

Money Laundering

Contributed by The Editors

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Nylon doesn't grow on trees and neither does cash. And these days, it takes a small fortune to get outfitted for the backcountry. Outerwear is made to take a beating, but if you want it to last, you need to hit the wash.

Almost all waterproof materials—both hard-and softshells—come with a durable, water-repellent treatment (DWR), which causes water to bead and roll off. Without DWR, water would saturate the face fabric and eventually soak through.

Due to age and exposure to dirt, body oils and abrasion, DWR becomes less effective and fabric gets soggy. When a shell stops beading water, simply wash it in warm water to revitalize DWR, even if it's not visibly dirty. Do this several times a season, as necessary, and close all zippers when washing. Regular detergent works for cleaning outerwear, but may leave behind residue that can weaken DWR. Consider using a special detergent, like Nikwax Tech Wash, Granger's 30UC Cleaner, or Atsko Sport-Wash. These cleaners leave no residue, and contain no fragrance or brighteners, which make them choice detergents for any synthetic clothing—stinky softshells to crusty baselayers.

Heat will revive DWR, too. After washing, dry a garment on medium heat for 15 minutes. You can also iron on a warm setting, but be cautious—use a reliable steam iron and place a towel between it and your \$400 shell. Before ironing or drying, check the garment's instructions. Nixwax recommends reapplying DWR after six to eight regular washes—or every couple years. Several wash-in treatments are available for hardand softshells, like Nikwax TX. Direct Wash-In or Softshell Proof, and Granger's 30UC Proofer. Spray-on treatments—like Granger's XT Proofer and ReviveX Spray-On—allow you to target and increase application at high-wear areas, like the shoulders and waist on a jacket. Follow manufacturer instructions on the bottle and clean garments prior to treating. Rinse and repeat. —The Editors