



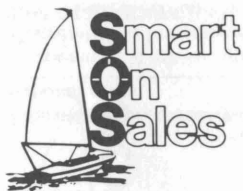
TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM  
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS 77843

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## TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

The Texas A&M University System

S.O.S. Shopper:

Clothing sales are popular to clear out seasonal inventories. Now is a good time to look for all-season fabrics and classic styles that will not be outdated. I hope this letter on Clothing Dollars and Sense will help you find big savings. Remember that a bargain is never a bargain if it doesn't meet a need!

The S.O.S. letter series and other educational programs are provided at no charge by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. Extension publications are available from my office to give you shopping guides for other items you may find on sale this month. If you would like to receive any of these bulletins or know more about other Extension programs, contact me.

### A General Guide to Clothing Sales

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Accessories	x							x				
Children's Wear							x		x			x
Infant's Wear	x				x			x		x		x
Drugs and Cosmetics	x											
Fabrics and Notions	x	x		x			x					
Furs	x	x						x			x	
Hosiery		x				x						
Jewelry	x			x	x							
Lingerie and Sleepwear	x			x		x						
Men's and Boy's Wear	x	x			x	x						
Outerwear (coats)	x							x		x		
Resort and Cruise Wear	x											x
Shoes	x						x					
Sportswear		x					x	x				x
Women's Dresses	x	x			x	x						

Happy Sales,

County Extension Agent



## CLOTHING DOLLARS AND SENSE

The key to stretching clothing dollars is shopping skill. Learning to recognize high quality workmanship and materials will help you find the best value for your money.

### SHOPPING TECHNIQUES

Develop shopping techniques that can help you locate clothing at the price you want to pay. The following points may help you make better decisions for your fashion dollar.

- Study fashion trends to know current styles; evaluate their attractiveness and compatibility with existing garments and accessories.
- Plan for clothing needs ahead of time.
- Read permanent care labels and hangtags to know manufacturer's name, fiber content and care requirements.
- Compare prices, values, merchandise and service in several stores.
- Select the best quality you can afford for items you wear often. Lower quality can be selected for garments that will be worn infrequently, be out of fashion quickly or be outgrown rapidly.
- Buy well-made clothing to achieve a better fit, longer wear and an attractive appearance.

### CLUES TO QUALITY

Judge clothing quality by careful examination and comparison shopping. Check the labels for information on fiber content, care instructions and special finishes. Then look for signs of careful workmanship. The following points will help you determine good quality while shopping for clothing.

#### Garment Cut and Fabric Allowance

- Be sure that each fabric piece is cut so that the garment will hang straight on the wearer.
- Check to see if plaids and stripes are matched across the pockets and at the center front and back, side, waist and armhole seams.
- Examine pile fabrics, such as corduroy and velveteen, and knits to make sure that all parts of the garment are cut in the same direction. This will insure a uniform color throughout the garment.
- Check knits for runs, and check all fabrics for pulls, holes or stains.

#### Seams

- Look for machine stitches that are short and firm and will hold the pieces of fabric together without puckering.

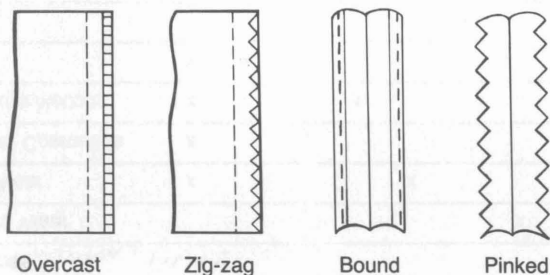


Figure 1

- Check the firmness of the stitching by gently pulling the fabric on each side of the seam and holding it up to the light. If the stitching is too loose, you will be able to see between the garment pieces.
- Examine for smooth seams; make sure there are no unwanted tucks; check for smoothness of gathers.
- Look for seam allowances that are at least 1/4-inch (.6 cm) wide to prevent unraveling or pulling out when there is strain on the seam.

Prepared by Extension clothing specialists, The Texas A&M University System.

- Wide seam allowances will allow you to let out a garment that is a little too tight and still have enough fabric left for an adequate seam.
- For fabrics that ravel, check for finished seam edges such as zig-zagging or overcasting (open or closed), pinking or binding (see Figure 1).
- Since knit edges will not ravel, these seams need only be pressed open or closed for a neat appearance, though some manufacturers will finish regardless of fabric type.
- On knits, examine for holes along seamlines caused by using the wrong needle. If there are holes, runs or fraying, the seam can not be let out without these showing.

#### Zippers

- Examine zippers carefully to be sure they lie smooth and flat, are securely stitched and are of a compatible type, weight, strength and color.
- Run zippers up and down to be sure they work properly. Zippers should remain closed at the top under stress.
- Straight, even stitching should hold the zipper in place and completely hide zipper teeth.

#### Buttons and Buttonholes

- Look for buttons that are firmly attached, properly placed and a compatible size and type for the garment.
- For garments, such as coats and sweaters, check to see if an envelope containing extra buttons is attached, especially if buttons are covered.
- Examine buttonholes to make sure they are neat with no loose threads or raw edges showing. Stitches should be firm and close together. Loosely sewn buttonholes will pull out and allow the fabric around the edges to ravel.
- Bound buttonholes are usually found on expensive garments; however, their absence is not an indication of poor quality. Machine-embroidered buttonholes are more suitable than bound on machine washable garments, such as sports or casual clothes.

#### Hems

- Try on the garment to make sure the hem is inconspicuous and parallel to the floor.
- Examine the hem to see if it is uniform in width, flat and smooth, but not over-pressed.
- Check for quality stitching, so the hem will not easily pull out.
- Examine the hem to see that it is not pulled off grain or stretched out of shape.
- Check to see that the raw edge is finished appropriately for the fabric to prevent raveling.

#### Interfacing

- Look or feel for interfacing in the collar, lapels, cuffs, neckline and sleeve facing. Interfacing will give "body" and prevent these areas from stretching out of shape (see Figure 2).
- Crush an interfaced section to be sure it springs back into place.

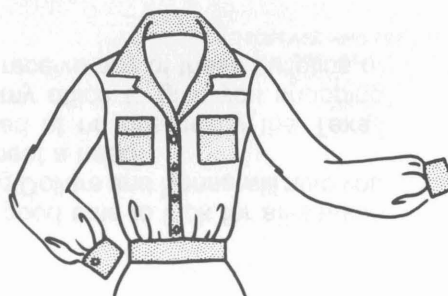


Figure 2

Educational programs conducted by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion or national origin.

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