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# Finishes on Fabrics

Fabrics are often specially processed to give them a **finish**. A finish is any substance applied to a fiber, yarn or fabric either before or after weaving or knitting to change the **appearance** (what you see), the **hand** (what you feel) and the **performance** (what the fabric does). A **finish is as important as, and sometimes more important than, the fiber content**. Finishes can change fiber properties to such an extent that the end product has little resemblance to the original.

Some finishes are visible — dyeing, printing or glazing. Others cannot be seen or felt, such as moth resistance or shrink resistance. Fabrics may have more than one finish. For example, fabric can be dyed and also treated for shrink resistance and moth resistance.

Finishes may be **nondurable** — must be renewed or replaced after the first washing or drycleaning; **durable** — will last through several washings or drycleanings; or **permanent** — will last the life of the fabric.

Finishing adds to the cost of fabric. Prices are higher when a finish is new and in demand. Costs often go down when the finish has been on the market for a while. Permanent press finish is a good example of this cost-time relationship.

Sometimes finishes have a harmful effect on fabrics. They may cause fabrics to be less durable or more difficult to sew. Fabrics may not drape as well, may have an objectionable odor, or may be finished off grain. If the fabric or garment is affected by finish limitations so much that it isn't acceptable to you, don't buy it!

*Prepared by Janice Buckner, extension textiles and clothing specialist, with materials adapted from Washington State University E.M. 3377.*

Many different finishes are on the market. Each fabric manufacturer gives his own name to the finishes used on his fabrics, which explains why there are so many different names for the same kind of finish. When selecting and buying a fabric or garment consider the purpose of the finish, its contribution to the fabric and its limitations.

A good label will tell you these facts about a finish:

- What the finish is.
- What the finish should do.
- Specific care instructions to protect the finish.
- How long the finish should last.

Label information can help you make wise choices. To keep your selection looking better longer, follow these suggestions:

- Look for, read, and keep informative labels.
- Follow instructions on permanent care labels.
- Share information about fabrics and finishes with your dry cleaner or use it for laundering the garment at home.
- Launder or dry clean items often to prevent soil build up.
- Pretreat stains before laundering.

SPECIAL FINISH	TRADEMAKRS	CHARACTERISTICS	CLUES TO CARE
ANTI-STATIC	Burmalaire Cling-Free Crepeset Perma-Free Suavette .L	Reduces cling between nylon lingerie and outerwear. Some anti-static finishes are inherent in the fiber and never wash out. Others wash out after numerous machine washings.	Can be machine washed and dryer dried. An occasional use of fabric softener will help reduce static if it becomes a problem.
CREASE RESISTANCE WRINKLE RECOVERY (WASH AND WEAR)	Belfast Cyana-Superset Disciplined Cottons Everglaze Perma-Smooth Regulated Cotton Fibilized Unidure	Reduces tendency to crease and helps wrinkles fall out. Effectiveness often lost with repeated laundering.	Can be washed in hot water and machine dried. Chlorine bleach may harm the finish — read label. Use a warm iron to touch up.
Wrinkle-Shed			

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SPECIAL FINISH	TRADEMARKS	CHARACTERISTICS	CLUES TO CARE
<b>DURABLE OR PERMANENT PRESS</b>	Burmi-Crease Coneprest Dan-Press Ever-Press Grid-Press Koratron Lee-Prest Never-Press Penn-Prest Perma-Prest Primatized Reeve-Set Sharp-Shape Sta-Prest Super-Crease Vanopress	Requires little or no ironing if laundered correctly. Garments stay fresh, smooth, and neat looking. Pleats and crease lines remain sharp during wear and care. Alterations are noticeable when seams are let out or hems are lowered. It is best to "buy to fit." Stitching lines may pucker. Harsh curing methods may reduce the wear life of the garment. May retain oil-borne stains.	Wash garments before first wearing to remove residual finish if skin is sensitive. Launder frequently to avoid a heavy build-up of oily soil that is difficult to remove. Pretreat stains. To machine wash, turn garment inside out to prevent frosting. Keep washer loads small to prevent wrinkling. Use an adequate all-purpose detergent to prevent soil redeposition. Wash in warm water and use a cold rinse. Dry in dryer on permanent press cycle or at 165 degrees F. and a "cool off" period. Remove immediately. May be dry cleaned.
<b>FLAME RETARDANT FINISH</b>	Firegard Firefoe Fire-Stop Cuddlesoft	Finished fabrics will not continue to support a flame when ignition source is removed. Finishes must last a minimum of 50 washings with proper care. Fabrics with a flame retardant finish need special care to maintain flame retardant quality. Finished fabric weighs more, hand is less soft, absorption ability, breathability, and wear strength are reduced. Fabrics may develop an order.	Read care labels and follow care instructions exactly. Basically: Do not use bleach Do not use soap or non-phosphate detergents Do not send garments to a commercial laundry
<b>SHRINKAGE CONTROL</b>	Rigmel Sanforized Sanforized-Plus  Pak-nit (1% in knitwear) Pak-nit RH Penn-set Redmanized	Controls shrinkage. Increased strength because after pre-shrinkage there are more yarns per square inch. Increased luster and softness. If "preshrunk" appears on the label, according to Federal Trade Commission, it must state the percentage of residual shrinkage.	
<b>SOIL RELEASE</b>	Bancora (wool) Dylanize Sanforian Wurlan  Fybrite Perma-Clean Riegel Release Soilex Soil-out Springs Clean Visa Wash-Ease X-it Zip Clean	Developed for durable-press fabrics, which have an affinity for oil-borne stains. Does not prevent soil from entering fabric, but allows it to leave faster. Better resistance to soil redeposition and static.	Machine wash and dry. Avoid overloading machine. For heavy staining, pretreat the stains or soak the garment, use a warm water setting, and use plenty of detergent. Some stains may require a second laundering, e.g., mustard and tobacco. May be dry cleaned.
<b>STAIN AND SOIL REPELLENT</b>	Dual-Action Scotchgard Scotchgard Zepel  Spotshed (waterborne stains only) Syl-mer  Syl-mer II	Protects fabric from water-borne and oil-borne stains. Durable to laundering and/or drycleaning.	Accidental spills should be carefully dabbed off immediately. If rubbed in or neglected, stains may be more difficult to remove. All detergent must be rinsed from the fabric or it will "mask" the finish.
<b>WATER PROOFED</b>	Reevair	Waterproof fabrics may be cotton or rayon which has been coated with rubber, vinyl, or plastic. Fabric does not breathe. Reevair has a micro-porous film to permit air circulation. Effective for life of garment.	Fabrics usually are wet cleaned. Some materials stiffen in dry cleaning. Many soil marks can be wiped off with a damp cloth. Not removed by dry cleaning or laundering.
<b>WATER REPELLENT</b>	Cravenette Plus Permel Plus Syl-mer Syl-mer II Zelan  Aquanon Cravenette	Resistant to wetting, but not waterproof. May be durable or nondurable. Some may be renewed by the dry cleaner.	Stains not removed soon enough may become permanent. Pressure, such as sitting, may force stain into fabric. Heat may set stain.