

HOW TO FIND A QUALITY DRYCLEANER (47)

I get many requests from my readers for me to recommend a quality drycleaner. There are several key things a consumer can look for when evaluating a drycleaner. Drycleaning is an art. Some cleaners are excellent at drycleaning and some are not as good. Price is not the key factor when evaluating the quality of the cleaner.

ENTERING THE STORE

A clean store means the drycleaner cares. If you smell drycleaning solvent it means the equipment is not operating properly. The drycleaning machine should not emit odor that is easily detectable by smell. Solvent odor becomes noticeable at 100 parts per million and means that the equipment is not operating up to correct standards.

STAIN REMOVAL

A drycleaner should remove 90-95% of the stains that they encounter. If this percentage is not reached it means the spotter does not have the necessary skills or uses the necessary skills to be considered a quality drycleaner. The spotter attempting stain removal should not leave rings or light areas.

SOLVENT PURITY

When a white garment is drycleaned it should remain white and not turn gray. When garments turn gray it may be due to impure solvent. This graying is referred to as redeposition of soil. A way to judge the quality of the cleaning is to sew in half of a small white fabric in the pocket area of a light colored garment. After cleaning, compare the white sample fabric to the other half of the fabric which was not cleaned.

ODOR

The garment that was returned to you should smell fresh. Any odor left in a garment may be due to cleaning in impure solvent.

GARMENT APPEARANCE

Check the seams for puckering. The lining of the garment should not have hard breaks and wrinkles. If hard breaks and wrinkles are apparent it means that too much water and heat was present in the drycleaning process. The garment should have a feel consistent with the texture of the fabric.

PRESSING

The garment that is returned should not be wrinkled. The sleeves should be rolled and not creased. The lapels should also be rolled and not creased. If sleeves and

lapels are creased it means poor quality control in pressing. There should be no double creases and no pocket impressions. There should be no shine or hard pressing on soft napped fabrics. After pressing the garment should be properly packaged.