

BUYING FABRICS AND GARMENTS THAT ARE MORE DURABLE (7) AND SERVICEABLE

There are many garments and fabrics on the market styled for fashion rather than wear and serviceability. As a garment analyst I have examined and tested thousands of garments which failed to give the consumer long use and wear. Although styling is important there are things you can look for when buying a garment that can give you more value for your money and longer use of the item.

WEAVES

A weave is created by interlacing two or more yarns at right angles.

WEAK WEAVES

Satin is a weave created by low twisted floating yarns. This means that yarns travel over several yarns before being interlaced. This type of weaving gives satin a shiny surface but is also dull on the opposite side. It is the weakest of all weaves since the delicate floating yarns are subject to chafing, snapping and breaking.

STRONG WEAVES

Twill weaves form a diagonal ridge on the fabric. It has the highest tear resistance and is the sturdiest of all weaves. Denim and most uniform fabrics are made of the twill weave.

VELVET

Velvet is a pile fabric made by an extra set of yarns which form a short pile.

UNSERVICEABLE VELVET

The most unserviceable velvet is made from acetate pile. Any liquid or water spillage permanently flattens the pile.

SERVICEABLE VELVET

A more serviceable velvet is made of cotton, polyester or nylon.

UNSERVICEABLE DRAPERIES

Acetate and silk have the poorer resistance to sunlight and atmospheric gases. They can fade, weaken and deteriorate while hanging for a short period of time.

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SERVICEABLE DRAPERIES

The most serviceable and sun resistance draperies are made of fabrics with a blackout coating such as acrylic, vinyl or polyurethane. Having an extra lining is also helpful for a longer lasting fabric.

PLEATED GARMENTS

Pleating is a process of forming intricate folds in a fabric.

NON-PERMANENT PLEATS

All natural fabrics including wool, silk, linen and cotton are made with non-permanent pleats. This means that after normal wear, dry cleaning, or washing the pleats must be reset with time consuming finishing. Rayon is also a fiber that is not permanently pleated.

PERMANENT PLEATS

If you want to purchase a garment with permanent pleats buy garments made of polyester, nylon and acrylic.

BIAS CUT

A bias cut gives a loose flowing and billowy effect to dresses and gowns. It is created in manufacture by using fabrics that have been cut on an angle.

UNSERVICEABLE BIAS CUT

Bias cut garments made from a fabric with a loose construction such as chiffon or knitted fabrics have no resistance to distortion in normal wear and cleaning. If these garments are even checked in the store when purchasing you can notice that the hemline is misshapen and not even.

SERVICEABLE BIAS CUT

Look to purchase bias cut garments with a tight weave or garments cut straight with no flair.

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SUEDE AND LEATHER TRIMMING

Suede and leather trimming is fashionable on many garments including coats, dresses, jackets and blouses. When suede or leather trimming is dark and the garment is light there is the risk of bleeding from trimming on to the garment. This means that the garment may not be drycleanable or washable.

SERVICEABLE TRIMMING

If the leather and suede trimming is neutral in color or matches the garment it usually can be cleaned successfully. You can also purchase garments with imitation suede and leather trimming that does not bleed. This can be Ultra Suede, vinyl or polyurethane. Ultra Suede and polyurethane is both drycleanable and washable. Vinyl is only washable.