

Choose garments, fabrics carefully to get best buys

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When you shop for clothes nowadays, there is one thing of which you can be sure, and that is that the prices will be high. You want to know that you are getting a good buy for your money, and that the merchandise is of good quality. By examining the garment in the store, you can determine the quality of the workmanship.

There is another factor to be considered before deciding whether or not a garment is worth purchasing, and that is the care necessary to maintain its new-looking appearance. Fabrics are either machine washable, hand washable or dry cleanable, and you must be willing to accept and follow the directions for care supplied by the manufacturer of the garment. Dry cleaning is an added expense and you therefore may wish to look for garments that can withstand normal washing with regular detergents and oxygen bleach.



Falls

When you buy any textile product, you expect it to retain its new-looking appearance for some time. One factor that can greatly influence the breakdown of this new look, however, is color loss from the fabric. This problem can occur in the washing process or with exposure to sunlight or even the atmosphere alone. The following are terms given for various types of color loss.

Fugitivity is a general term used when colors are not colorfast and are lost by one or more methods.

Bleeding refers to dyes which fade or run in water. They will turn the water a shade of the color released.

Crocking is the rubbing or abrading of color from fabric surfaces. This may occur when a dye is only fixed onto the surface of a fabric and has not penetrated into the fibers.

Migration describes the shifting of color to adjacent areas in printed fabrics, as when the white background of a red print turns pink after washing.

Fume fading, also known as **atmospheric fading**, is caused by certain elements in the air combining and causing some dyes to lose color. This may be noticeable when you take a garment that has been stored for some time out from the back of a dark closet. Often it will be the shoulders which will fade first.

Sunlight fading is the loss of color due to exposure to sunlight. Curtains and draperies are especially susceptible to this type of fading if they are not lined.

Perspiration fading is the breakdown of dyes in the presence of perspiration. It is most often apparent under the arms, especially on summer or sport clothes.

For the dyes used in all fabrics to be colorfast to all the above methods of color loss would be unnecessary. For example, it would be needless to use a color dye which is fast to perspiration fading on a drapery fabric and likewise to use a dye that will not bleed on a fabric that will only be dry cleaned. It is important, therefore, that the dyes used on fabrics be appropriate for the end use of

the textile product.

Washability should mean being able to wash a fabric repeatedly without the fabric showing evidence of loss of strength (tears or holes) or loss of color. A washable fabric may be considerably changed by the

addition of color dyes, or chemical treatment, and by additions of other fabrics such as linings, etc., when transformed into a garment. Also, fabric construction makes a difference in washability of a fabric category.

We think of cotton as one of the best washable fabrics, being even stronger when wet than when dry, and yet it is evident that corduroy, denim and percale have much greater washability than gauze, dotted swiss, organdy and lawn. Your

guide, therefore, to the proper care of a textile product is the specific statement on the hang tags or care labels that state that a garment is guaranteed washable or that it has guaranteed washable (tub-fast) colors.

Only the manufacturer can give you this information. Anything less specific involves a risk on your part. When a garment carries such a guarantee, it can be washed normally, using a regular detergent and a safe oxygen bleach.

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