LABELING HAND CRAFTED TEXTILE ITEMS

Because of the tremendous variety of fibers and materials used in hand-crafted textile items it is literally impossible to know by appearance and feel what care procedures are required.

Manufacturers of textile items are required by law to label the products they produce. Among other things, they are required to provide information concerning the fiber content and care instructions. Labels with good directions for maintenance can prevent considerable dissatisfaction. When these labels are sewn into the item, they provide a permanent record of care procedures.

Consumers have grown accustomed to finding this information on manufactured goods. Labels giving the fiber content and suggestions for maintenance may make your hand-crafted items more salable. I am sure that you hope that the prospective owners of your hand-crafted textile items will have as much concern for caring for the item as you had when you made it. The preferred method of care and handling of these items will contribute to their lasting beauty.

Aesthetic concerns for color, texture, and appearance will attract the prospective customer to your hand-crafted items, a meaningful label giving fiber content, finishes, and suggested care may just cinch the sale. Where does one find this information? It is important to read all the copy given in catalogue descriptions and on Skein wrappers. Information is often given for fiber content, weight, ply, color fastness, and applied finishes, (e.g. moth proof, shrink resistant). Wool yarns are identified as being "woolen" or "worsted". When other materials, glass, plastic, wood, and plant materials, etc., are combined with fibered yarn, thread, and cord—this too, should have some bearing on information given on the label.

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Because instructions for caring for items made from the various yarns, cords, and threads are not spelled out in catalogues or in skein wrappers, it is the craftsman's responsibility to fashion a label that gives this information. The label you design may give little information, (e.g., fiber content), or much information (e.g., fiber content, ply, yarn type, yarn weight, colorfastness of dye, applied finishes, and suggestions for care). You may want to become known for providing informative labels on your hand-crafted textile items.

Any number of fiber types are used by textile craftsmen, but the most commonly used natural fibers are cotton, linen, and wool, while polyester, acrylic, acetate, and nylon are the commonly used man-made fiber types. The chart that follows gives fiber property information which the craftsman may want to consider when planning information that is to be given on the label or information tag.

### NATURAL FIBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiber</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>Can be dyed and printed easily and evenly. Durability and wear life excellent; can be laundered or dry-cleaned; will withstand high temperatures.</td>
<td>Creases and wrinkles easily; flammable; mildew will attack.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linen</td>
<td>Extremely strong; cool and comfortable to wear; does not lint; can be laundered or dry-cleaned; will withstand high temperatures.</td>
<td>Creases and wrinkles easily; poor resistance to flex abrasion; mildew will attack.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wool</td>
<td>Warm and comfortable Wrinkle resistant Dyes easily Tailors well Flame resistant</td>
<td>Readily attacked by moths Requires special handling in laundering or dry cleaning to prevent felting. Weak when wet Dry clean most items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiber</td>
<td>Advantages</td>
<td>Limitations</td>
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<td>-----------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acetate</td>
<td>Luxurious soft feel&lt;br&gt;May be laundered or dry cleaned depending on dyes, finishes, decorative design&lt;br&gt;Dries quickly</td>
<td>Heat sensitive&lt;br&gt;Poor abrasion resistance&lt;br&gt;Weakened by long exposure to light.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acrylic</td>
<td>Wrinkle resistant&lt;br&gt;Can be washed&lt;br&gt;Good dye fastness&lt;br&gt;Dimensionally stable&lt;br&gt;Good bulking properties</td>
<td>Heat sensitive&lt;br&gt;May pill in some yarn constructions&lt;br&gt;Moderate retention of oil-borne stain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nylon</td>
<td>Very strong, resilient&lt;br&gt;elastic&lt;br&gt;Resists mildew and insect damage&lt;br&gt;Washes easily and dries quickly</td>
<td>Heat sensitive&lt;br&gt;Damaged by sunlight&lt;br&gt;Absorbs and holds body oils and perspiration&lt;br&gt;May pill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polyester</td>
<td>Wrinkle resistant and resilient&lt;br&gt;Washes and dries easily&lt;br&gt;Good strength&lt;br&gt;Good dimensional stability</td>
<td>Heat sensitive&lt;br&gt;Accumulates static electricity&lt;br&gt;High affinity for oily stains</td>
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These fiber properties carry over, in varying degrees, to the end product.

Many individual properties combine to influence the manner in which a handcrafted textile item performs in wear or use and in cleaning. The major ones are fiber content (natural or man-made), yarn construction (simple, novelty), construction process (knitted, woven, knotted), dyeing or printing (natural dye, synthetic dye, batik, silk screen), finish (moth-proof, water repellent), and decorative design (glass, wood, plant material).

Today the consumer's acquaintance with the world of textiles from fiber to finished product is a necessity as well as a pleasure. The information in this leaflet has been chosen for its value in furthering a profitable acquaintance with today's textiles.
EXAMPLES OF INFORMATIVE LABELS

X 100% WOOL X
X DRY CLEAN X
X MOTH PROOF X

100% COTTON WARP
100% POLYESTER FILLING
HAND WASH OR DRY CLEAN
SYNTHETIC DYE

100% POLYESTER
MACHINE WASHABLE
OIL STAINS DIFFICULT
TO REMOVE
HAND KNIT BY
CRAFTY FOX

100% LINEN
NATURAL DYES
SIZE 10

ACETATE
AND
NATIVE GRASS
WEAKENED BY LONG
EXPOSURE TO LIGHT
DRY CLEAN ONLY
ZEPEL STAIN
RESISTANT FINISH

DESIGN YOUR OWN INFORMATION GIVING LABELS