

Thanks for your interest in Retro Clean. Here are some directions for cleaning your vintage quilt. If you haven't washed this quilt in the past, it's best to test for colorfastness prior to getting it wet. Take a q-tip and dip it in hot water, then lightly rub your colored areas in an inconspicuous spot to see if any color transfers. Repeat, trying different temperatures of water. If even the slightest bit of color transfers, it is not stable and it will most likely bleed when immersed in water. If this is the case, there is a product called Synthrapol that is formulated to remove the excess dye. If not, proceed as follows...

We recommend a 3 part process to get the best results. Start by hand washing your quilt to remove any surface dirt, then soak to remove the more stubborn stains, and finally, wash again to remove any residual. For this reason we provide two products which work together. Here is a more complete explanation...

The best technique we know of for washing a delicate vintage quilt is as follows...first wash it to remove any surface dirt...lay a sheet in your bathtub (to use as a sling...a wet quilt can be heavy and picking it up may pop some seams), fill it about a third to half full. Mix in your laundry powder (Retro Wash is a great, gentle solution as it has no phosphates, softeners, brighteners, dyes, or perfumes, yet is very concentrated...only 1 tbsp. for a half tub). Lay your quilt in and avoid twisting or wringing, but rather push the fabric through the solution. Let it soak for 10 minutes or so, push again, drain, rinse (Retro Wash will rinse clear the first time), then push as much water out of the quilt as possible. Lift the sheet out with the quilt inside.

Move the quilt into a tub (we use the kind you would use for ice and soda at a party), put enough Retro Clean solution to immerse the items and let sit for up to 48 hours. If you're working indoors, you may want to add hot water occasionally or do this procedure in your backyard in the sunshine to keep the water warm. When done, empty the water into your garden (it's biodegradable and safe for the environment).

Wash again to remove any residual, rinse and push as much water as possible out of the quilt and into the tub, then roll the quilt in some towels and squeeze out any excess water until it is just damp. Finally, lay the quilt on dry towels on a bed to dry or if it's sunny, lay a sheet on your grass, lay the quilt on the sheet and cover with a second sheet over it, to avoid direct contact with the sun or birds and let air dry. We avoid hanging wet quilts to avoid undue stress on the seams and fabric.

I hope this has helped. There is also a tutorial on the website, as well as a video on the Testimonial page which explores several different uses. Feel free to call the office if you have any other questions.

All the Best!

Larry Gonzales  
Retro Clean