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CLOTHING TAGS & TIPS

Judging Quality

Quality clothing combines the best of style, workmanship and serviceability. It means well cut, well chosen fabric and a just-right finished appearance. Learn to judge quality, then decide the level you want to pay for.

Fabric is the basic foundation of a garment. When examining clothing, check the grain and the color match of garment pieces.

If the garment is cut off-grain the skirt, bodice, collar or sleeves will hang crooked on the body. Little can be done about these major defects, and the garment may go on the sale rack. Beware.

Color match problems are easier to detect. Check carefully that all sections of the garment are exactly the same color. If some parts are cut from different dye lots or print lots, differences in fabric color are quite possible. Such garments are often sold as seconds with the manufacturer's label removed.

The process of matching plaids and stripes increases the cost of the garment because of the added labor in cutting and sewing. Bias sections are often used to cut costs without lowering garment quality.

Learn to recognize quality features.

Collars should set smoothly on the garment. Corners should be even and not roll upward. Underlinings or undercollars should not be visible, and supportive fabric should be used if needed.



Sleeves should seem to blend into the total garment. They need to be roomy enough for the upper arm. Long sleeves should cover wristbone when arm is bent. The curve of the armhole should be smooth and gradual, and fullness in the sleeve cap should be evenly distributed. The crosswise grain above the elbow should be parallel with the floor, and inner sleeve seams should not twist on the arm. The lengthwise grain should hang straight from the end of the shoulder to the elbow.

Waistlines or waistbands should be smooth, flat, and even in width. Sewn-in ribbon seam binding or a strip of firmly woven fabric may be added for shape retention.

Hems should be even, proportioned to the width and flare of the skirt, and inconspicuous from the right side.

Closures may have simple, lapped plackets; more expensive garments may feature bound plackets. Zippers should be inconspicuous unless they are intended to serve a decorative effect. Eliminating zippers cuts labor costs. The spacing and finishing of buttonholes are labor-intensive. Fused buttonholes, a cost-cutting move, are found in many synthetic fabrics.

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