

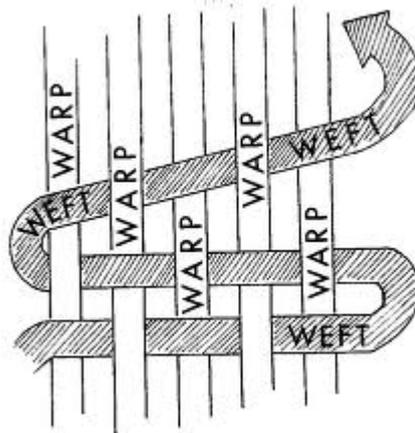


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What fibre content do I look for in a washable fabric?

When it comes to fabrics they all have a warp and a weft which is the weave made to construct the cloth resulting in the fabric that you purchase in the fabric shop. As you can see from the picture below the warp runs the length of the cloth from top to bottom while the weft runs from left to right. If you were to look at the fabric very closely, you will be able to see the weave as it intertwines with one another. If a fabric has a thicker yarn like linen, the weave can be quite easy to see rather than that of a fine cloth like a high quality wool suiting.



The blends of different fabrics

Fabric mixes are made up of the warp being one fibre and the weft being another, so a wool and silk mix will have wool fibres woven into silk fibres to create the fabric mix. If a cloth has a 100% fibre property say for instance a linen, then the warp and the weft are both 100% linen fibres. As you know linen creases quite dramatically and to reduce this there might be a blend of linen and silk or linen and cotton as a mix, this blend would reduce the linen creasing and give a lot more of a supple feel to it.

What blends to look out for in a washable cloth

The properties of fibres within a finished fabric are man-made or natural. There are 4 different natural fibres which consist of wool, linen, silk and cotton and the rest are man-made. If you come across a fabric which is 100% natural, for instance Wool, then the best way to clean is by taking your garment to the dry cleaners but if the wool has a mix of polyester for example, then you can most likely wash it and be very confident that it will not shrink. 100% linen has a tendency to shrink if washed so dry cleaning is the only option, saying that there are some cases that 100% linen will not shrink when washed by hand. If the linen has a mix with a man-made fibre, then you can wash it without shrinking. Although this theory of mix blend fabrics are washable, there can be instances that the fabric will still shrink and the most likely cause is that the fabric was not pre washed, this is of course rare and very unfortunate if it happens to you.

A tailors last word

If I get a request to make a washable suit for a customer, I always show them my fabric sample books of a wool mix and I am confident enough that their suit will never shrink when washed. So as a conclusion 100% natural fabrics need to be dry cleaned and natural mix cloths or 100% man-made fabrics are washable.

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