Fiber properties are important in purchasing all articles of fabric because they give valuable clues to performance and care. This handy "purse-size" reference tells you what you can expect from fiber families or generic groups of fibers.

The generic (or family) name is required by law¹ to appear on the label. Reliable manufacturers and retailers abide by this ruling.

Fabric finishes sometimes alter fiber properties. Read labels for guarantees in performance.

Look at your label; it contains valuable information.

Natural Fibers

COTTON (cellulosic)


Uses: All kinds of light weight apparel.

Care: Can be laundered or drycleaned; limited only by finish, dye and construction of garment. May be machine washed or dried. Avoid risk of mildew. Do not use chlorine bleach on resin treated cotton unless label says safe to do so.
LINEN
(cellulosic)

Characteristics: Cool, crisp, comfortable in warm weather. Extremely durable and does not lint. Wrinkles easily unless treated to resist wrinkling.

Uses: Women’s and children’s dresses, blouses and summer suiting.

Care: May be laundered, wet cleaned or dry cleaned. Iron at high temperature. Avoid pressing in sharp creases. Avoid mildew.
SILK
(protein)


Uses: Light and medium weight clothing; accessories.

Care: Drycleaning preferred. Careful hand laundry possible with some items. Protect from perspiration. Can be attacked by moths and carpet beetles.
WOOL
(protein)


Uses: Outerwear; medium weight clothing.

Care: Drycleaning preferred. Will shrink and felt in presence of moisture, heat and agitation, as in laundry. Must be protected from moths and carpet beetles. Washable finish possible. Check label.
Man-made Fibers

ACETATE (AND TRIACETATE)

Characteristics: Crisp or soft, depending on end use. Drapes well. Dries quickly. Subject to sun fading, unless solution dyed. Low durability.

Triacetate less sensitive to heat and acetone. Possesses good wet strength.

Uses: Light and medium weight clothing.

Care: May be laundered, wetcleaned or dry-cleaned. Will glaze and melt at low temperature in ironing or pressing.

Trademark names: Avicolor\(^1\), Avisco Actate, Celanese Actate, Celaperm\(^1\), Celaspun, Dupont Ace-tate, Acele, Color-sealed Acetate\(^1\), Estron, Cromspun\(^1\), Arnel, Arnel 60, Celaloft.

\(^1\)Solution-dyed.
ACRYLIC


Uses: Tailored outerwear, knitted wear, pile fabrics.

Care: Remove oily stains before washing. Waterborne stains easily removed. Body oils and perspiration penetrate fibers and are hard to remove.

Trademark names: Acrilan, Creslan, Orlon, Zefran, Zefkrome\(^1\), Sayelle.

\(^1\)Solution-dyed.
METALLIC

Characteristics: Glitter.

Uses: Decorative accent.

Care: Laundered or drycleaned. Iron at low temperature.

Trademark names: Chromeflex, Fairtex, Lame, Lurex, Malora, Metlon, Mylar.
MODACRYLIC

Characteristics: Soft, warm, quick drying and durable. Resistant to wrinkling and to chemicals.

Uses: Deep-pile and fleece fabrics.

Care: Very sensitive to heat. Remove oily stains before washing.

Trademark names: Dynel, Verel.
NYLON

*Characteristics:* Exceptional strength. Excellent elasticity. Permanent shape retention. Woven fabrics often hot and uncomfortable to wear.

*Uses:* Hosiery, lingerie, sweaters, wind jackets, dress fabrics. In combination with other fibers.

*Care:* Washes easily. Care must be taken to maintain whiteness. Press at low temperature. Avoid long exposure to sunlight.

*Trademark names:* Antron, Cadon, Caprolan, Cumuloft, Nylon, Enka.
POLYESTER


Uses: Wash and wear apparel. Often in combination with other fibers.

Care: Easily washable. Needs little ironing or pressing. Remove oily stains before washing. Stanley degreaser. Fuller Brush degreaser.

OLEFIN


Uses: Shoe fabrics, non-woven fabrics, draperies, brocades.

Care: Use low temperature in washing. Do not dryclean.

Trademark names: DLP, Herculon, Reevon, Royalene, Polypropylene.
RAYON


Polynosic—High wet strength.

Uses: Light and medium-weight clothing.

Care: Dryclean. Can be laundered, but does not withstand treatment that can be given cotton or linen. Tends to shrink.

Trademark names: Avicolor\textsuperscript{1}, Avril, Bemberg, Coloray\textsuperscript{1}, Corval, Cupioni, Narco, Veri-Dul.

\textsuperscript{1}Solution-dyed.
RUBBER

Characteristics: High degree of stretch and recovery. Deteriorated by body oils and perspiration.

Uses: Foundation garments and swimwear.

Care: Wash frequently with mild soap. Avoid constant overstretch.

Trademark names: Lastex.
SPANDEX


Uses: Foundation garments, swimwear, men's wear, ski pants, other sports wear.

Care: Machine washable in warm water. May be machine dried.

Trademark names: Blue "C", Lycra, Vyrene.

REMEMBER — YOUR LABEL IS YOUR CLUE TO CARE!

Trade names are used only to simplify information. No endorsement of named products is intended nor criticism implied of similar products not mentioned.

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