

Home Décor Dictionary

A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z

A

Antique Satin

A reversible satin-weave fabric with satin floats on the technical face and surface slubs on the technical back created by using slub-filling yarns. It is usually used with the technical back as the right side for drapery fabrics and often made of a blend of fibers.

B

Barkcloth

A textured woven, usually printed cotton fabric that was popular in the 30s-40s and 50s as an interiors fabric. The prints were often large vines, leaves and florals.

Basket Weave

A distinctive technique of weaving that creates a fabric resembling basket work with interwoven fibers. Basketweave fabric is most common in home décor fabrics.

Batik

A method of dyeing fabric where some areas are covered with wax or pastes made of glues or starches to make designs by keeping dyes from penetrating in pattern areas. Multicolored and blended effects are obtained by repeating the dyeing process several times, with the initial pattern of wax boiled off and another design applied before dyeing again in a new color.

Batiste

A lightweight, plain weave fabric, semi-sheer and usually made of cotton or cotton blends. Appropriate for heirloom sewing, baby clothes and lingerie.

Bengaline

A fabric with a crosswise rib made from textile fibers (as rayon, nylon, cotton, or wool) often in combination.

Boiled Wool

Felted knitted wool, it offers the flexibility of a knit with great warmth. Create your own by washing double the needed amount of 100% wool jersey in hot water and drying in a hot dryer. Expect 50% shrinkage. Appropriate for jackets, vests and stuffed animals.

Blackout

A type of fabric that is commonly used for drapery, this fabric has the distinctive quality of blocking light, and comes in two forms: 2-pass and 3-pass. Two-pass has two “passes” of foam on a fabric, which means the black layer of foam will be visible. 3-pass has two layers of white and one layer of black foam. Three-pass can also be used as an upholstery fabric, as the black layer is not visible. Blackout fabrics can also be insulating and noise-dampening.

Boucle

A knit or woven fabric with small curls or loops that create a nubby surface. The fabric has a looped, knotted surface and is often used in sweater looks, vests and coats.

Broadcloth

A plain weave tightly woven fabric that is usually made from 100% cotton or a cotton blend. Most common uses are quilting and shirt-making.

Brocade

A heavy jacquard-type fabric with an elaborate all-over raised or embroidered pattern or floral design. Appropriate for upholstery, draperies, handbags and eveningwear.

Buckram

A very stiff cotton fabric that is been soaked in a substance to fill in the gaps between the fibers. The fiber is usually cotton and is finished with starch and resin. Buckram fabric is most commonly used as the supporting material inside of baseball caps. It is also used in lady's hats, costumes, belts, and handbags.

Burlap

A loosely constructed, heavy weight, plain weave fabric. It has a rough hand. Appropriate for draperies and decorative items.

C

Casement Cloth: A fabric in which yarns are spaced far enough apart to create openings through which light passes. Used for curtains and other window treatments.

Canvas

A strong, durable, closely woven cotton fabric.

Chalk Cloth

A pliable fabric that can be used like a chalk board. Commonly used for tablecloths, posters, and projects, prime the fabric with chalk before using. To remove the chalk, wipe with a damp sponge.

Challis

A lightweight fabric that features incredible drape and a cool and smooth hand. Most commonly found in rayon fibers, with a recommended use of dresses, skirts, and blouses.

Chambray

A plain woven fabric that can be made from cotton, silk, or manufactured fibers, but is most commonly cotton. It incorporates a colored warp (often blue) and white filling yarns.

Chenille

The French word for Caterpillar, chenille fabric are created from fuzzy chenille yarns. A few different fabrics can fall into this type. Cotton chenille is cross between terry cloth and corduroy, with raised chenille cords and channels. Home décor chenille is similar to velvet, usually with finer cords.

Chantilly lace

This lace has a net background, and the pattern is created by embroidering with thread and ribbon to create floral designs. The pattern has areas of design that are very dense, and the pattern is often outlined with heavier cords or threads.

Charmeuse

A type of satin that is on the lighter end of the spectrum, with fluid drape and a brilliant sheen. It is most commonly used for slinky dresses, lingerie, and binding baby blankets.

Cheese Cloth

A lightweight, sheer, plain-woven fabric with a very soft texture. It may be natural colored, bleached, or dyed. It usually has a very low count.

Chiffon

Lightweight, extremely sheer and airy fabric, containing highly twisted fibers. Suitable for loose tops or dresses.

Chintz

A plain-weave fabric, which has been glazed to produce a polished look. Fabric must be dry-cleaned as the glazing will wash off with machine laundering. Suitable for drapes and lining.

Color Line: The range of available colors of a solid or printed fabric.

Corduroy

A fabric, usually made of cotton or a cotton blend, utilizing a cut-pile weave construction. The number of wales indicate the number of cords in one inch. Suitable for jackets, pants and skirts.

Crypton - is a manufacturing process, not a finish. It is a way a fabric is made, from the very extrusion, that offers PERMANENT, not applied, stain, moisture, mildew, bacteria and odor-resistant protection. It is the perfect product for any application: where moisture and heavy soiling is an issue.

Cutting/Cutting for Approval/CFA: A tiny piece of fabric that is cut directly from a specific bolt of fabric to match up with a previously purchased dye lot. Do not get this mixed up with a memo or a sample.

D

Damask

A glossy jacquard-type fabric, the patterns are flat and reversible. Unlike jacquards, the fabric is all one color. Suitable for draperies, curtains bed and table linens.

Denier

A measure of the density of the weave of the fabric. The lower the number, the more sheer/lightweight the fabric is. Usually found in nylon fabrics.

Denim

A twill weave cotton fabric made with different colored yarns in the warp and the weft. Due to the twill construction, one color predominates on the fabric surface. Suitable for pants, jackets and skirts. Pre-wash and dry 100% cotton denim at least twice to eliminate shrinkage and color bleeding.

Dobby

A decorative weave, characterized by small figures, usually geometric, that are woven into the fabric structure for a slightly raised texture.

Dotted Swiss

A lightweight, sheer cotton or cotton blend fabric with a small dot flock-like pattern either printed on the surface of the fabric, or woven into the fabric. End-uses for this fabric include blouses, dresses, baby clothes, and curtains.

Double roll: A double roll is the equivalent length of two single rolls on one physical roll. Many manufacturers sell wallpaper by the single roll but ship by the double roll. Almost all wallpaper on our site is priced and sold by the SINGLE ROLL. There is no universal measurement for a single roll, so please make sure you know how many yards are on a roll before you purchase.

Duck

A tightly woven, plain-weave, fabric that is similar to canvas. The fabric is usually made of cotton, and is widely used in printed home décor fabrics.

Dupioni

A crisp fabric with irregular slubs. It is perfect for tailored slimmer silhouettes like flat-front trousers, jackets and fitted blouses and dresses.

Dye Lot: Bolts of the same fabric pattern that were manufactured at the same time. Occasionally "dye lots" may vary slightly which is the reason for ordering a cutting from the specific bolt of fabric that you will receive.

E

Eyelet

Fabric with patterned cut-outs, around which stitching or embroidery may be applied in order to prevent the fabric from raveling.

F

Faille

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

Faux Fur

Artificial fur made from synthetic material.

Felt

A non-woven fabric made from wool, hair, or fur, and sometimes in combination with certain manufactured fibers, where the fibers are locked together in a process utilizing heat, moisture, and pressure to form a compact material. Ideal for most craft projects.

Flannel

Usually a 100% cotton fabric that has been brushed on one or both sides for softness. Typically used for shirts and sleepwear.

Fleece

A brushed polyester fabric that is quite lofty, and stretches along the grain. Suitable for vests, jackets and tops.

Flocked

A raised, often velveteen design added onto the surface of a fabric. Flocking adds interest and texture to fabric, and is most often featured on apparel and home décor fabrics.

French Terry Knit

A soft knit fabric that features a smooth face and loped back. French terry knit fabric is typically used in loungewear, tops, and baby items.

G

Gauze

A sheer, open-weave fabric usually cotton or silk. It is suitable for blouses, dresses and curtains.

Gingham

A medium weight, plain weave fabric with a plaid or check pattern created with dyed yarns. End-uses include dresses, shirts, and curtains.

Grosgrain

A tightly woven, firm, warp-faced fabric with heavy, round filling ribs created by a high-warp count and coarse filling yarns. Grosgrain can be woven as a narrow-ribbon or a fullwidth fabric.

H

Half Drop: Specific to wallpaper, the half drop is where the pattern repeats across the roll half way down the vertical repeat. This normally means allowing for extra length and cutting very carefully as each cut will start at the half repeat. The best way to be certain of buying enough wallpaper, is to work it out as if it were an ordinary repeat and add half a repeat to each drop, except for the first one.

Hatchi

A lightweight sweater knit fabric that features a characteristic lightly brushed face. It is most commonly used to create sweaters, cardigans, and tops.

Homespun

Refers to a coarse, plain weave fabric with a hand-woven look.

[Back to Index](#)

I

Interlining: A soft, but thick fabric that is inserted between the main fabric and the back lining. Interlining helps fabric drape gracefully.

ITY Knit

ITY stands for Interlock Twist Yarn and is a soft, lightweight, slinky jersey knit fabric. It features a fluid drape and a smooth hand that is usually cool. It is always made with a polyester and lycra spandex blend. Does not wrinkle easily.

J

Jacquard

Jacquard is a woven fabric which uses a special loom to control the yarns to create patterns that are reversed on the back side. It is usually found in home décor fabrics, from lighter weight silk-like fabrics to heavier upholstery tapestry fabrics. Brocade and damask are types of jacquard woven fabrics.

Jersey Knit

Usually thinner or lighter-weight than Interlock knit, with varying degrees of stretch. Drape, stretch, and usage depend on the fiber used, and whether lycra, spandex, or elastane are added.

K

Knit Fabric

Fabrics made from only one set of yarns, all running in the same direction. Some knits have their yarns running along the length of the fabric, while others have their yarns running across the width of the fabric. Knit fabrics are held together by looping the yarns around each other. Knitting creates ridges in the resulting fabric. Wales are the ridges that run lengthwise in the fabric; courses run crosswise.

L

Lace

An openwork fabric with yarns that are twisted around each other to form complex patterns or figures. Lace may be hand or machine made by a variety of fabrication methods including weaving, knitting, crocheting, and knotting.

Lamé

A woven fabric using flat silver or gold metal threads to create either the design or the background in the fabric.

Laminate

This fabric is created by bonding a thin polymer film to cotton fabric. Laminated fabric is perfect for creating rainwear, linings, and table coverings.

Faux Leather

Simulated leather.

Linen

Made from flax, this fabric can have a most rustic weave, with a crisp hand..

Lining: Fabric sewn on the back of drapery or slipcovers. It gives substance to the item. When used for drapery, it also protects the front fabric from the sun. Due to its delicate nature, silk drapery that is exposed to sunlight should always have a lining.

Lawn

A light, fine cloth made using carded or combed, linen or cotton yarns. The fabric has a crease-resistant, crisp finish. Linen lawn is synonymous with handkerchief linen.

M

Madras

A lightweight, usually cotton, shirting that features different plaids in an overall pattern. This type of fabric is usually imported from India. End-uses are men's and women's shirts and dresses.

Memo: (Synonymous with "sample") A small piece of fabric from a selected fabric pattern. This may or may not be from the bolt of fabric a customer will receive. Samples show general color and texture of the pattern.

Matelassé

A medium to heavyweight luxury fabric made in a double cloth construction to create a blistered or quilted surface. Common end-uses are upholstery, draperies, and evening dresses.

Melton

A heavyweight, dense, compacted, and tightly woven wool or wool blend fabric used mainly for coats.

Mesh

A type of fabric characterized by its net-like open appearance, and the spaces between the yarns.

Minky

A soft and fuzzy polyester fabric created to imitate the look of mink, Minky fabric is available in a variety of colors and prints, and is used for creating luxurious blankets and soft baby accessories.

Monk's Cloth

A heavy weight cotton fabric utilizing the basket weave variation of the plain weave. Used for draperies and slip covers, monk's cloth is an example of 4 x 4 basket weave. It has poor dimensional stability and tends to snag.

Muslin

An inexpensive, medium weight, plain weave, low count (less than 160 threads per square inch) cotton sheeting fabric. In its unfinished form, it is commonly used in fashion design to make trial garments for preliminary fit.

N

Netting

Refers to any open-construction fabric whether it is created by weaving, knitting, knotting, or another method.

Nylon

Produced in 1938, the first completely synthetic fiber developed. Known for its high strength and excellent resilience, nylon has superior abrasion resistance and high flexibility. [Back to Index](#)

O

Oilcloth

Sheetings or printcloth that are printed, bleached, or dyed, and given a special linseed oil and pigment preparation. Used for table coverings, waterproof outerwear; now largely replaced by plastic-coated and vinyl materials.

Onion Skin

A lightweight knit fabric that has a subtle pattern on the backing that resembles the appearance of an onion skin.

Organdy

A stiffened, sheer, lightweight plain weave fabric, usually cotton or polyester.

Organza

A crisp, sheer, lightweight plain weave fabric, with a medium to high yarn count, made of silk, rayon, nylon, or polyester. Used for special occasion garments and interfacing lightweight fabrics.

Osnaburg

A crisp, sheer, lightweight plain weave fabric, with a medium to high yarn count, made of silk, rayon, nylon, or polyester.

Ottoman

A heavy, plain weave fabric with wide, flat crosswise ribs that are larger and higher than in faille. It sometimes comes with alternating narrow and wide ribs. When made of narrow ribs only, it is called

soleil. Warp may be silk or manmade fiber; filling may be cotton, silk, wool, or manmade fiber. Used for dress coats, suits, and trimmings.

Outdoor

Outdoor fabric is used to recover cushions, pillows, create awnings, and more for spaces exposed to nature's elements like the sun and rain. Created with polyester or acrylic fibers, outdoor fabric is durable, soil and stain resistant, and can be cleaned by wiping with a damp rag.

Oxford

A fine, soft, lightweight woven cotton or blended with manufactured fibers in a 2 x 1 basket weave variation of the plain weave construction. The fabric is used primarily in shirtings.

P

Pack Cloth

A sturdy and pliable fabric, usually of nylon. Perfect for utility items like bags and tents.

Panné Velvet

A lustrous, lightweight velvet fabric, in which the pile has been flattened in one direction. It has a varied sheen and nap, and is usually stretch. Appropriate for tops and dresses.

Pincord

A fabric similar in texture and appearance to corduroy with very fine raised stripes. Pincord fabric is most common in home décor and apparel projects.

Peachskin

A soft fabric with a brushed texture similar to the skin of a peach on one side, with a good amount of drape. Peachskin is often used to create blouses, skirts, and dresses with a lining.

Peau de Soie

A heavy twill weave drapeable satin fabric, made of silk or a manufactured fiber. This satin features a more matte sheen than other satins, and also goes by the name of Matte Satin and Duchess Satin.

Piqué

A medium-weight fabric with a pebbly texture that looks almost like a check. Can be knit or woven.

Plissé

A lightweight, plain weave, fabric, made from cotton, rayon, or acetate, and characterized by a puckered striped effect, usually in the warp direction. The crinkled effect is created through the application of a caustic soda solution, which shrinks the fabric in the areas of the fabric where it is applied. Plissé is similar in appearance to seersucker. End-uses include dresses, shirtings, pajamas, and bedspreads.

Pointelle

Very feminine, delicate-looking, rib-knit fabric made with a pattern of openings.

Poplin

A fabric made using a rib variation of the plain weave. The construction is characterized by having a slight ridge effect in one direction, usually the filling. Poplin used to be associated with casual clothing, but as the "world of work" has become more relaxed, this fabric has developed into a staple of men's wardrobes, being used frequently in casual trousers.

Q

Double Sided Quilted Cotton

A fabric construction in which a layer of down or fiberfill is placed between two layers of fabric, and then held in place by stitching or sealing in a regular, consistent, all-over pattern on the goods.

R

Repeat

The pattern repeat is the vertical distance between where the pattern is identical again. That distance can be less than an inch or as much as the entire width of the product.

Reserve

Fabric that is reserved for a customer for a one week period. This ensures the customer of having a specific fabric available until the purchase is made.

Rib Knit

This knit has tremendous stretch across the grain a 1 x 1 rib has one rib up and one down. A 2 x 1 rib has two ribs up and one down, similar to a Poor Boy Knit.

Rip-Stop Nylon

A lightweight, wind resistant, and water resistant fabric. Appropriate for outdoor wear and equipment as well as outdoor flags.

Roll: Almost all wallpaper on our site is priced and sold by the SINGLE ROLL. There is no universal measurement for a single roll, so please make sure you know how many yards are on a roll before you purchase.

S

Sailcloth

Any heavy, plain-weave canvas fabric, usually made of cotton, linen, polyester, jute, nylon, etc. that is used for sails and apparel.

Sample: (Synonymous with "memo") A small piece of fabric from a selected fabric pattern. This may or may not be from the bolt of fabric a customer will receive. Samples show general color and texture of the pattern.

Sateen

A fabric made from yarns with low luster, such as cotton or other staple length fibers. The fabric has a soft, smooth hand and a gentle, subtle luster. Sateen fabrics are often used for draperies and upholstery.

Satin

With a lustrous, shiny surface, drapability depends on fiber content. Silk and rayon satins have the best stitch results.

Selvage:

The lengthwise edges of a piece of cloth, often a different weave of heavier threads. Intended to prevent unravelling.

Seersucker

A fabric with a woven pucker, this fabric is traditionally cotton, but can be polyester. Suitable for shirts, casual slacks and children's clothing.

Shantung

Similar to Dupioni silk, Shantung has a more refined appearance with smaller slubs. It's appropriate for tailored pants fuller skirts and gowns.

Single roll: Almost all wallpaper on our site is priced and sold by the SINGLE ROLL. There is no universal measurement for a single roll, so please make sure you know how many yards are on a roll before you purchase.

Faux Suede

Leather with a napped surface

T**Taffeta**

With a crisp hand, taffeta is typically used for formal wear like gowns and fuller skirts. Underlining prevents some of the wrinkling it has a tendency to have.

Tapestry

A heavy, often hand-woven, ribbed fabric, featuring an elaborate design depicting a historical or current pictorial display. The weft-faced fabric design is made by using colored filling yarns, only in areas where needed, that are worked back and forth over spun warp yarns, which are visible on the back. End-uses include wall hangings and upholstery.

Terry Cloth

Unclipped, looped pile, 100% cotton terry cloth is highly absorbent. French Terry has a looped reverse and a knit-like face.

Toile: A plain cloth, or, when described as *Toile de Jouy*, one that is printed with pastoral scenes printed on cotton.

Tulle

A lightweight, extremely fine, machine-made netting, it is softer to the touch than netting. Appropriate for veils and costumes.

Tweed

A medium to heavy weight, fluffy, woolen, twill weave fabric containing colored slubbed yarns. Common end-uses include coats and suits.

Twill

A fabric that shows a distinct diagonal wale on the face (e.g., denim, gabardine, tricotine)

V**Velour**

Usually with a knitted back, velour resembles velvet, but has some stretch. Appropriate for tops and sportswear like pants and jackets.

Velvet

With a longer pile, velvet is the most luxurious fabric. Appropriate for tops, skirts and fuller pants, and home decor upholstery.

Velveteen

A cotton or cotton blend fabric with a short, dense pile. It lacks the sheen and drape of velvet. It is perfect for drapes and home décor items as well as pants, jackets and skirts.

Voile

A crisp, lightweight, plain weave cotton-like fabric, similar in appearance to organdy and organza. It is appropriate for curtains as well as blouses and dresses.

W**Waffle Cloth**

Similar to piqué in texture. Waffle cloth has a honeycomb weave made on dobby loom. Usually of cotton.

Wool Crepe

A lightweight worsted fabric with a more or less crinkly appearance, obtained by using warp yarns that are tightly twisted in alternate directions. The term is often applied to lightweight worsted fabrics for women's wear that have little or no crepe surface.

Workroom: A place where upholstery and drapery are made.

Woven Fabric

Fabrics composed of two sets of yarns. One set of yarns, the warp, runs along the length of the fabric. The other set of yarns, the fill or weft, is perpendicular to the warp. Woven fabrics are held together by weaving the warp and the fill yarns over and under each other.

Y

Yarn

A continuous strand of textile fibers created when a cluster of individual fibers are twisted together. These long yarns are used to create fabrics, either by knitting or weaving.

Yarn-Dyed

A continuous strand of textile fibers created when a cluster of individual fibers are twisted together. These long yarns are used to create fabrics, either by knitting or weaving.

Z

Zari

An even thread that is usually gold or silver, commonly found in brocades that adds a metallic sheen to fabric.