

Corduroy

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FABRIC FACTS

The casual trend has produced a resurgence of corduroy. Sales of corduroy have increased and caught the appeal of fashion conscious men and women. Corduroy is a plush cut pile fabric, typically cotton and sometimes with a little spandex added. Corduroy has ribs called wales. The width of these ribs range from fine pin-wale to wide-wale. The fabric name has French roots; "corduroi" means cloth of the king. It was named in the 1600s when several in the French royal house wore it. Corduroy is popular as casual wear, particularly pants, skirts and jackets. Corduroy is most popular in blue but is sold in all colors.

FABRIC PROBLEMS

Corduroy has durable wearing qualities but dye and pile problems are common. Dye Crocking is due to poor dye penetration. Much of the dye is left on the fabric surface from where it will crock off due to friction and mechanical action in normal wear, in drycleaning or in spotting. When the surface dye is removed, the color becomes lighter. Loss or Change of Color will occur when two or more dyes are used to achieve a color and one of these dyes is solvent soluble. Deep colors such as reds, rust and blues are most susceptible. Matting or Flattened Pile may result due to pile distortion. This can occur in normal wear, in spotting or in finishing. Shine may also result in finishing. Bald Areas may result if the pile fiber is not securely woven or anchored to the base fabric. Loss of Pile may result from friction in normal wear or in spotting procedures.

INSPECTION

When accepting corduroy, examine the garment for dye crocking, matting and loss of pile fibers. Be sure to look at areas subject to friction and abrasion such as cuffs, hems, collars, sleeves and pockets. If removal of stains on the garment will require the use of lubricants and mechanical action, obtain a written release for possible loss of dye due to crocking. If corduroy has paint stains, they can rarely be removed without color loss.

DRYCLEANING

Classify corduroys according to color. Light and neutral colored corduroy can be drycleaned routinely. If the corduroy garment is trimmed with plastic, suede or leather, the trimming will determine the load classification. Reds, purples and other deep colored corduroy are notorious bleeders which will lose color and contaminate with dye the solvent in which they are run. Save deep colored corduroys for the end of the day. Run for four (4) minutes with no moisture in cool solvent (75? F to 80? F).

SPOTTING

Limit mechanical action in stain removal to avoid dye crocking, matting and loss of pile. Dyes on corduroy fabric frequently are soluble in dryside chemicals such as oily type paint remover and amyl acetate. Before attempting dryside stain removal on corduroy, obtain a written customer release. When removing paint, oil and nail polish, allow sufficient time for the lubricant to penetrate the stain. This will reduce the amount of mechanical action necessary for stain removal. Do not work on the reverse side of corduroy fabric. It will loosen the base of the pile and result in loss of pile. Always brush with and not across the ribs or wales. Brush in the direction that produces the smoothest appearance. If the pile becomes matted in wetside spotting, tumble the garment in a cool reclaimer to restore the pile or reclean. Wetside chemicals should be tested on an unexposed seam to determine color safety.

WETCLEANING

Corduroy should be wetcleaned with limited mechanical action, especially on deep colors. Use a mild lubricant with a low alkali or neutral pH. Dry in a warm tumbler

(at 110? F) and remove when damp or 90% dry if tumbler is regulated to fabric moisture content. Remove when damp, stretch and smooth out wrinkles on a hanger.

FINISHING

Head pressure should not be used in finishing corduroy except where a crease is needed. When head pressure is used, do not lock the head. As soon as the head is lifted, immediately steam and brush the fabric. Head pressure will result in fabric shine and pile distortion. Brushing while steaming corduroy will raise the pile surface. Corduroy slacks and trousers are sometimes distorted during wear. It is noticeable in the seams. Stretching the trousers while steaming it on the buck will usually bring it back to its original shape.

SUMMARY

Corduroy ranges from limited serviceability to fully serviceable depending on the dye or dyes. Deep color corduroys are more likely to suffer color loss. Dye crocking also results in color loss. It occurs because of the friction and mechanical action in normal wear, in drycleaning and in spotting. Loss of dye from deep colored corduroy will contaminate the solvent. In finishing, avoid using the head unless it is needed for a crease. Head pressure may result in flattening the pile and in fabric shine.