

Exploiting the inattentive

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The makers of a certain major brand of detergent which I will not name (but which for the purposes of this discussion will be called “Snide”) appears to take every step to exploit inattentive customers.

A box of Snide detergent powder comes with instructions indicating that for a normal-sized load, you should use $\frac{3}{8}$ cup of detergent; for a large load, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.

The detergent box also comes with a handy measuring cup.

The measuring cup holds $\frac{5}{8}$ cup of detergent.

Not to be outdone, Liquid Snide plays a similar trick.

The instructions indicate that for a normal-sized load, you should fill the cup to line 1 (the lowest line). For a large load, fill to line 2. If you look at the cup they provide, there is also a line 3 which is even higher than lines 1 and 2. Not even counting the imaginary “line 4” which is what you get if you fill the cup to the brim.

Just because it comes with a measuring cup doesn’t mean you have to use it.

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