

A viscous jelly detergent: a sustainable innovation with less packaging



Procter & Gamble (P&G) has launched a new type of detergent, a thick viscous gel. The product requires 34% less packaging than most liquid detergents. Production also consumes significantly less water and energy. Additionally, it performs well even at 15°C, so the customer saves energy as well.

prevent **pack**

A **more compact product** requires less packaging

P&G launched the new product, Ariel Excel Gel, in Belgium in April 2009. It comes in compact 667 millilitre flasks (18 washing doses) with a specially designed dosing cap.

Linda Blereau of P&G notes that 'the gel is squeezed into the dosing cap, which is then set on top of the laundry in the machine drum. A 37-millilitre dose is usually sufficient. Heavily soiled laundry may need a little more. Gel and packaging enable very

precise dosing without any waste.'

Ariel Excel Gel produces a series of ecological advantages. 'The product is much more compact than current concentrated detergents and uses up to 34% less packaging material than most liquid detergents currently on the Belgian market,' says Blereau. 'We also have calculated that the production and distribution of this gel requires up to 50% less water and up to 40% less energy.'

Washing clean **at 15°C saves energy**

Ariel Excel Gel was developed specifically to clean at all temperatures, including temperatures that require no water heating. 'Ariel Excel Gel contains enzymes as well as special 'Coolclean' ingredients,' explains Blereau. 'These ingredients are active at washing temperatures as low as 15°C, matching the cold cotton washing program.'

This means an important additional saving in energy. Blereau:

'When considering the all inclusive cost of a single washing cycle, 75% of the total energy required is consumed in the home. Heating the water consumes 85% of this domestic energy consumption; the rest is for rotating the drum. Consumers who choose to wash at low temperatures, or even without any additional water heating whatsoever, save a great deal of energy.'

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good to remember

Ariel Excel Gel consumes **up to 34% less packaging material**. Production requires up to 50% less water and up to 40% less energy compared to diluted liquid detergents.

A washing dose contains up to **three times more** ingredients that are active at cold temperatures. That is why the gel can even wash fabrics clean at **15°C**, without heating the water. This accounts for a significant energy saving.

The product is not derived from an existing formulation. It was developed from scratch with the intent of combining excellent washing performance with **minimal environmental impact**.

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How did P&G develop the new Ariel Excel Gel?



Step 1: focus on washing performance and sustainability

Ariel Excel Gel results from a research project that sought to find the 'detergent of the future'. P&G required that the product perform excellently, even at low temperatures. This substantially lowered its environmental impact, since heating water consumes most of the energy used during the washing process. A concentrated product also reduces packaging and transportation.



Step 2: start from scratch

The product was developed from scratch and is not merely an upgrade of an existing formulation. 'We brainstormed for three months. This resulted in approximately five billion possible formulations. We checked these against our very strict initial criteria and eventually ended up with 30 formulations for comprehensive testing. The result was Ariel Excel Gel,' says Blereau. 'It took three years to convert the initial concept into a mature product.'



Step 3: testing and stimulating market acceptance

P&G conducted in-depth surveys to assess whether the consumer would welcome this compact gel detergent and its packaging. In the Netherlands, a survey population of 1,500 responded very positively. 'The results are promising in other countries as well,' observes Blereau. 'We are quite optimistic about this. We intend to promote this product strongly and clearly explain its advantages for the consumer.'

Linda Blereau, External Relations Benelux, P&G:

'We developed a combination of active washing ingredients that make a consistent and stable gel without additives.'

High concentration, no unnecessary additives

Ariel Excel Gel is not derived from an existing detergent, but is a completely new formulation. It contains three times more cold active ingredients than ordinary detergent. What's more, P&G has found a formulation that does not require any additives to build a consistent viscous gel. As a result, the product and its packaging are even more compact than other concentrated detergents.

Procter & Gamble and the environment

- At Procter & Gamble, sustainability has been a top priority for more than ten years.
- Realizations in environmental matters:
 - The Ariel Cool Clean product and the 'Turn to 30°' campaign urge consumers to wash at **lower temperatures**.
 - In 2007, P&G built The Big Box in Amiens, France, the largest distribution centre in Western Europe. A series of advanced technologies for **sustainable construction** were used throughout the construction process. Sustainable energy systems include solar cells, wind turbines, plentiful natural light, and economical TL lighting.