

Absorbent period underwear

Absorbent period underwear are an alternative to disposable pads. They look and feel like regular underwear, but have layers of absorbency and leak prevention sewn in. They are available in the same styles as regular underwear such as bikini briefs and trunks, making them a great way to get into reusable period products. Simply wear them in place of your regular underwear, wash and reuse.

Cloth pads

Cloth pads are another reusable alternative to disposable pads. Like period underwear, cloth pads consist of layers of absorbency and leak prevention and come in different shapes, sizes, fabrics and absorbency levels. They stay in place by wrapping around your underwear with wings that attach to each other with press studs. There are also handmade pads available where you can purchase a custom set made especially for you, in fabrics and patterns of your choice.



How many do you need?

The number of cloth pads or pairs of period underwear you'll need will vary from person to person, but you'll roughly need around 6-12 (plus some spares) with varying levels of absorbency, to match your flow from day-to-day.

Internal options

If you currently use tampons, you might consider switching to an internal product such as a menstrual cup or menstrual disc.

Menstrual cups

A menstrual cup is worn inside the vagina. It collects your flow, rather than absorbing it. Once inserted they form a seal to prevent leaks. Cups come in a range of firmness levels and shapes to fit the wearer and are often made from medical grade silicone. A cup can be worn for up to 8-10 hours, depending on the brand and the heaviness of your flow. It can take a few cycles to get the hang of it, so you may wish to use a cloth pad or period underwear as a backup at first.

Menstrual discs

Menstrual discs are another reusable alternative to tampons that are worn inside the vagina to collect flow rather than absorbing it. Unlike cups, rather than creating a seal they prop into place against your public bone, so they can be easier to insert for some people.

How many do you need?

If you have decided that a menstrual cup or disc is for you, you only need to buy one, making them a very simple switch that can be used for years – sometimes up to 10 years if looked after well and depending on the manufacturer's recommendations.

