

## BLEACHING LINEN YARN AND FABRIC

While linen was traditionally processed “grey” or its natural color, it is quite possible to bleach both linen yarn and fabric without damaging the fiber. Yarn is best lightened by boiling(simmering) it for about an hour in a large pot using one ounce of SOAP and one ounce of WASHING SODA for a gallon of water. If the yarn is still not light enough, the process can be repeated.

Newly woven fabric can also be lightened/bleached by the same method using a larger pot.

Linen fabric can also be bleached using “solar power”. Traditionally, the newly woven fabric was laid out on “bleaching fields” for several days to several weeks. The fabric was kept damp and turned regularly. While bleaching yards of fabric in the garden might be awkward today, gravy stains and other blemishes on white linen goods can be substantially lightened by putting that piece (tablecloth, runner, napkin) in the sun for a day or two.

The use of chloring bleach is not recommended for linen. There is no information about using non-chlorine bleaches for modern laundry.