



Homemakers: Fabric Performance

Eliminate static cling have been developed and are identified on attached labels and hangtags.

DURABILITY
Durability can determine the suitability of a particular fabric for a specific purpose. Iterates for special occasions may be used or worn infrequently and need not be as durable as work apparel.

children's clothing or active sportswear. "Pilling"—Durable fabrics start with strong fibers. (Read Hangtags and Labels for Fiber Content). Most synthetic fibers are more durable than the natural fibers. Synthetic fibers are often combined with the weaker natural fibers to add wear life to the article. Because natural fibers are weaker, they produce lint by

breaking and coming loose from the fabric. Synthetic fibers are stronger and rather than breaking off in the form of lint, the fiber ends roll up on the surface of the fabric in tiny balls or pills. This "pilling" may occur with fabrics made of 100% synthetic fibers and blends of synthetic and natural fibers.

to snagging, than woven fabrics because of their looped construction. Snagging occurs when a yarn loop catches on a rough object and is stretched or pulled to the surface without being broken. Holes or runs occur in some knits when the yarn is broken. Holes most often occur in cotton knit garments when a yarn is broken, and becomes more apparent each

time the item is laundered. **CARE REQUIRED**
Maintaining that "just purchased" appearance in garments and fabrics requires careful attention to fabric care procedures. The care that will be required for any garment or fabric should be considered carefully before you buy. Remember: Read labels for proper care recommendations.

BY JOYCE A. WATTS
Ass't Home Ec. Agent
Before you buy... Learn how to predict fabric performance. There are 4 factors to keep in mind before you buy fabric in order to predict fabric performance and avoid later disappointment. The 4 factors are: appearance, comfort, durability and care required.

How and where the fabric will be used or worn will determine the relative importance of each factor. For instance, appearance may be the deciding factor when selecting an evening dress while the amount of care required will be the more important consideration when choosing children's play clothes.

APPEARANCE
Wrinkle Resistance—Resiliency is an important factor in appearance. Wrinkle resistance is determined by a number of things, including Fiber Content—Generally, nylon, polyester, acrylic, triacetate and blends containing a predominance of these fibers are more resilient than untreated cotton or linen. Fabric Construction—Knit fabrics are usually more wrinkle resistant than woven fabrics. Finish—Permanent press is the most widely used finish that affects fabric performance. The application of a chemical resin and heat-setting process is usually applied to a blend of cotton and a synthetic fiber to assure wrinkle resistance. Garments of 100% synthetic fiber are naturally resilient and do not require a finish for wrinkle resistance. Permanent press finishes lessen the durability and wear life of fabrics. Creases, edges such as collar points and cuffs, and areas of abrasion may show wear by fraying, losing color or piling.

Colorfastness—If an article is two-tone or is multi-colored containing both light and bright colors, check the label for care information and/or a statement that the article is colorfast. Bright or dark colors should usually be washed alone the first time they are laundered. If trim is not detachable, both trim and garment fabric should be colorfast and compatible in required care.

COMFORT
Garments should be comfortable as well as attractive. Comfort can be affected by a number of things. Fit is important, as it affects not only how garments look but also how comfortable you feel wearing them. If a garment has a permanent press finish or heat-set creases, make sure it fits since it is often impossible to remove previous creases after alteration. Consider how active you will be wearing the garment—walking, bending, sitting or reaching—to decide if the fit is acceptable. Stretch—fabrics that stretch are often preferred for active children or adults because they allow greater freedom of movement. Comfort of stretch fabrics may be due to elastic fibers, textured yarn structure or fabric construction. When purchasing a garment in which the stretch factor is important, check for the direction it stretches. Some fabrics stretch both ways, others only across grain (usually across the body.)

ABSORBENCY
Absorbency is a characteristic that affects wearing comfort as well as functional value. Absorbent fibers such as cotton or linen feel comfortable on hot days as well as in humid climates because they absorb perspiration. For some home furnishings items, towels for example, absorbency is of prime importance. Most synthetic fibers are nonabsorbent and may be uncomfortable in warmer temperatures. However textured yarns, blends with absorbent fibers, or loose, open construction that allows air to circulate through the fabric will improve comfort. Static electricity may build up in nonabsorbent fabrics, causing the fabric to cling to the body and attract lint and soil. Adding fabric softener to the final rinse in an automatic washer when laundering nonabsorbent fabrics will minimize static buildup. Fiber modification and special finishes that

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