



### TRICKY-CARE TOOLBOX

These four items will keep your prized pieces in mint condition.



#### ◀ Handheld steamer

This surprisingly powerful version holds enough water to press up to four garments and has a handy brush attachment.

**TO BUY:** Rowenta Ultra Steam Steambrush, \$50, shoprowenta.com.



#### ◀ Wrinkle-release spray

Spritz away creases with this nontoxic, allergen-free miracle worker. No heat or hunching over an ironing board required.

**TO BUY:** The Laundress Crease Release, \$6 for two ounces, thelaundress.com.



#### ◀ Mesh laundry bag

Finally, a zippered bag that's large enough (20 by 23 inches) to keep tops and dresses from snagging in the washing machine.

**TO BUY:** Washermate polyester wash bag, \$7, stacksandstacks.com.



#### ◀ Acid-free tissue paper

Ordinary tissue paper can cause clothing to yellow over time. Store delicates with these fabric-preserving sheets.

**TO BUY:** University Products unbuffered tissue paper, \$18 for 100 sheets, archivalsuppliers.com.

## PLEATS

### WHERE YOU'LL FIND THEM

Besides the obvious places, like pleated skirts and tuxedo shirts, soft versions are showing up in ruched tops and draped dresses.

### HOW TO CLEAN

There are two kinds of pleats: Heat-set pleats, like those on an accordion-pleated dress (shown above) and the origami-like folds of starburst pleats, hold their shape thanks to a heat process. Stitched-in pleats, such as those on a knife-pleated skirt or on anything ruched or draped, are sewn into place. Not sure how to tell which is which? "Lightly spray water on a small area," says John Mahdessian of Madame Paulette. "The pleat will loosen if it is heat set."



FIG. 1: Ironing



FIG. 2: The spray method

Pick up the iron and set it down again farther down the pleat. (Don't drag it across the fabric or the pleats will pucker.) Repeat on the rest of the pleats. Avoid ironing over the clips. See Fig. 1: *Ironing*.

▶ **Tuxedo shirt:** Turn the shirt inside out and iron the backs of the pleats, then turn the shirt right-side out, press down on several pleats, and give them a burst of steam. Pick up the iron and set it down again farther down the pleats. Repeat.

▶ **Soft folds:** Use a steamer, because an iron will create hard creases. As you skim the steamer over the fabric, carefully hold the slack fabric straight with your free hand. No steamer? Spritz the garment with a wrinkle-release spray (see Tricky-Care Toolbox, left), smooth out the fabric with your hands, and hang to dry. See Fig. 2: *The spray method*.

### HOW TO STORE

"Everything needs to hang," says designer Rebecca Taylor. Give pleated pieces some breathing room to prevent crimping.

▶ **Heat-set pleats:** Dry-clean these garments to preserve the crispness of the pleats.

▶ **Stitched-in pleats:** These won't lose their shape when wet, so you can usually machine wash them on a gentle cycle.

### HOW TO DEWRINKLE

▶ **Heat-set pleats:** Generally speaking, take these items to a dry cleaner. However, if your garment is made of a synthetic fabric, you can safely steam it.

▶ **Knife-pleated skirt:** Lay the skirt on an ironing board and attach a paper clip to each pleat's fold to keep it in place (clip about three at a time). Place the iron at the top of the pleat and burst the steam.