



R O D O L P H

-A-

ABRASION RESISTANCE

The degree to which a textile can withstand changes to its appearance through rubbing, chafing, or other surface wear. Measured by the Martindale and Wyzenbeek tests.

ACETATE

A manufactured fiber formed by a cellulose compound composed of cotton linters and/or wood pulp that has been extruded through a spinneret and hardened.

ACRYLIC

A soft, wool-like manufactured fiber that is machine washable and dryable and has excellent color retention.

ACRYLIC BACKING

A finish, applied to the back of the fabric, which increases abrasion resistance. Range from light, SA-1 to heavy, LR3.

ALPACA

An animal-based natural fiber, specifically from the llama, used mostly for dresses and apparel.

ANGORA

The hair of the Angora goat or rabbit, also known as Angora Mohair.

ANTI-BACTERIAL (ANTI-MICROBIAL)

Resistant to, or inhibiting the growth of bacterial organisms. Can refer to a chemically treated fabric or a fiber created by incorporating the anti-bacterial chemical into the fiber formula.

ANTI-STATIC

Resistance (either natural or acquired through a finishing process) to the accumulation of an electric charge.

APPLIQUE

Material that is cut from its source and then sewn, embroidered, or fastened to a fabric.

ANTIQUÉ SATIN

A sateen or horizontal satin drapery fabric with horizontal (weft) slubs which imitate spun shantung silk. Most fabrics are one color from a selection of many. Occasionally the warp and weft yarns are dyed different colors to give an iridescent effect. Antique satin may also be printed. Generally used for drapery, but can also be quilted for bedding.

-B-

BACKING

A polymer or resin treatment applied to the back of a fabric to provide enhanced performance characteristics, including stability, seam integrity, reduced fraying and curling, and better physical performance.

BAMBOO FABRIC

| A natural textile made out of sustainably grown bamboo grass. Bamboo fabric has excellent wicking ability that pulls moisture away from skin and natural antibacterial qualities.

BARRÉ

An imperfection characterized by a mark running from selvage to selvage.

BARRIER CLOTH:

A nonporous layer of nonwoven material laminated to the back of a fabric during finishing; the layer will not allow fluids to pass through and is most commonly used in healthcare applications. A barrier cloth can also be composed of fire retardant materials.

BATIK

Also known as Tjap, where areas are made opaque with wax before the fabric is dyed. For two or more colors each preceding wax layer is removed and reapplied in a different patterned layer. A crinkled pattern is achieved by crumpling the fabric and cracking the wax. Traditional batik patterns from Indonesia and Africa are reproduced by mechanical silk screen or roller printing on contemporary fabrics.

BATISTE or CHAMBRAY

A medium-weight cotton or cotton-blend fabric with a plain weave.

BLACKOUT

Fabric, commonly hung with a sheer at the window, which reduces or blocks light.

BLEED

Migration of dye from fiber, yarn, or fabric when the dyed material comes in contact with a liquid medium - water, solvent, perspiration, etc. This dye migration can result in staining of adjacent, lighter-colored fiber or yarns in a fabric, or lighter fabrics or other materials that come in contact with the migrating dye.

BLENDS

The use of two or more types of staple fibers in one yarn to achieve color mixtures or better performance characteristics.

BLOCK PRINTING

A hand printing process using a series of wooden blocks on which the design is carved. Each color of the pattern is applied to a different block.

BONDING

The permanent joining of two fabrics (typically a face fabric and a lining) into one product. The bonding process makes possible easier handling of fragile cloths such as sheer materials or laces.

BOUCLE

A knitted or woven fabric with a knitted or looped surface which creates a soft, spongy look and feel. Can also refer to a variety of slubbed, curled, or looped yarns.

BRAID

Also referred to as Passementerie. A braid is a woven or plaited fabric used for trimming or binding.

BROCADE/LAMPAS

A multi-use formal, Jacquard weave with supplemental warp or weft woven into the fabric to give an embroidered, often-colorful design. Background weave is often satin. Threads not tied down

are carried as "floaters" on the back of the fabric and indicate the supplemental set of threads.

BROCATELLE

A variation of the Brocade, also made on a Jacquard loom. Utilizes four sets of yarns (commonly two warp and two weft) to create a refined pattern with variations in texture.

BRUSHING

A finishing process in which brushes or other abrasive devices are used on a loosely constructed knit or woolen fabric to create a nap or other novelty surface texture.

BURN-OUT

A printing process in which a chemical is applied to the fabric instead of a color, creating a brocade-like pattern. The chemical (most commonly a sulfuric acid paste) creates a hole in the fabric in a specific design. The fabric is then over-printed with a simulated embroidery stitch.

-C-

CALENDERING

The process of passing a textile between one or more rollers (called calenders), using the heat and pressure to produce a variety of surface effects on the fabric, such as high luster, glazing, embossing and more.

CALICO

Cotton or cotton/polyester fabric similar to broadcloth and usually printed in small "country" all-over multi-colored floral patterns.

CAMEL HAIR

Wool-like under hair of the Bactrian camel, often used in blends with wool for suits, sweaters, and oriental rugs. Colors range from light tan to brownish black.

CANVAS

Versatile medium to heavy weight cotton fabric in plain or twill weave. May be dyed any color, and has many uses.

CASEMENT

Casual drapery fabric in loose, tight, plain or novelty weaves. Often given interesting texture, color and pattern through tied complex-yarn arrangements and weave variations. Usually semi-sheer, translucent or opaque.

CASHMERE

From the Cashmere goat in Tibet, the Kashmir province in India. It is known for its softness.

CELLULOSE

A naturally occurring fiber found in organic woody substance of most vegetation, cellulose is the basic raw component of rayon and acetate.

CFA

Abbreviation for "cutting for approval." A small sample of fabric typically requested before ordering a fabric to verify such things as color, pattern design, and construction.

CHALLIS

Known for its soft hand, challis is a lightweight, soft plain weave with a slightly brushed surface, usually made of cotton, wool, or rayon. Named for the American Indian word "Shalee" which means soft.

CHEESECLOTH

A soft, delicate low-count cotton fabric, also known as gauze.

CHENILLE

Special yarns made by packing a small number of filling yarns and then slicing between the groups along warp lines. Creates a yarn with a soft hand and the appearance of pile fibers protruding from it.

CHEVRON

Regular and repeated zigzag pattern, also called herringbone, formed by reversing the twill weave.

CHIFFON

A plain woven lightweight soft silk fabric consisting of highly twisted filament yarns. The term "chiffon" implies gauze like structure and softness.

CHINCHILLA CLOTH

A heavy conventional twill weave with a spongy napped surface that is brushed into little tufts to resemble chinchilla fur. Usually made of wool or wool/cotton blends.

CHINTZ

Glazed plain weave cotton fabric with a filling of course slack twist yarns and a tightly spun warp, typically printed with brightly colored stripes or flowers.

CHINTZ-GLAZE

A lustrous or polished surface produced on a fabric using friction calendering.

CLIPPED

Sheer fabric where loose threads are cut to create a fringed effect. Clipped designs exist on both side of the fabric and are reversible.

COLORFASTNESS

This term describes a dyed fabric's ability to resist fading due to washing, exposure to sunlight, or other environmental conditions.

CONVERTER

The person or company who purchases "grey goods" (untreated textiles) and manages the process of finishing the product, particularly the bleaching, dyeing, printing, etc.

CORDUROY

A fabric which utilizes a cut-pile weave construction, where extra sets of filling yarns are woven into the fabric to form ridges of yarns on the surface.

CORE YARN

A yarn in which one type of staple fiber is twisted or wrapped around another fiber. Commonly used to reduce elongation due to moisture in linen draperies.

COTTON

A natural fiber that grows in the seed pod of the cotton plant, typically ½ to 2 inches in length. The longer the fiber, the higher quality of cotton fabric.

COUNT OF CLOTH

The number of ends and picks per inch in a woven fabric. For example, a cloth which 70 ends and 60 picks per inch has a cloth count of 70 X 60. A cloth that has the same number of ends and picks per inch is called a "square cloth". Pick count is the number that is most directly related to texture.

CREASE RESISTANCE

The ability of a fabric to resist wrinkling or the appearance of having just been folded.

CREPE

A fine yarn which is twisted so tightly that it gives a pebbly or crinkled surface in woven fabrics. Crepe fabrics may be plain or satin weave.

CREWEL EMBROIDERY

Basket weave base cloth of cotton, linen or wool, with hand or machine embroidery of worsted wool. Patterns are meandering vine and floral motifs based on the East Indian tree-of-life designs and their English interpretations.

CROCKING

The rubbing off of dye from a fabric, often the result of lack of penetration of the dyeing agent, the uses of incorrect procedures or the lack of proper washing and finishing treatments after the dyeing process.

CROSS DYED

Dyeing yarns composed of two different fibers to achieve a multicolored effect, caused by the different reactions of the fibers to the dye.

CRYPTON

A stain resistant, anti-bacterial and water repellent finish used most commonly in healthcare and hospital projects.

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DAMASK

Formal satin base Jacquard fabric with reversible pattern, historically a large floral or Renaissance pattern. Contemporary damasks are medium weight in a variety of designs, used in nearly any decorative fabric situation.

DENIM

Cotton or cotton/polyester left-hand twill weave cloth which is practical and sturdy. Navy colored denim is Jeans fabric, cream or white denim is Drill.

DIGITAL PRINT

A process where an image is applied directly to the fabric from a digital source file, without the use of printing screens.

DIMOUT

A fabric which hangs behind a sheer and reduces (but not eliminates) light from passing through it.

DIRECTIONAL

A textile with a designs or motifs all oriented in a single direction, so that the fabric surface looks correct only when viewed from one perspective.

DISCHARGE

A print created with color destroying chemicals on a dyed fabric, so as to bleach out or discharge the color on the printed portion, creating a white pattern on a colored ground.

DOBBY WEAVE

A decorative weave of small geometric figures that are woven into the structure of the fabric. Dobbies vary greatly, as they may be of any weight or compactness, with yarns that can be very coarse or quite fluffy. Dobby fabrics are usually flat and relatively sheer, but can be suitable for home furnishings as well.

DOUBLE CLOTH

A fabric construction in which two fabrics are woven together on the loom, one on top of the other. The two fabrics are held together using binder threads and can feature different weave patterns in each layer.

DOUBLE WEAVE

A fabric construction made by interlacing two more sets of warp yarns with two or more sets of filling yarns, commonly using a total of four or five sets of yarns.

DRAPERY

A broad term for window treatments with lining or multiple linings, elaborate and substantial hardware, and sometimes trim.

DUCK

Covering a wide variety of fabrics, a duck is a tightly woven, heavy, plain weave, bottom-weight fabric with a hard, durable finish. Usually made of cotton, the most important varieties of duck are called number duck, army duck and flat or ounce duck.

DURABILITY

A description of the fabric's ability to resist wear over time, measured for commercial purposes with a Martindale or Wyzenbeek test. In these tests, wear is simulated by rubbing an abrasive material against the test fabric until thread breaking or pilling is observed.

DYE

Coloring of yarn (before weaving) or fabric (after weaving) using natural or synthetic chemicals.

DYE LOT

A quantity of textile fiber, yarn, or woven goods dyed in one production run. Lot size can vary greatly depending on the mill or finishing plant's dyeing processes and equipment.

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ECO/ ECO-FRIENDLY

Terms used to describe products or services that cause little, if any, harm to the environment.

ELASTICITY

The ability of a fiber to return to its original length or shape immediately after the removal of stress.

EMBOSSING

A calendering process in which fabrics are engraved by heated rollers under pressure to produce a raised design on the surface of the fabric. Embossing is traditionally decorative, as any moisture or stress may erase the design.

EMBROIDERY

A thread or set of threads sewn onto a fabric for surface ornamentation. Embroidery may be done as piece work or one-of-a-kind embroidered cloths. Machine embroidery for mass production is called Schiffli embroidery.

END

A single weft yarn, often the unit of measurement for thread count, "ends per inch."

END-USER

The actual user of a specified product.

EURO HEM

A selvage hem with a loaded weight sewn into it for the purposes of hanging or draping.

-F-

FAILLE

A soft, glossy, finely ribbed silk like woven fabric made from cotton, silk, or man-made fibers.

FACE

The front side of the fabric as opposed to the back. This is the side of the fabric that is normally treated and tested to meet commercial standards. See ID cord.

FELT

A non-woven fabric made from wool, hair or fur, created through a process where heat, moisture and pressure form a compact material.

FELT BACKING

A backing commonly used for vinyls and polyurethanes which is appropriate for wall application.

FILAMENT

A continuous manufactured fiber, extruded from the spinneret during the fiber production process.

FILLING

The yarn running from selvage to selvage at right angles to the warp, called a pick individually. Carried by the shuttle or other yarn carrier during the weaving process.

FINISHING

A catch-all term for all processes through which a fabric passes after manufacturing. Can include bleaching, dyeing, printing, heat setting, or the application of stain or bacteria resistant finishes.

FLAME RESISTANT

The ability of a fabric (typically after chemical treatment) to resist burning or catching on fire. Textiles made with Trevira CS are innately fire resistant.

FLAME RETARDANT

A chemical applied to a fabric, or incorporated into the fiber at the time of production, which significantly reduces a fabric's flammability

FLANNEL

Any fabric that is woven then brushed to achieve a soft nap. Types include cotton, flannelette, outing (for outerwear), French (finely twilled), melton (cotton and/or wool dense weave), and suede top-sided nap trimmed and pressed).

FLAX

The plant from which cellulosic linen fiber is obtained.

FLEECE

The wool shorn from a sheep, llama, or any other animal in the wool category.

FLEECE FABRIC

A lightweight fabric with a thick, wool-like surface. May be a pile or napped fabric, or either woven or knit construction.

FLOCK

The material obtained by reducing textile fibers to fragments by cutting or grinding. There are two main types: precision cut flock, where all fiber lengths are approximately equal; and random cut flock, where the fibers are ground or chopped to produce a broad range of lengths.

FLOCKING

A method of cloth ornamentation in which adhesive is printed or coated on a fabric, and finely chopped fibers are applied all over by means of dusting, air-blasting or electrostatic attraction. In flock printing, the fibers adhere only to the printed areas and are removed from the unprinted areas by mechanical action.

FR TREATMENT

A finishing process intended to make the fabric flame resistant, causing the fabric to extinguish itself if caught on fire.

FRISÉ or EPINGLE

A fine, lustrous, corded dress fabric with ribs running either warp-wise or filling-wise in the fabric. May be Jacquard woven to achieve a sculptural or ribbed effect.

FULLING

A finishing process also known as milling or felting, where a combination of heat, friction and pressure cause yarns to shrink and interlock. Fulled fabric has a smooth, felt-like surface.

-G-

GABARDINE

A construction of fabric that is tightly woven, twilled, and worsted with a slight diagonal line. While wool gabardine is often used as fabric for business suits, polyester, cotton and various blends can also be used to make the fabric.

GAUZE

A sheer, delicate plain-weave fabric often made from silk, rayon, or cotton. End uses include everything from surgical bandages to window dressings.

GEORGETTE

Often made of silk or Polyester, this lightweight fabric has a crepe surface caused by the twisting of yarns in the weave. Used primarily in apparel.

GREIGE GOODS (or "Grey Goods")

Unfinished textiles that have not yet been processed. Fabric just removed from a knitting machine or loom. Greige goods which are then dyed are called "piece dyed" and can have variance.

GROS GRAIN

A firm, closely woven ribbed fabric in full fabric widths or in ribbon widths.

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HAND

A term used to describe the softness or feel of a fabric.

HAND WOVEN

Fabrics constructed without a mechanical loom, using a shuttle to push down fill yarns to create stripes. Because of the use of a shuttle, stripes will not be uniform in size and may not side-match.

HEAT SET FINISH

A process that uses intense heat to stabilize manufactured fabrics to prevent any change in size or shape due to outside elements. Often used to permanently give the fabric a crease or pleat, or to increase durability, a heat set finish cannot be washed out of a fabric.

HEATHER

Yarn or fabric made using pre-dyed fibers. Fibers are blended together to create a particular look or color (for example, black and white fibers may be blended to create a grey heathered yarn). Heathered yarns provided a mottled look in woolen weaves.

HEMP

A fiber obtained from the bark of the hemp plant. Primarily used in twines and cordages, hemp fibers are coarse and durable.

HERRINGBONE

A novelty or complex twill which has a regular zigzag pattern. Woven or printed on light, medium, and heavy weight fabrics.

HORSEHAIR

Consisting of actual hairs taken from the tail of a horse, usually used as horizontally woven filling in upholstery fabrics. Horsehair is prized for its luster and hard, durable hand, and is now frequently simulated by synthetic fibers.

HOUNDSTOOTH

Medium to heavy weight fabric with woven twill pattern that resembles squares with projecting "tooth-like" corners.

HYDROPHILIC/PHOBIC

Two terms that describe the ability of a material to either absorb water or resist the absorption. Cotton and rayon can be hydrophilic, while polyester and olefin are examples of hydrophobic fibers.

-I-

ID CORD

An identification cord of longer floats woven into the right selvage of a roll of fabric to clearly mark the face and direction of the fabric.

IKAT

A traditional Indian resistance dyeing technique which involves tying knots around portions of the fabric to keep it from absorbing dye.

INDIGO

A natural dye with a distinctive dark blue color. Historically, indigo had economic value due to its rareness, and is now used in the production of denim cloth for blue jeans.

INSULATING ALUMINIUM BACKING

A metallic finish which works to keep seasonal heat or cold air out of the home.

INTERFACING

Fabrics used to support, reinforce, or give shape to a sewn product. An interfacing can be made from yarns or directly from fibers and is woven, nonwoven or knitted. Interfaces are typically designed to be adhered with heat, or to be stitched to the fashion fabric.

-J-

JACQUARD

A loom attachment that permits individual control of each warp yarn for intricate designs. Brocade and damask are types of Jacquard woven fabrics.

JUTE

A coarse brown fiber found in the bast plant, native to India. Used primarily for gunny sacks, bags, cordage, and binding threads in carpets or rugs.

-K-

KAPOK

A short, lightweight vegetable fiber found in the Bombocaceae tree. As it's quite brittle it is not typically spun, yet its natural buoyancy and moisture resistance make it ideal for cushions, mattresses, and life jackets. Kapok is also quite flammable.

KNIT FABRIC

A fabric made from a single set of yarns which all run in the same direction. The yarns can run along the length or the width, but are held together by looping the yarns around each other. The ridges created by these loops are called wales if they run lengthwise or a Course if they run crosswise.

KNIT BACKING

A backing which increases the seam strength and durability of chenilles, silks, and loosely woven fabrics.

-L-

LACE

A fabric created when threads are twisted, knotted, or intertwined to create an open fabric. Lace can be hand or machine woven in a variety of different techniques.

LAMB'S WOOL

The first clip of wool sheered from lambs up to eight months old, known for being soft, slippery, and resilient.

LAMÉ

A woven fabric that utilizes gold or silver threads in either the design or the ground of the fabric.

LAMINATED FABRIC

Similar to bonding, laminating is a process by which two fabrics have been joined together, specifically with a high strength reinforcing scrim or flexible thermoplastic film.

LAMINANT PRINT

Process that utilizes a polyurethane or similar protective treatment to create a design or print on the face of a fabric.

LASER CUT

A process of cutting away portions of the fabric with a focused laser.

LENO WEAVE (DOUP)

A woven fabric construction that produces a very sheer, yet durable fabric. Two or more warp yarns are twisted with each other as they are interlaced with the filling yarns, preventing the filling yarns from slipping out of position. The second yarn used in this weave is called the skeleton or doup yarn. Leno weave fabrics are typically used for window treatments, as they have good durability with minimal yarn slippage, and permit the passage of light and air.

LINEN

A fabric made of the fibers from the flax plant. The term linen only applies to natural fiber flax. Linen is known for its soil resistance, natural luster, and strength. Linen fabrics are very cool and absorbent but wrinkle easily, unless blended with manufactured fibers.

LISSERIE

A fine Jacquard woven stripe imitating silk and embroidery. The figuring and color in the pattern comes from the warp.

LOOM-FINISHED

Material that has no post-weaving finishing done to it, sold in the same condition in which the goods came off the loom. Examples of loom-finished fabrics are duck, webbing, or canvas.

LUSTER

The reflective quality of the a fabric's surface. Can be achieved by using lustrous yarns, or through finishing process that employ heat or pressure.

-M-

MADRAS

A lightweight plain weave cotton fabric with a distinctive striped, plaid or checked pattern, usually imported from India.

MANILA

A natural vegetable fiber from the leaves of the Abacá plant (a relative of the banana). Once used to make manila rope, this fiber is now commonly pulped for specialty papers such as the manila envelope or manila folder.

MARTINDALE

A fabric abrasion test method that employs the Martindale machine to test fabric using worsted wool as the abradant. Fabric samples are mounted flat and rubbed in a figure-eight motion, and the results are measured in the number of cycles achieved before noticeable wear is apparent.

MATELASSÉ

A heavy upholstery-weight textile in Jacquard weave with two sets of warps and wefts. Surface appears puffy or cushioned. Also called double cloth.

MERCERIZATION

A treatment process for cotton yarn or fabric, in which the fabric is dipped in a caustic soda solution which is then neutralized. Mercerization causes a permanent swelling of the fiber, resulting in an increased luster and affinity for dyes.

MERINO

A type of wool that originates from pure bred merino sheep, considered the highest quality in the world.

MESH

Characterized by an open, net-like appearance and spaces between the yarns, mesh is a type of fabric available in a variety of constructions such as weaves, knits, or laces.

METALLIC

A manufactured fiber produced from minerals and metals which are blended and extruded to form fibers. Purely decorative, metallic fibers are coated with Mylar to prevent tarnishing.

MICROFIBERS

A term to describe ultra-fine manufactured fibers and the technology of developing them. Microfiber technology produces fibers which weigh less than 1.0 denier. Fabrics made from micro-fibers have a superior hand, drape well, and are very soft. There are four varieties of micro-fibers: acrylic, nylon, polyester and rayon.

MOHAIR

Fiber from the Angora goat.

MOISTURE BARRIER

A protective finish applied to a fabric that resists liquid-based spills and stains.

MOIRÉ

A calendering process with engraved rollers that results in a rippled surface, resembling watermarks.

MUSLIN

A low count, medium weight plain weave cotton fabric. Commonly used in fashion design to create trial garments.

MYLAR

The polyester film which covers metallic yarns.

-N-

NANO-TEX FINISH

A groundbreaking new textile finish that bonds with the molecules of the fabric to give it a permanent spill and stain resistance. It

enhances abrasion resistance while preserving the natural feel of the fabric.

NAP/NAPPING

The fuzzy feel from fiber ends extend from the basic fabric structure to the surface fabric, and the process by which that feeling is created. Fibers are raised on the face of the good either by teasels or rollers covered in steel wires. Napping a fabric makes the cloth more compact, causes the fabric to become softer in hand, increases durability and covers the areas between the interlacing.

NATURAL DYES

Dyes that are made from mineral, plant, or animal sources. Common natural dyes include indigo, cochineal, lac, logwood, munjeet, brazilwood and tannin.

NATURAL VEGETABLE FIBERS

Naturally occurring cellulose fibers, including bamboo, cotton, jute, linen, and manila.

NET

An open mesh fabric made of rayon, nylon, cotton or silk, made in a variety of sizes and weights for various end uses. The net is made by knotting intersections of thread or cord to form the mesh.

NINON

A lightweight plain weave with a mesh-like appearance. Made with high twist filament yarns for a crisp hand. End uses include window dressings and eveningwear.

NONWOVEN FABRIC

A textile structure where fibers interlock in a random web, accomplished by mechanical, chemical, thermal or solvent means.

NONWOVEN BACKING

Lighter than knit-backing, used for lightweight (one word) fabrics which may bubble when backed.

NOVELTY YARN

A yarn intentionally created to have specific or unique characteristics. These characteristics are produced by twisting several uneven yarns, by using yarns that contain irregularities, or by twisting yarns that vary in color.

NYLON

The first completely synthetic fiber, formed from a long chain synthetic polyamide. Nylon has high flexibility and abrasion resistance and is also known for its high strength and resilience.

-O-

OLEFIN

A manufactured fiber known for light weight, high strength, and resistance to abrasion. End uses include upholstery, indoor-outdoor carpets, and lawn furniture.

OMBRE

A color effect with a gradual change from dark to light or from color to color.

ORGANDY

A stiffened, sheer, lightweight plain weave fabric whose uses include blouses, dresses and curtains/draperies.

ORGANIC COTTON

Cotton fiber that is grown using biological pest control and crop rotation instead of relying on pesticides and artificial fertilizers.

ORGANIC LINEN

Linen fiber originating from flax plant grown without herbicides or pesticides.

ORGANZA

A sheer, lightweight, plain weave fabric, stiffer than the similar organdy. Organza is used primarily in evening and wedding apparel for women and is made of silk, rayon, nylon or polyester.

OTTOMAN

A ribbed plain weave fabric with a slightly lustrous surface. Created by weaving a fine silk or manufactured warp yarn with a heavier filler yarn (usually cotton, wool or waste yarn). The heavier filler yarn is completely covered by the warp yarn, creating the ribbed effect. Appropriate for coats, suits, upholstery and draperies.

OVERLOCKING

A process where stitches are sewn over the edge of one or two pieces of cloth for edging, hemming, or seaming. Can help to prevent seam slipping. RODOLPH recommends overlocking for a variety of fabrics to ensure the highest level of performance. All backing and overlocking decisions can and should be discussed with the fabricator.

-P-

PAISLEY

A printed pattern with a tear drop shape, used in dresses, blouses and men's ties.

PANNÉ VELVET

A lustrous, lightweight velvet fabric in which the pile has been flattened in one direction.

PARACHUTE FABRIC

A lightweight fabric with a very tight weave made of silk, nylon, rayon, or polyester.

PEAU DE SOIE

A French term, meaning literally "skin of silk" applied originally to a fine silk fabric in a modified satin weave that has a ribbed or grained appearance.

PERFORMANCE FABRICS

Fabrics produced for specific functional qualities, such as moisture management, UV protection, anti-microbial capabilities, thermo regulation, and wind/water resistance.

PICK

In woven constructions, a filling yarn that runs from selvedge to selvedge.

PIECE

A standard full length of fabric, generally 50 to 60 yards.

PIECE DYED

Fabric which is dyed after it is woven, creating more variance in color than traditional dyeing methods.

PILE FABRIC

Fabric with a third element; an extra warp or weft set, woven or knitted into the fabric to produce a deep surface texture. Examples include velvet, terry cloth, frieze or corduroy.

PILE WEAVE

A weave construction where extra warp or filling yarns are interlaced to create loops on the face of the fabric. The loops may be cut to create a cut pile fabric, or left uncut. Fabrics constructed in this manner need to be cared for properly, as a pile can get crushed or show streaking over time.

PILLING

A tangled ball of fibers that can appear on the surface of the fabric as a result of abrasion or surface wear.

PIÑA

A natural vegetable fiber from the leaves of the pineapple plant, commonly used in the Philippines. Sometimes combined with silk or polyester to create a linen-like fabric that is lightweight and easy to care for.

PIQUÉ

A medium weight fabric, either knit or woven in construction, featuring raised dobby designs. A woven piqué will have cords running along the warp, and knitted versions are double-knit constructions.

PLAID

Similar to a Scottish tartan, a pattern of colored bars and stripes intersecting at right angles.

PLAIN WEAVE

A basic weave, suitable for any type of fiber, which utilizes a simple alternate interlacing of warp and weft yarns.

PLEATING

Decorative folds in a fabric, fixed by stitching or heat, which create dimensional interest.

PLISSÉ

A sheer, thin or lightweight fabric given a blistered or puckered surface through chemical treatments.

PLY

Two or more yarns twisted together, the number in front of "ply" signifying how many.

POLYESTER

The most commonly used manufactured fiber, formed by any long-chain, synthetic polymer. Known for high strength, excellent resiliency, high abrasion, and resistance to shrinking and stretching. Used in apparel and home furnishings.

PONGEE

A naturally colored, lightweight, plain weave silk-like fabric with a slubbed effect.

POPLIN

A variation on the plain weave that uses extra filling yarns to create a ridge in one direction.

-Q-

QUALITY

Describes the specific construction of a textile, referencing weight, content, count of cloth, yarn size and finish.

QUILTING

A method of fabric construction in which a layer of fiber filling is sandwiched between two layers of fabric, and then is held in place by stitching a regular, consistent, all-over pattern on the goods.

-R-

RAILROAD

Turning a fabric so that the selvage edges appear at the top or the bottom as opposed to the left and right sides. Most common with sheers and other window dressings.

RAMIE

A sustainable natural vegetable fiber, similar to flax, taken from a plant grown in East Asia and China. Similar in look to linen, ramie fabric is three to five times stronger than cotton, very absorbent and quick to dry.

RAYON

A manufactured fiber composed of regenerated cellulose. Most commonly produced through the cuprammonium process and the viscose process. As a fabric, rayon is soft and absorbent.

REP, REPP

A ribbed fabric (horizontal or vertical ribs) between poplin and ottoman fabric in both rib size and weight. Durable medium to heavy fabric. Many applications. High quality reps are often woven of wool.

REPELLANCY

The ability of a fabric to resist wetting or staining from dirt, water, stains, etc.

RESILIENCY

The ability of a fabric to resist changes to its original size and shape after being crushed, wrinkled, or distorted in any way.

REVERSIBLE

Double faced fabric that can be used on either side.

RIB WEAVE

A variation on a plain weave, formed by using heavy yarns in the warp or the fill, by weaving a higher number of yarns per inch in one direction, or grouping several yarns together as one. All rib fabrics are characterized by a slight ridge in one direction, usually the filling. Ribbed fabrics may have problems with yarn slippage, resistance to abrasion, and tear strength.

SAILCLOTH

Any heavy, plain weave fabric used for sails and apparel.

SATEEN WEAVE

A variation of the satin weave in which fill yarns are floated over warp yarns. Sateen fabric has a soft, smooth hand and a subtle luster.

SATIN

A basic type of weave where warp threads float over up to eight weft threads, then are tied down with one weft thread. Fine threads yield a smooth, slick, lustrous surface. Light to medium weight. Types of satin include: antique (with horizontal slubs to imitate shantung), lining satin (lightweight drapery lining), ribbed satin (resembles faille, or calendered into satin moiré'), satin damask (background satin with jacquard pattern-in lighter weight is known as ticking satin), and upholstery satin (heavier weight satins).

SEAM SLIPPAGE

The condition that occurs when a fabric pulls apart at a seam. Some fabrics require overlocking or backing to prevent seam slippage.

SCRIM

Sheer open weave cotton fabric used for draperies and window decorating.

SHABBY CHIC

A look reflecting casual and relaxed lifestyles. Emphasis is on a soft touch, neutral colors and often a puckered, washed or unfinished look.

SEERSUCKER

Crinkled surface in all-over or spaced stripes, permanently woven into a cotton or blend fabric, or induced through chemical treatments. Puckers tend to be more durable than plisse' when chemically treated. Permanent puckers are woven in by loosening or relaxing some warp threads. Light to medium weight.

SELVAGE OR SELVEDGE

The edge of a woven fabric, running parallel to the warp yarns, which is compressed or tightly woven to prevent the fabric from raveling.

SERGE

A catch-all term for any smooth face cloth made with a two up and two down twill weave.

SHANTUNG DUPIONI

Originally a spun silk fabric with slubs that formed interesting textures. Shantung today may be of many natural or synthetic fibers. Fabrics which imitate shantung are antique satin and antique taffeta.

SHEER

Transparent or very light weight fabric meant for hanging at the window.

SILK

The natural fibers obtained from a silkworm's cocoon. Fibers are obtained in filament form and may be between 300 and 1600 feet in length when collected. The majority of silk is cultivated. Tussah silk, also known as wild silk, is thicker and shorter than the filaments from cultivated worms.

SINGEING

A process that smoothes a fabric's surface by burning protruding fibers.

SKEW

A condition caused by uneven tension in weaving or finishing in which filling yarns are not perpendicular to the selvage. Skew is found by measuring the distance that a filling yarn deviates from a perpendicular line drawn from the point at which the filling yarn meets the selvage.

SMART TEXTILES

Textiles that are able to respond to changes in their environment from thermal, chemical, mechanical and other sources.

SOIL RELEASE FINISH

A finish that increases the wicking action of a fabric to make cleaning the fabric easier. Some soil release finishes also provide a resistance to soil as well as being easily cleanable.

SOLUTION-DYED

A dyeing process in which colored pigments are mixed into the spinning solution before the fiber is extruded through the spinneret. Solution-dyed fibers have a high resistance to color loss.

SPECIFIER

The architect or interior designer who selects furniture, fabrics and finishes for a specific interiors project.

SPINNING

The last step in the yarn production process, which consists of drawing and winding the newly spun yarn into a device such as a bobbin, spindle, cop, tube, etc. In manufactured fibers, spinning refers to the extrusion of the spinning solution into a cooling area to form a continuous filament.

SPUN YARN

A yarn made from a group of short staple fibers, which have been cut from longer fibers, twisted together to form a single yarn. The completed yarn is then used in weaving or knitting.

STAIN REPELLENT

A fiber's ability to resist wetting or staining by water.

STAIN RESISTANCE

The ability to resist spots and stains.

STAPLE FIBERS

Shorter fibers, ranging from ½ inch to 18 inches in length. Many natural vegetable fibers, such as flax, cotton and wool, only exist as staple fibers. Manufactured staple fibers are measured and cut into pieces ½ to 8 inches in length.

STRIÉ

A French term for an irregular striped design, created by varying shades of the same color.

SUEDECLOTH

A light to medium weight synthetic knit or woven textile with brushed nap which imitates genuine suede.

-T-

TAFFETA

A medium weight plain weave fabric with a slight ribbed look in the filling direction, often with a lustrous sheen. Most commonly made out of silk, taffeta has lots of body and a crisp hand.

TAPESTRY

A plain weave technique used to produce complex, hand-woven European pictorial designs. These are now, most often, Jacquard woven with multiple warps and wefts.

TEAR STRENGTH/TENSILE STRENGTH/BREAKING STRENGTH

A measure of the force necessary to start or continue a tear in a fabric. Most commonly determined by the Elmendorf test procedure.

TEFLON

A stain resistant, water repellent finish.

TENSION CONTROL WEAVE

A decorative type of weave, known for its puckered appearance caused by a variance of the tension in the warp yarns before the filling yarns are woven into the fabric.

TERRY CLOTH

An uncut pile weave fabric characterized by uncut loops on both sides of the fabric. Uses include towels, robes and apparel.

THREAD COUNT

The number of ends and picks per inch in a woven cloth, similar to "count of cloth."

TICKING

Originally a twill blue and cream vertical, woven striped fabric used to make "ticks" or mattress and pillow casings. Historically used on walls, also for draperies and other interior uses. Mattress ticking may also be satin damask ticking, or ticking damask.

TISSUE PICK

Term which describes supplementary filling yarn or yarns which "float" along the back of fabric in bands, and are brought up in selected areas for added color detail on the face of a fabric.

TOILE

A fabric of cotton or linen similar to muslin or percale in plain or sometimes twill weave. It is unglazed chintz. Types include: toile de jouy (historic French scenes, Federal toile (American Federal buildings and eagles), country toile (contemporary provincial floral) and toiles de Indy (historic East Indian printed designs). Chinese toiles (Oriental designs and scenes), Rococo toiles (large-scale contemporary Rococo prints).

TOILE DE JOUY

Toile fabrics printed in one color (traditionally navy, cranberry or black) in rural country French scenes and of people from the 18th and 19th centuries.

TUFTED FABRIC

A pile fabric which is formed by tufting a yarn into a woven background. Early American tufted bedspreads are one example. Some upholstery fabrics and all tufted carpets utilize this method. The fabric may be tufted with a small hand-held tufting gun, or on a large machine utilizing multiple needles to tuft entire sections in rapid sequence.

TWEED

Upholstery weight textile in plain balanced or variation weave, (originally) twill weave or variation. Plain and twill weaves may be combined in some novelty tweeds. Made first of wool in Scotland. Today's tweeds may be of wool, nylon or a combination of natural and man-made fibers in solid colors, also heathered effect or plaid.

TWILL WEAVE

One of three basic weave styles (the others being plain and satin), characterized by diagonal lines.

TWIST

A description of the numbers of turns and the direction that two yarns are turned during the manufacturing process. Twisting the yarn helps make the fibers more compact and increases yarn strength. Single yarns may be twisted to the right (S twist) or the left (Z twist). Twist is generally expressed as turns per inch/meter/centimeter.

-V-

VEGETABLE DYE

Colored pigments derived from natural sources, including plants and bark, berries, and roots. They contain no synthetic chemicals and as such tend to fade faster than chrome dyes, but produce unique shades of blue, green and other colors.

VELCRO®

A nylon material that comes in matching pairs - one strip that with a surface of tiny hooks, and a complementary strip with a looped surface. The strips can be pushed together and pulled apart easily for fastening and unfastening.

VELOUR

A pile fabric with a soft, velvet-like texture including some velvet, and all plush-pile surface cloths.

VELVET

Woven pile fabric with a soft yet sturdy face. May be of one or more fibers, including nearly all-natural and man-made fibers. Velvet can be made from almost all kinds of fibers and may be embossed, embroidered, or printed upon.

VELVETEEN

A pile cloth in which an extra set of filling yarns is woven into the back of the material and cut, to create a pile.

VINYL

Extruded polyvinyl chloride synthetic fabric flowed onto a woven, knitted, or non-woven base cloth. Medium to heavy weight upholstery fabric which imitates leather.

VISCOSE

The most common variety of rayon.

VOILE

Sheer transparent fabric in plain weave with tightly twisted yarns. Often has a stiff finish. May have novelty effects such as pique stripes, printed patterns and stripes, or woven with nubby yarns for novelty voile.

-W-

WARP

In woven fabrics, the set of yarns running lengthwise, parallel to the selvedge. Warp yarns are wound together on a beam for the purposes of weaving or warp knitting.

WARP PRINTING

A printing process in which the warp yarns are laid out in the order that they will appear in the fabric, and then the print is applied before weaving, creating a shadowy effect.

WASHED

A fabric which has been cleaned by removing dirt and natural grease. With sheers, it can increase the fiber's natural fire resistance. Draperies especially should be framed when washed, so as to stabilize width dimension and prevent shrinkage.

WATER REPELLENT

The ability of a fabric to shed or resist the penetration of water. Typically imbued into a fabric by a treatment or finishing process that can include wax coatings, resins, silicones or fluorine derivatives applied to the fabric. Similar to "water resistant" but implies a greater ability to resist penetration.

WATER RESISTANT

Fabric chemically treated to resist water while still being air-permeable.

WEAVING

A fabric construction process that utilizes a loom to interlace warp (lengthwise) yarns with weft (crosswise yarns) perpendicular to each other. The three basic weaves are plain, satin, and twill; all other weaves are based fundamentally on these styles.

WEFT

The filling yarns which run at right angles to the warp yarns in a woven product.

WOOF

A general term for filling or weft yarns.

WOOL

A natural fiber usually associated with the fleece of sheep or lamb but can also apply to a wider variety of animal fibers such as the hair of the Cashmere or Angora goat.

WORSTED FABRIC

Fabric made from yarns spun from long, combed wool fibers. Worsted fabrics have a hard, smooth surface and are often used in men's tailored suits.

WRINKLE FREE

The property of resistance to wrinkling, imparted by a variety of treatments and finishes.

WRINKLE RECOVERY

Similar to resiliency, the ability of a fabric to return to its original appearance after being subjected to a physical change such as a twist, wrinkle, or distortion.

WYZENBEEK

The most common fabric abrasion test method. The Wyzenbeek machine rubs an abradant (no. 10 cotton duck) over a fabric in back and forth motions, referred to as "double rubs."

-Y-

YARN

A strand made of twisted fibers or continuous filament that is used for weaving or knitting.