



ECO-FRIENDLY LAUNDRY PRODUCTS are free of harsh ingredients like artificial preservatives and perfumes, so they're gentler on clothes and safer for the planet than traditional cleaners. "If you're new to the green movement or are working on slowly phasing synthetic chemicals out of your life, your home is a great place to begin," says Linda Mason Hunter, author of *Creating a Safe and Healthy Home* (Creative, 2005). Get a fresh start with these editor-tested essentials. —5.A.

- 1. Cut down ironing time by as much as 30 percent with the energy-saving Oliso Steam Iron (\$120; www.oliso.com). Its unique auto-lift technology—in which the iron rests on legs built into the surface plate—means you don't have to prop up the iron on its base, which gives you more control and reduces the risk of burns and other accidents.
- 2. Add a set of two Nellie's Dryerballs (\$40; www.nellies laundry.com) to the dryer instead of using fabric soft-ener—they relax fibers naturally, leaving clothes softer and towels more absorbent. What's more, the balls, which last for 1,000 loads, help clothes dry 25 percent faster by increasing airflow to the fabric.
- 3. Conventional dryer sheets coat clothes with wax and perfumes and are slow to break down once they're discarded. Shaklee Get Clean Soft Fabric Dryer Sheets (\$10; www.shaklee.com) are veggie-based, fragrance free, biodegradable, and recyclable.
- 4. Many stain removers treat spots with potent chemicals and artificial fragrances.

  Bi-O-Kleen Bac-Out Stain & Odor Eliminator (\$7; www .bi-o-kleen.com) uses live enzyme cultures, lime peel extract, and natural plantbased surfactants to digest stains and odors.
- 5. Ecover Laundry Wash (\$8; Whole Foods Market), with its lavender-scented, plant-derived formula, works just as well as chemical and petroleum-based detergents, yet is biodegradable and safe for waterways.
- 6. Earth Friendly All Natural Spray Starch (\$3.50; www .greenfeet.com) is a safe alternative to conventional aerosol formulas. It has a short list of ingredients—purified water, cornstarch, and cotton-blossom oils—but delivers a stiff punch.