

LIQUID DETERGENT HAVING IMPROVED
SOFTENING PROPERTIES

5 The present invention relates to novel liquid detergent compositions to be used in the laundering of fabrics, comprising anionic and nonionic surfactants and an alkyl glycoside in an amount effective to improve cleaning efficacy and to provide improved softening properties in the absence of quaternary ammonium softening compounds. Such compositions are also referred to by the term "softergent".

10 The use of various and diverse chemical materials and particularly cationic quaternary ammonium compounds as softeners for textile products is very well known in the art. It is also well known to employ such materials for their softening effects during the laundering operation and particularly in the rinse cycle of the laundering process. This latter technique has been necessitated by the fact that the aforesaid quaternary compounds heretofore employed, being mainly cationic in nature, were not compatible with the anionic detergents, one of the major types of detergents used in the washing cycle. Furthermore, cationic quaternary compounds are relatively ineffective in the presence of nonionic detergents.

20 It is also well known that there is a tendency for laundered articles to yellow or discolour when treated with the aforesaid quaternary compounds.

25 Another disadvantage associated with the use of the said cationic agents in the laundering of fabrics therewith is its interference with the deposition on the fabrics of optical brighteners, thereby reducing optical brightener performance of a detergent

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composition containing the said optical brighteners.

Still another disadvantage of the cationic quaternary ammonium antistatic softener is its interference with the cleaning properties of the detergent by reducing the soil removal effected by the detergent, resulting in decreased washing effectiveness. The presence of the anionic detergent material substantially negates the fabric softening properties of the cationic quaternary ammonium compounds.

Accordingly, the aforesaid quaternary agents have been combined with a variety of compounds designed to counteract the adverse detergency properties thereof, or the said quaternary softening agents have been replaced by other softening agents to improve cleaning efficacy.

Higher alkyl mono- and poly-glycosides useful as detergents, textile softeners, surfactants, gelling agents, food emulsifiers and lubricants; and processes for their preparation have been disclosed in US Patent Nos. 3,598,865; 3,707,535; 3,839,318; 3,772,269; and 3,219,656.

Higher alkyl polyglycosides have been used as nonionic surfactants in a variety of detergent compositions in conjunction with anionic surfactants as shown in US Patent Nos. 3,721,633 and 4,483,787; European Patent Nos. 0,070,074; 0,070,075; 0,070,076; 0,092,877.

The higher alkyl polyglycosides have also been used to improve the detergency of nonionic surfactants in laundry compositions, as shown in US Patent No. 4,483,779, European Patent Nos. 0,075,994; 0,075,995

and 0,075,996.

5. The prior art also discloses detergent compositions containing an alkyl polyglycoside, a conventional nonionic surfactant and a cationic fabric softening compound to provide both softening and detergency properties during laundering, as shown in US Patent No. 4,493,773; European Patent Nos. 0,094,118 and 0,106,692. However, these patents expressly omit anionic surfactants as being detrimental to the composition.

10. European Patent No. 0,105,556 discloses a liquid dishwashing detergent capable of promoting rapid and relatively complete drainage of rinse water in order to reduce spotting and filming on surfaces such as glass, ceramics and metal, comprising a major amount of anionic surfactant and minor amounts of higher alkyl polyglycoside and nonionic surfactant.

15. US Patent No. 4,488,981 discloses the use of 1-10% C₂-C₆ alkyl glycosides as a hydrotrope, i.e. to reduce viscosity and prevent phase separation, in detergent compositions containing nonionic and/or anionic and/or cationic surfactants.

20. However, none of the cited prior art references discloses a liquid detergent (or softergent) composition for simultaneously cleaning and softening fabrics comprising three essential ingredients, an effective softening amount of an alkyl glycoside which also improves detergency properties and a surfactant system consisting essentially of a major amount of a nonionic surfactant and a lesser amount of an anionic surfactant.

25. 30. We have now discovered that the addition of an alkyl glycoside surfactant to a stable liquid

detergent formula imparts fabric softening properties in the absence of any other known softening agent, and boosts detergency of a nonionic-anionic surfactant system.

5. Accordingly, the present invention aims to provide a liquid detergent composition having fabric softening properties and cleaning efficacy in the absence of cationic quaternary ammonium softening compounds.

10. The invention also aims to provide a liquid detergent composition, that simultaneously cleanses and softens fabrics during the laundering process comprising an alkyl glycoside, a nonionic surfactant and an anionic surfactant as the three essential ingredients.

15. The invention further aims to provide a liquid detergent formulation having improved cleaning and softening properties, due to the presence of an alkyl glycoside in a detergent composition containing a mixture of nonionic and anionic surfactants.

20. According to the present invention, a soap free liquid detergent composition for laundering fabrics comprises three essential ingredients, namely an effective fabric softening amount of an alkyl glycoside in the absence of a quaternary ammonium softening compound, a first amount of a nonionic surfactant other than an alkyl glycoside, the said first amount being from 15 to 30% by weight of the composition, and a second amount of an anionic surfactant, the said second amount being a lesser amount than the said first amount and excluding any content of hydrotropes, the said hydrotropes being sodium ^{and} ~~or~~ potassium xylene
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sulphonates, sodium ^{and} or potassium toluene sulphonates,
c^muene sulphonates ^{and} or ethyl benzene sulphonate, in an
aqueous carrier, the composition being free of
quaternary ammonium fabric softening compound the

5. composition optionally containing one or more of the
said hydrotrophes. The invention also extends to a
method of simultaneously cleansing and softening
fabrics without

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reducing brightener and detergency performance which comprises treating fabrics with a composition in accordance with the present invention during the wash cycle of the laundering operation.

- More specifically, the present invention relates
5. to a stable liquid detergent composition free of quaternary ammonium softening compounds, comprising a fabric softening amount of a C_1 - C_{30} , preferably a C_1 or C_8 to C_{23} , or more preferably a C_{12} - C_{13} , alkyl mono- or polyglycoside in an amount of at least 6% and up to 30%
 10. by weight, a major amount of a nonionic surfactant of 15-30%, and a lesser amount of an anionic surfactant of 4-12% by weight, in an aqueous carrier.

- The alkyl glycosides function as fabric softening agents as well as boosting detergency in a nonionic-anionic surfactant system. It is believed that the alkyl glycosides coat the surface of the fabric and/or alter the fabric structure, thereby imparting softening benefits. It is believed that the alkyl glycosides may disrupt hydrogen-bonding and make it more substantive to fabrics than the quaternary ammonium softening compounds, thereby affording superior softening properties to fabrics in the absence of quaternary softening agents. The alkyl glycosides do not interfere with detergency and/or brightener deposition which is a common problem of softergents. Problems with regard to grease spotting and water proofing have not been observed to occur.
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- The alkyl glycosides, utilized in the compositions of the present invention may be defined as having one or more hydrophobic groups containing 1 to 30 carbon atoms per hydrophobic group, and a hydrophilic glycoside group
30. containing 1 to 10, and preferably from

1 to 3 saccharide radicals. The alkyl glycosides may be represented by the following formula:

$RO(R'O)_xZ_n$, wherein R represents a C_1-C_{30} alkyl radical, (R'O)

5. represents an ethoxy, propoxy or glyceryl group, X has a numerical value of 0-10 and preferably 0, Z is a reducing saccharide containing 5 or 6 carbon atoms, and n has a numerical value of 1-10 and preferably 1.0 to 3. The hydrophobic alkyl group may be saturated or unsaturated, branched or straight chain, preferably saturated and linear, containing 1 to 30 carbon atoms, preferably
10. 8 to 23, carbon atoms. Suitable alkyl glycosides include methyl, ethyl, propyl, octyl, nonyl, decyl, undecyl, dodecyl, tridecyl, tetradecyl, hexadecyl, heptadecyl and octadecyl glycosides and mixtures thereof, in the form of monoglycosides, diglycosides, and triglycosides. The glycoside units may be glucose, galactose,
15. mannose, lactose and/or fructose. Methods of preparing the aforesaid glycosides are disclosed in US Patent Nos. 3,598,865; 3,707,535; 3,839,318; 3,772,269; 3,219,656, all of which are incorporated herein by reference. The addition of the alkyl glycoside to the detergent provides fabric softening properties as
20. well as improving the cleaning efficacy thereof. The amount of glycoside should be sufficient to soften fabrics in the absence of known softening agents such as the cationic quaternary ammonium softening agents, and preferably constitutes at least 6% up to 30% by weight of the composition.

25. In accordance with the present invention, the nonionic surfactants for use as the fabric detergent are commercially well known and include the primary or secondary aliphatic alcohol ethoxylates, alkylphenol

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ethoxylates and the alcohol ethylene oxide-propylene oxide condensates such as Plurafacs (Registered Trade Mark) (Wyandotte), and mixtures thereof. The nonionic synthetic organic detergents are generally the

5. condensation product of an organic aliphatic or alkyl aromatic hydrophobic compound and hydrophilic ethylene oxide groups. Practically any hydrophobic compound having a carboxy, hydroxy, amido, or amino group with a free hydrogen attached to the nitrogen can be condensed
10. with ethylene oxide or with the polyhydration product thereof, polyethylene glycol, to form a nonionic detergent. Further, the length of the polyethenoxy chain can be adjusted to achieve the desired balance between the hydrophobic and hydrophilic elements.

15. The nonionic detergents include the polyethylene oxide condensate of one mole of alkyl phenol containing from 6 to 12 carbon atoms in a straight- or branched-chain configuration with 5 to 30 moles of ethylene oxide, for example, nonyl phenol condensed with 9 moles
20. of ethylene oxide, dodecyl phenol condensed with 15 moles of ethylene oxide. Condensation products of the corresponding alkyl thiophenols with 5 to 30 moles of ethylene oxide are also suitable.

- Also included in the nonionic detergent class are
25. the condensation products of a higher alcohol (e.g. an alkanol containing 8 to 18 carbon atoms in a straight or branched-chain configuration) condensed with 5 to 30 moles of ethylene oxide, for example, lauryl-myristyl alcohol condensed with about 16 moles of ethylene
30. oxide.

A preferred group of nonionic surfactants are the Neodol (Registered Trade Mark) ethoxylates (Shell Co.), which are higher aliphatic alcohol ethoxylates having 5

- to 20 ethyleneoxy groups per mole of aliphatic alcohol containing 10-18 carbon atoms, such as C_{12} - C_{13} alkanol condensed with 6.5 moles ethylene oxide, C_{12} - C_{15} alkanol condensed with 12 moles ethylene oxide, C_{14} - C_{15} alkanol condensed with 13 moles ethylene oxide, and the like. Ethoxamers having a HLB (hydrophobic lipophilic balance) value of 8-15 give good O/W (oil in water) emulsification, whereas ethoxamers with low HLB values (below 8) contain less than 5 ethyleneoxy groups, and are poor emulsifiers and poor nonionic detergents. This nonionic surfactant is present
5. in the detergent composition in accordance with the present invention in an amount greater than the anionic surfactant content, and in the range 15-30% by weight. The nonionic surfactant, e.g. the nonionic alcohol ethoxylates defined above, preferably constitutes the major detergent component in this composition.
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- The anionic surfactants utilized in the detergent compositions of the present invention are commercially well known and include alkylbenzene-sulphonic acid and its salts, e.g. compounds of the formula alkyl-phenyl- SO_3 -M, wherein alkyl is an alkyl radical of C_8 to C_{22} and preferably C_{10} to C_{18} and M is hydrogen or an alkali metal, which compounds comprise a well-known class of anionic detergents and include sodium dodecylbenzene sulphonate, potassium dodecylbenzenesulphonate, sodium laurylbenzenesulphonate, and sodium cetylbenzene sulphonate.
20. Others include paraffin sulphonates, alkyl sulphates, alcohol ether sulphates, olefin sulphonates and the alkylphenoethoxylate sulphates (e.g. sodium dinonylphenoxynonaethoxyethanol sulphate), and other equivalent water-soluble salts, particularly of the
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alkali metal series.

and Among the above-noted alkylbenzene-sulphonic acids
the salts thereof, the preferred compounds include

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those which are biodegradable and which are particularly characterised by a linear alkyl substituent of from C₁₀ to C₂₂ and preferably from C₁₂ to C₁₅. It is, of course, understood that the carbon chain length represents, in general, an average chain length since methods for producing such products usually employs alkylating reagents of mixed chain length. It is clear, however, that substantially pure olefins as well as alkylating compounds used in other techniques can and do give alkylated benzene sulphonates wherein the alkyl moiety is substantially (i.e. at least 99%) of one chain length, i.e. C₁₂, C₁₃, C₁₄, or C₁₅. The linear alkyl benzene sulphonates are further characterized by the position of the benzene ring in the linear alkyl chain with any of the position isomers (i.e. alpha to omega) being operable and contemplated.

In addition to the benzene sulphonates one may also employ the lower alkyl (C₁ to C₄) analogs of benzene such as toluene, xylene, the trimethyl benzenes, ethyl benzene, isopropyl benzene and the like. The sulphonates are generally employed in the water soluble salt form which include as the cation, the alkali metals, ammonium and lower amine, and alkanolamine cations.

Examples of suitable linear alkyl benzene sulphonates include:

sodium n-decyl benzene sulphonate
sodium n-dodecyl benzene sulphonate
sodium n-tetradecyl benzene sulphonate
sodium n-pentadecyl benzene sulphonate
sodium n-hexadecyl benzene sulphonate

and the corresponding lower alkyl substituted homologues of benzene as well as the salts of the cations previously referred to. Mixtures of these sulphonates may, of course, also be used with mixtures which may include compounds wherein the linear alkyl chain is smaller or larger than indicated herein provided that the average chain length in the mixture conforms to the specific requirements of C_{10} to C_{22} .

The linear paraffin sulphonates are also a well-known group of compounds and include water-soluble salts (alkali metal, amine, alkanolamine, and ammonium) of:

- 1-decane sulphonic acid
- 1-dodecane sulphonic acid
- 1-tridecane sulphonic acid
- 1-tetradecane sulphonic acid
- 1-pentadecane sulphonic acid
- 1-hexadecane sulphonic acid

as well as the other position isomers of the sulphonic acid group.

In addition to the paraffin sulphonates illustrated above, others with the general range of C_{10} to C_{22} alkyls may be used, with the most preferable range being from C_{12} to C_{20} .

The linear alkyl sulphates which are contemplated for use in compositions in accordance with the present invention comprise the range of C_{10} to C_{20} . Specific examples include sodium n-decyl sulphate; sodium n-dodecyl sulphate; sodium n-hexadecyl sulphate, sodium n-heptadecyl sulphate; sodium n-octadecyl sulphate; and the ethoxylated (1 to 100 moles ethylene oxide) derivatives such as the ethoxylated alcohol sulphates, and, of course, the ^{corresponding salts of the} other water-soluble salt-forming

cations mentioned above.

5. Included in the group of anionic detergents, which have been described above as suitable for use in the present invention, are the olefin sulphates, including long chain alkene sulphonates, long chain hydroxyalkene sulphonates, as well as disulphonates. Examples of suitable olefin sulphonates, which are merely illustrative of the general class, are sodium dodecenyl-1 sulphonate, sodium tetradecenyl-1 sulphonate, sodium hexadecenyl-1 sulphonate, and sodium octadecenyl-1 sulphonate. The amount of anionic surfactant utilized in the compositions of the present invention is preferably considerably less than the nonionic (ethoxylated aliphatic alcohol) surfactant content by weight, and preferably less than 50% by weight of the nonionic surfactant content, and more preferably constitutes 4-12% by weight, of the composition.

20. The detergent compositions of the present invention may also include conventional laundering additives such as optical brighteners, germicides, soil suspending agents, antiredispersion agents, antioxidants, colouring materials (dyes and pigments), perfumes, water-soluble alcohols, foam boosters, 25. hydrotropes namely sodium and potassium xylene sulphonate, sodium and potassium toluene sulphonate, cumene sulphonate, and ethyl benzene sulphonate, enzymes and enzyme stabilizers, and builders such as tripolyphosphate, bicarbonate etc., provided they do 30. not interfere with the detergency and softening activity of the composition.

The invention may be put into practice in various ways and a number of specific embodiments will be described to illustrate the invention with reference to the accompanying examples.

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Example 1

A composition is made up having the ingredients and proportions given in Table 1 below.

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Table 1

	C12 - 15 :7 M ethoxylated alcohol (Shell Neodol 25-7)	20.0%
	Dodecyl benzene sulphonate	4.0%
15.	Methyl glycoside	6.0%
	Ethanol	4.0%
	Sodium xylene sulphonate	4.0%
	Triethanolamine	1.0
	Perfume	0.4
20.	Colour	0.5
	Water	Q.S.

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The liquid detergent is prepared by mixing the above ingredients until homogeneous to form a stable liquid composition.

Examples 2A to 2E

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A detergent composition (Example 2A) having the ingredients and proportions given in Table 2 is made up.

Table 2

- 21% Neodol 25-7
 4% Sodium dodecyl benzene sulphonate
 6% Methyl glycoside
 0.4% Brightener
 5. 8% Ethanol
 5% Sodium xylene sulphonate
 0.5% Colour
 Q.S. Water
10. This formulation was tested in a 5 cycle, 6lbs.
 (2.7 Kgs) clean load softness test using Solo as the
 control having the greatest softness (10). The
 softness rating of this formulation, which is 7.2 (the
 average of these readings after the 1st, 3rd and 5th
 15. cycle) compares favourably to a control (Solo), as
 shown in Table 3. The softness rating is within a
 range of 1 (the harshest) to 10 (the softest). The
 absence of the glycoside in Products 1 and 2 (Examples
 2B and 2C) containing a quaternary softening agent
 20. yields a composition having lower softening properties
 (5.9 and 5.8 respectively). Example 2B is 6% dodecylbenzene
 sulphonate (DBS) and 6% tallow trimethyl quat (quat). Example 2C
 is 5% DBS and 5% quat and 6% tallow amine 15 ethylene oxide
 (TAE0). The conjoint use of the quaternary softening agents and
 25. the glycoside yields improved softness ratings of 6 and 6.8
 (Products 3 and 4) (Examples 2D and 2E). Example 2D is 4% DBS and
 4% quat and 3% TAE0 and 2% methyl glycoside (MG). Example 2E is
 4% DBS quat and 2% MG. However, superior softening properties are
 effected by the sole use of
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the alkyl glycoside (Product 5) (Example 2A) over the conventional quaternary softening agents.

The following Table 3 summarises the brightening and static results of the 5-cycle softening/static/brightener tests of 5 test products and 2 controls. Fluorescence of the cotton swatches is read as a measure of brightener effectiveness (Rb).

Table 3A

10	Products:	C O N T R O L			Product 1.
		<u>DYNAMO</u>	<u>SOLO</u>		<u>LIQ.DET.6/6</u>
15	Static	Moderate	Light		Very
	Control	to Heavy	v. Light		Light
	Brightening				
	1st wash	188.5	102.9		214.7
	3rd wash	223.1	95.9		240.4
20	5th wash	209.7	90.5		222.4
	Softness	1	10		5.9
	<u>SRI</u>	=	<u>171.5</u>		<u>186.1</u>

Table 3B

25	Products:	Product 2.	Product 3.
		<u>Liq. Det. 5/5/6E</u>	<u>Soft. 4/4/3E/2MG</u>
30	Static Control	Light v Light	Very Light
	Brightening		
	1st wash	211.1	216.3
	3rd wash	228.2	241.9
	5th wash	228.9	237.4
	Softness	5.8	6.0

<u>SRI</u>	<u>190.2</u>	<u>186.6</u>
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Table 3C**Products:**

5.		Product 4.	Product 5.
		<u>Soft. 4/4 2MG</u>	<u>Soft. 4/0/6MG</u>
	Static Control	Light v Light	Moderate Heavy
	Brightening		
10.	1st wash	227.1	228.5
	3rd wash	253.2	254.2
	5th wash	251.4	257.0
	Softness	6.8	7.2
	<u>SRI</u>	<u>193.4</u>	<u>184.1</u>

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The above results indicate that methyl glycoside imparts superior softening benefits to fabric. The lab tests also indicate that the glycoside imparts superior brightening benefits in liquid formulations. However,

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in the absence of quat. Product 5 (Example 2A), no static control is achieved.

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The precise composition of Examples 2B to 2E is set out in Table 4 below.

Table 4

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<u>Example</u>	2B	2C	2D	2E
	<u>Parts %</u>			
<u>Ingredients</u>				
Neodol	21	21	21	21
10. DBS 1	6	5	4	4
quat ²	6	5	4	4
TAE0 ³	-	6	3	-
MG ⁴	-	-	2	2
Brightener	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
15. Ethanol	8	8	8	8
SXS ⁵	5	5	5	5
Colour	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Water	QS	QS	QS	QS

20. Notes on Table 4

- 1 Sodium dodecyl benzene sulphonate
- 2 Tallow trimethyl quaternary ammonium chloride
- 3 Tallow amine 15 ethylene oxide
- 25. 4 Methyl glycoside
- 5 Sodium xylene sulphonate

30. The detergents containing an effective fabric softening amount of an alkyl glycoside have been unexpectedly found to improve the detergency and the softening properties of the detergent composition, in the absence of conventional softening agents, such as quaternary ammonium compounds. This is clearly shown

5. in Table 3 by Product 5 (Example 2A) containing 6% methyl glycoside. Likewise, Product 5 (Example 2A) exhibits a greater brightness after the 1st, 3rd and 5th wash cycle, than Products 1, 2, 3 and 4 (Examples 2B to 2E).

Examples 3 - 8

10. Liquid detergents are made up having the ingredients and proportions given in Table 5 below.

Table 5

<u>Examples</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
15. <u>Ingredients</u>						
Neodol 25-7	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	21
Dodecyl benzene sulphonate	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	6
20. Sodium xylene sulphonate	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	5
C ₁₂₋₁₃ glycoside	22.6					
C ₉₋₁₁ glycoside		23.5				
C ₁₂₋₁₃ triglycoside			26.1			
C ₉₋₁₁ triglycoside				21.1		
25. Methyl glucoside					12.0	
Tallow trimethyl ammonium sulphate						6
Water	Q.S	Q.S	Q.S	Q.S	Q.S	Q.S

30. The above compositions were subjected to a three cycle 1.5 lbs. (0.7 kgs) clean fabric load test to

ascertain the softening properties of the alkyl glycosides.

5. The softening properties of the test compositions were assigned on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 indicates a harsh feel (no softness) and 10 the softest feel. Fabrics washed in SOLO, a commercially available detergent, are the control i.e. they define the 10 softness rating.

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The results are given in Table 6 below. Example 8 is a comparison example and contains a quaternary ammonium softening agent in lieu of the alkyl glycoside.

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Table 6

	<u>Softness Ratings:</u>	<u>Cycle 1</u>	<u>Cycle 3</u>
10.	Example 3	6.8	4.4
	Example 4	5.2	3.8
	Example 5	5.6	4.0
	Example 6	5.2	6.2
	Example 7	3.6	3.0
15.	Example 8 (comparison)	3.6	6.4
	Solo (Control)	9.8	10.0

These results illustrate the fabric softening properties exhibited by detergent compositions containing alkyl glycosides in a nonionic-anionic surfactant system wherein the nonionic surfactant is the primary detergent supplemented by minor amounts of anionic surfactant, in the absence of quaternary ammonium softening agents.

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Amounts as low as 6% alkyl glycoside is effective in improving both the detergency and softening properties of a detergent composition used in the laundering of fabrics. In addition, the formulations in accordance with the present invention exhibit better cleaning and softening efficacy than other surfactant and/or softener combinations presently on the market, as shown by the comparative results in Table 3.

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5. A 3-cycle clean load softening test was conducted using glucose with a C₁₂-C₁₃ carbon chain attached to the anomeric carbon (AGP-23-1). The controls used were Solo = 10 and DAP = 1. Another formulation using a monotallow-trimethylammonium sulphate (M Quat 620) was included in the test. All softening agents were added at a 6% level. Five panelists evaluated the products.

		<u>1st Wash Cycle</u>	
		<u>Average</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>
10.	AGP 23-1	6.8	1.8
	M Quat 620	4.6	1.0
		<u>3rd Wash Cycle</u>	
	APG 23-1	7.6	1.4
	M Quat 620	6.4	2.4

15. The unexpected superiority of the alkyl glycoside as a softening agent over the prior art quaternary softener exhibited above, avoids the inherent problems associated with the use of the said quaternary compounds in detergent compositions. It is now possible
20. to formulate a composition wherein neither detergency nor softening is compromised.

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CLAIMS

1. A soap free liquid detergent composition for simultaneously cleaning and softening fabrics comprising three essential ingredients, namely an effective fabric softening amount of an alkyl glycoside in the absence of a quaternary ammonium softening compound, a first amount of a nonionic surfactant other than an alkyl glycoside, the said first amount being from 15 to 30% by weight of the composition and a second amount of an anionic surfactant, the said second amount being a lesser amount than the said first amount and excluding any content of hydrotropes, the said hydrotropes being sodium and potassium xylene sulphonate, sodium and potassium toluene sulphonate, cumene sulphonate and ethyl benzene sulphonate, in an aqueous carrier, the composition being free of quaternary ammonium fabric softening compound, the composition optionally containing one or more of the said hydrotropes.
2. A composition as claimed in Claim 1 in which the amount of alkyl glycoside is at least 6% and up to 30% by weight.
3. A composition as claimed in Claim 1 or Claim 2 in which the alkyl glycoside has one or more hydrophobic groups containing 1 to 30 carbon atoms per hydrophobic group, and a hydrophilic glycoside group containing 1 to 10 reducing saccharide radicals.



4. A composition as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 3 in which the alkyl glycoside is a C_1 or C_8 to C_{23} alkyl monoglycoside or polyglycoside.
5. 5. A composition as claimed in Claim 4 in which the alkyl glycoside is C_{12} - C_{13} alkyl glycoside.
6. A composition as claimed in Claim 4, in which the glycoside is methyl glycoside.
10. 7. A composition as claimed in Claim 4 in which the glycoside is C_{12} - C_{13} alkyl triglycoside.
8. A composition as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 7 in which the nonionic surfactant is selected from the group consisting of primary aliphatic ethoxylates, alkylphenol ethoxylates, alcohol ethylene oxidepropylene oxide condensates, and mixtures thereof.
15. 9. A composition as claimed in Claim 8 in which the nonionic surfactant is a C_{12} - C_{15} aliphatic alcohol having 7 ethylene-oxy groups per mole of alcohol.
20. 10. A composition as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the anionic surfactant is selected from the group consisting of alkylbenzene sulphonates, alcohol ether sulphates, olefin sulphonates, paraffin sulphonates, alkyl sulphates, and ethoxylated alcohol sulphates.
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11. A composition as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the anionic surfactant content is less than 50% by weight of the nonionic surfactant content.

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12. A composition as claimed in Claim 10 in which the anionic surfactant constitutes 4-12% by weight of the composition.

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13. A composition as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the anionic surfactant is sodium dodecyl benzene sulphonate.

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14. A composition as claimed in Claim 1 substantially as specifically described herein with reference to Example 1 or Example 2A.

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15. A method of simultaneously cleansing and softening fabrics without reducing brightener and detergency performance which comprises treating fabrics with a composition as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in the wash cycle of the laundering operation.

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