

**A**

Absorbency- The ability of a fabric to take in moisture.

Acetate- A manufactured fiber formed by compound of cellulose, refined from cotton linters and/or wood pulp, and acetic acid that has been extruded through a spinneret and then hardened.

Acrylic- A manufactured fiber, its major properties include a soft, wool-like hand, machine washable and dryable and excellent color retention.

Alpaca- A natural hair fiber obtained from the Alpaca sheep, a domesticated member of the llama family.

Angora- The hair of the Angora goat. Also known as Angora mohair. Angora may also apply to the fur of the Angora rabbit.

Antique Satin- A reversible satin-weave fabric with satin floats on the technical face and surface slubs on the technical back created by using slub-filling yarns. It is usually used with the technical back as the right side for drapery fabrics and often made of a blend of fibers.

Argyle- A pattern designed with different color diamond shapes knit into a fabric.

**B**

Bamboo Fabric- Bamboo fabric is a natural textile made from the pulp of the bamboo grass. Bamboo fabric has been growing in popularity because it has many unique properties and is more sustainable than most textile fibers. Bamboo fabric is light and strong, has excellent wicking properties, and is to some extent antibacterial.

Barkcloth- A textured woven, usually printed cotton fabric that was popular in the 30s-40s and 50s as an interiors fabric. The prints were often large vines, leaves and florals.

Basket Weave- A distinctive technique of weaving that creates a fabric resembling basket work with interwoven fibers.

Batik- A method of dyeing fabric where some areas are covered with wax or pastes made of glues or starches to make designs by keeping dyes from penetrating in pattern areas. Multicolored and blended effects are obtained by repeating the dyeing process several times, with the initial pattern of wax boiled off and another design applied before dyeing again in a new color.

Bengaline- A fabric with a crosswise rib made from textile fibers (as rayon, nylon, cotton, or wool) often in combination.

**Blackout-** A type of fabric that is commonly used for drapery, this fabric has the distinctive quality of blocking light, and comes in two forms: 2-pass and 3-pass. Two-pass has two applications of foam on a fabric, which means the black layer of foam will be visible. 3-pass has two layers of white and one layer of black foam. Three-pass can also be used as an upholstery fabric, as the black layer is not visible. Blackout fabrics can also be insulating and noise-dampening.

**Boucle-** A knit or woven fabric with small curls or loops that create a nubby surface. The fabric has a looped, knotted surface and is often used in sweater looks, vests and coats.

**Broadcloth-** A plain weave tightly woven fabric that is usually made from 100% cotton or a cotton blend. Most common uses are quilting and shirt-making.

**Brocade-** A heavy jacquard-type fabric with an all-over raised pattern or floral design. Appropriate for upholstery, draperies, handbags and eveningwear.

**Buckram-** A very stiff cotton fabric that is been soaked in a substance to fill in the gaps between the fibers. The fiber is usually cotton and is finished with starch and resin. Buckram fabric is most commonly used as the supporting material inside of baseball caps. It is also used in lady's hats, costumes, belts, and handbags.

**Burlap-** A loosely constructed, heavy weight, plain weave fabric. It has a rough hand. Appropriate for draperies and decorative items.

**Burn-out Velvet-** Created from two different fibers, the velvet is removed with chemicals in a pattern leaving the backing fabric intact. Appropriate for more unconstructed and loosely fit garments.

## C

**Canvas-** A strong, durable, closely woven cotton fabric.

**Cashmere-** A natural fiber obtained from the soft fleecy undergrowth of the Kashmir goat. A luxury fiber with a very soft hand.

**Challis-** A lightweight, soft plain weave fabric with a slightly brushed surface. The fabric is often printed, usually in a floral pattern. Challis is most often seen in fabrics made of cotton, wool, or rayon.

**Chambray-** A plain woven fabric that can be made from cotton, silk, or manufactured fibers, but is most commonly cotton. It incorporates a colored warp (often blue) and white filling yarns.

**Chenille-** The French word for caterpillar, this soft fabric is created by placing short pieces of yarns between core yarns and twisting the yarn together to make a fabric.

Charmeuse- A luxurious, supple silky fabric with a shiny satin face and a dull back. Generally either silk, rayon ,or polyester.

Chevron- Lightweight, extremely sheer and airy fabric, containing highly twisted fibers.

Chintz- A plain-weave fabric, which has been glazed to produce a polished look. Fabric must be dry-cleaned as the glazing will wash off with machine laundering. Suitable for drapes and lining.

Corduroy- A fabric, usually made of cotton or a cotton blend, utilizing a cut-pile weave construction. The “wale” indicates the number of cords in one inch.

Cotton- A white vegetable fiber grown in warmer climates in many parts of the world, has been used to produce many types of fabric for hundreds of years. Cotton fabric feels good against the skin regardless of the temperature or the humidity and is therefore in great demand by the consumer.

Crepe- Used to describe all kinds of fabrics--wool, cotton, silk, rayon, synthetics and blends--that have a crinkle, crimped or grained surface.

Crewel- A true crewel fabric is embroidered with crewel yarn (a loosely twisted, two-ply wool) on a plain weave fabric. Traditional crewel fabrics are hand-woven and embroidered in India. The design motif for crewel work is typically outlines of flowers, vines, and leaves, in one or many colors. Modern weaving technology and inventive designers create traditional “crewel” looks with weave effects alone, without the use of embroidery.

## D

Damask- A glossy jacquard-type fabric, the patterns are flat and reversible. Unlike jacquards, the fabric is all one color.

Denim- A twill weave cotton fabric made with different colored yarns in the warp and the weft. Due to the twill construction, one color predominates on the fabric surface.

Dobby- A decorative weave, characterized by small figures, usually geometric, that are woven into the fabric structure.

Double Rub- Double rubs measure a fabric’s abrasion resistance, determined by the Wyzenbeek test. Each double rub is one back and forth pass over a stretched piece of fabric by a mechanical arm. The test is run until the fabric shows noticeable wear.

Duck- A tightly woven, heavy, plain-weave, bottom-weight fabric with a hard, durable finish. The fabric is usually made of cotton.

Dupioni- A crisp fabric with irregular slubs.

## E

Elasticity- The ability of a fiber or fabric to return to its original length, shape, or size immediately after the removal of stress.

Embossing- A calendaring process in which textiles are engraved with the use of heated rollers under pressure to produce a raised design on the fabric surface.

Embroidery- An embellishment of a fabric or garment in which colored threads are sewn on to the fabric to create a design. Embroidery may be done either by hand or machine.

## F

Faux Suede- Leather with a napped surface.

Felt- A non-woven fabric made from wool, hair, or fur, and sometimes in combination with certain manufactured fibers, where the fibers are locked together in a process utilizing heat, moisture, and pressure to form a compact material.

Filament- Single polyester fiber that is usually not twisted.

Flannel- Usually a 100% cotton or other natural fabric that has been brushed on one or both sides for softness.

Flax- The plant from which cellulosic linen fiber is obtained. The fiber in fabrics known as linen.

Fleece- Synthetic knit fabric that stretches across the grain.

Flocked- A raised, often velveteen design added onto the surface of a fabric. Flocking adds interest and texture to fabric.

Frieza- A strong, durable, heavy-warp yarn pile fabric. The pile is made by the over-wire method to create a closed-loop pile.

**G**

Gabardine- A worsted twill weave that is wrinkle resistant. Wool gabardine is the most common and is considered year-round fabric for suits.

Greige- Unfinished; not fully processed; neither bleached nor dyed. Grois Point- A fabric which features large points of yarn on the surface of the fabric.

Grosgrain- A tightly woven, firm, warp-faced fabric with heavy, round filling ribs created by a high-warp count and coarse filling yarns.

**H**

Heather- A yarn that is spun using pre-dyed fibers. These fibers are blended together to give a particular look. (For example, black and white may be blended together to create a grey heathered yarn.) The term, heather, may also be used to describe the fabric made from heathered yarns.

Herringbone- A variation on the twill weave construction in which the twill is reversed, or broken, at regular intervals, producing a zig-zag effect.

Homespun- Refers to a coarse, plain weave fabric with a hand-woven look.

Houndstooth- A variation on the twill weave construction in which a broken check effect is produced by a variation in the pattern of interlacing yarns, utilizing at least two different colored yarns.

**I**

Ikat- A fabric, usually handwoven which has been tie-dyed in the yarns prior to weaving. The pattern can range from simple little dots to intricate double ikats.

**J**

Jacquard- Woven fabrics manufactured by using the Jacquard attachment on the loom. This attachment provides versatility in designs and permits individual control of each of the warp yarns. Thus, fabrics of almost any type or complexity can be made. Brocade and damask are types of jacquard woven fabrics.

Jute- A bast fiber, chiefly from India, used primarily for binding threads in carpets and rugs.

**K**

**Kapok-** A short, lightweight, cotton-like, vegetable fiber found in the seed pods of the Bombocaceae tree. Because of its brittle quality, it is generally not spun. However, its buoyancy and moisture resistance makes it ideal for use in cushions, mattresses, and life jackets.

**Khaki-** A tan or dusty colored warp face twill, softer and finer than drill. Name derived from East India word meaning “earth color.” Fabric made of cotton, linen, wool, worsted, or manmade fibers and blends.

**Knit Fabric-** Fabrics made from only one set of yarns, all running in the same direction. Some knits have their yarns running along the length of the fabric, while others have their yarns running across the width of the fabric. Knit fabrics are held together by looping the yarns around each other.

**L**

**Lace-**An openwork fabric with yarns that are twisted around each other to form complex patterns or figures. Lace may be hand or machine made by a variety of fabrication methods including weaving, knitting, crocheting, and knotting.

**Lama-** A woven fabric using flat silver or gold metal threads to create either the design or the background in the fabric.

**Laminate-** This fabric is created by bonding a thin polymer film to cotton fabric.

**Leather-** Animal skin dressed for use as clothing

**Faux Leather-** A Simulated leather.

**Linen-** A natural plant fiber, linen fibers are stronger and more lustrous than cotton.

**Loomstate-** Fabric as it comes directly off the loom before any post weaving treatment.

**Lurex-** A fabric created from a yarn formed from synthetic film and includes a metallic layer that adds metallic features to fabrics.

**M**

**Matlesse-** A medium to heavyweight luxury fabric made in a double cloth construction to create a blistered or quilted surface.

**Melton-** A heavyweight, dense, compacted, and tightly woven wool or wool blend fabric.

**Merino-** A type of wool that originates from pure-bred Merino sheep. The best Merino wool comes from Italy.

**Mesh-** A type of fabric characterized by its net-like open appearance, and the spaces between the yarns.

**Microfibers-** An extremely fine synthetic fiber that can be woven into textiles with the texture and drape of natural-fiber cloth but with enhanced washability, breathability, and water repellancy.

**Mohair-** Hair fibers from the Angora goat..

**Moiree-** A corded fabric, usually made from silk or one of the manufactured fibers, which has a distinctive water-marked wavy pattern on the face of the fabric.

## **N**

**Napped-** Napped fabric has a surface texture with an added visual appeal, and is frequently featured in flannel, corduroy, velvet, and satin. The napped texture is created by brushing the surface.

**Nylon-** First produced in 1938, the first completely synthetic fiber developed. Known for its high strength and excellent resilience, nylon has superior abrasion resistance and high flexibility.

**Olefin-** A synthetic fiber made from polyolefin. This fabric is usually strong and colorfast, with a resistance to staining, mildew, abrasion, and sunlight.

**Ottoman-** A heavy, plain weave fabric with wide, flat crosswise ribs that are larger and higher than in faille. It sometimes comes with alternating narrow and wide ribs..

**Outdoor-** Outdoor fabric is used to recover cushions, pillows, create awnings, and more for spaces exposed to nature's elements like the sun and rain.

## **P**

**Paisley-** A tear-drop shaped, fancy printed pattern. The paisley shape as a design motif began by using the side of hand in the fist position to create a pattern.

**Panel-** In the office furniture business, panel fabrics are those used in space dividers to create individual workspaces.

**PFD-** A fabric that is not sized or finished. PFD stand for Prepared For Dyeing.

**Piece-dye-** Fabric that is woven in with natural yarns and then dyed to create color.

**Pima Cotton-** A type of cotton plant developed in the Southwestern USA from a cross between Egyptian and Uplands cotton which is longer in fiber length and more lustrous than most American cottons.

**Plush-** A compactly woven fabric with warp pile higher than that of velvet. Made of cotton, wool, silk, or manmade fiber, often woven as double face fabric and then sheared apart.

**Polyester-** A manufactured fiber introduced in the early 1950s, and is second only to cotton in worldwide use. Polyester has high strength (although somewhat lower than nylon), excellent resiliency, and high abrasion resistance.

**Poplin-** A fabric made using a rib variation of the plain weave. The construction is characterized by having a slight ridge effect in one direction, usually the filling

## R

**Ramie-** A bast fiber, similar to flax, taken from the stalk of a plant grown in China.

**Raschel Knit-** A warp knitted fabric in which the resulting knit fabric resembles hand crocheted fabrics, lace fabrics, and nettings. Raschel warp knits contain inlaid connecting yarns in addition to columns of knit stitches.

**Rayon-** A natural fiber created from wood pulp.

**Recycled-** Recycled yarn is a rather new addition to the eco knitting scene that involves combining new and recycled fibers into a completely different yarn product.

## S

**Sailcloth-** Any heavy, plain-weave canvas fabric, usually made of cotton, linen, polyester, jute, nylon, etc.

**Sateen-** A fabric made from yarns with low luster, such as cotton or other staple length fibers. The fabric has a soft, smooth hand and a gentle, subtle luster.

**Satin-** A woven fabric with a lustrous, shiny surface.

**Selvedge-** The edge of a fabric woven in a tight weave so that it will not fray, ravel, or curl.

**Shantung-** A medium-weight, plain weave fabric, characterized by a ribbed effect, resulting from slubbed yarns used in the warp or filling direction.

**Sheer-** Any very light-weight fabric (e.g., chiffon, georgette, voile, sheer crepe).



**Silk-** A natural filament fiber produced by the silkworm in the construction of its cocoon. Most silk is collected from cultivated worms; Tussah silk, or wild silk, is a thicker, shorter fiber produced by worms in their natural habitat. All silk comes from Asia, primarily China.

**Shantung-** Similar to Dupioni silk, Shantung has a more refined appearance with smaller slubs.

**Sisal-** A strong bast fiber that originates from the leaves of the Agave plant, which is found in the West Indies, Central America, and Africa.

**Solution dyed-** Yarns that are dyed in the fiber state before being spun or extruded into yarn.

**Spandex-** A manufactured elastomeric fiber that can be repeatedly stretched over 500% without breaking, and will still recover to its original length.

**Spun yarns-** Yarn produced by spinning fibers into a continuous strand.

## T

**Tapestry-** A heavy, historically hand-woven fabric featuring an elaborate design depicting a historical or current pictorial display. The fabric design is made by using multiple colored filling yarns

**Tarpaulin-** A waterproofed canvas sometimes made of nylon or other manmade fiber.

**Tencel-** Created from wood pulp. Tencel is similar to rayon in look and performance.

**Terry Cloth-** Unclipped, looped pile,

**Ticking-** A variety of fabrics are known as “ticking.” The main weave is a closely-woven, thick yarn twill. Spaced, colored, and natural or white yarns repeated in the warp, and all natural or white in the filling, forming a stripe.

**Toile-** A type of decorating pattern consisting of a white or off-white background on which has a repeated pattern depicting a fairly complex scene. The pattern portion consists of a single color.

**Tweed-** A medium to heavy weight, fluffy, woolen, twill weave fabric containing colored slubbed yarns.

**Twill-** A fabric that shows a distinct diagonal wale on the face

## U

**Ultrasuede-** An imitation suede fabric composed of polyester microfibers combined with polyurethane foam in a non-woven structure. Hand and appearance resemble sheep suede.

**V**

Velour- Usually with a knitted back, velour resembles velvet, but has some stretch.

Velvet- With a longer pile, velvet is the most luxurious fabric. Classic velvets are woven and sheared during the weaving process to create the pile.

Velveteen- A cotton or cotton blend fabric with a short, dense pile. It lacks the sheen and drape of velvet.

Viscose- The most common type of rayon. It is produced in much greater quantity than cuprammonium rayon, the other commercial type.

**W**

Waffle Cloth- Cloth that has a honeycomb weave made on dobby loom. Usually of cotton.

Warp- The threads on a loom over and under which other threads (the weft or filling) are passed to make fabric. These yarns go vertically the length of the fabric.

Weft- Also referred to as the "filling". The yarns on a loom that cross over and under other threads (the warp) to make fabric. These yarns go across the fabric.

Wool- Wool is naturally stain and wrinkle resistant. It can absorb up to 40% of its weight in moisture without feeling damp. Wool comes in many forms including crepe, felt, gabardine, merino, melton, jersey and worsted wool suitings.

Wool Crepe- A lightweight worsted fabric with a more or less crinkly appearance, obtained by using warp yarns that are tightly twisted in alternate directions.

Woven Fabric- Fabrics composed of two sets of yarns. One set of yarns, the warp, runs along the length of the fabric. The other set of yarns, the fill or weft, is perpendicular to the warp. Woven fabrics are held together by weaving the warp and the fill yarns over and under each other.

**Y**

Yarn- A continuous strand of textile fibers created when a cluster of individual fibers are twisted together. These long yarns are used to create fabrics, either by knitting or weaving.

Yarn-Dyed- Fabric created from yarns that are dyed first before weaving.