

STANDARDS OF QUALITY

TEXTILES: Sewing and Garment Construction

Design

1. The use of ethnic or traditional designs is acceptable if the main feature is the creation of the fabric, or if the design is used as a basis for surface embellishment (i.e. quilting, hand or machine embroidery, use of print and dye techniques, etc.). Otherwise, the garment must be designed, and the pattern made by or for the craftsperson.
2. The use of commercial patterns is permitted only if the pattern is so neutral as to have no influence on the aesthetic of the finished piece. Decoration must:
 1. Show a high level of understanding and application of design principles
 2. Be original, and show the distinct, personal style of the maker
 3. Show that consideration has been given to the integration of the base form into the finished product
 4. Be consistent with other products that form part of the craftsperson's line.

Materials

1. Fabrics used should be high quality, appropriate to the intended use of the article and meet the Craft Council fibre content ruling.
2. Where appropriate, materials (including fabrics, zippers, trims, shoulder pads, linings, interfacing, etc.) used in washable garments should be prewashed. Materials for which cleaning methods other than washing are recommended should be pre-shrunk before construction.
3. Fabrics, linings, interfacing, trims and notions must be compatible in weight, drapeability, quality and care requirements.
4. Fibre or fabric must be chosen to be compatible with style and function, and should retain colour and texture during the normal life of the garment if care instructions are followed.
5. Industry Canada regulations for fabrics to be used in children's sleepwear must be followed.
6. If re-cycled fabric is used it must be clean and of high quality. A hangtag must identify the fabrics as recycled.
7. Selvedges must be cut from commercial fabrics.

8. Printed fabrics featuring licensed characters or symbols may only be used by a licensed holder.

Technique

1. All garments must be properly constructed with no technical flaws, and be able to withstand normal expected usage. All articles must be clean, properly pressed and carefully finished.

2. Fabric must be cut so that hemlines are even, fabric drapes properly and garments are comfortable to wear. Grainlines of the material must be maintained.

3. Garments must be well finished inside and out. Loose threads, raw edges and marking lines must not be visible.

4. Machine, serger and hand stitching must be straight and even with proper choice of stitch and a balanced tension.

5. Thread should be of the appropriate type and weight, and must match or enhance fabric colour.

6. Seams and hems must be finished in a manner appropriate to the fabric and intended use. They must be inconspicuous on the right side unless it is a deliberate design feature.

7. Buttons, zippers and other closures must be securely attached. They should function well unless used for decorative purposes only.

8. Points must be sharp; intersections must meet evenly and be flat. All curves must be precisely executed without puckers, gathers or tucks. Pleats must be even.

9. Facings must be understitched, edgestitched or topstitched, where possible.

10. Glue must not be used on fabric unless stitching is impossible.

11. Linings and facings must not be visible on the right side of the garment.

Specialty fabrics – spandex

1. Garments should reflect a strong knowledge of materials and techniques used.

2. Only high quality spandex, that which has 4 way stretch, should be used.

3. All seams must be finished. They may be serged using 3 or 4 threads (but not 5) or stitched on a domestic sewing machine using an appropriate stretch sewing technique.

4. All machine tension must be balanced. Fabric and seam must return to original shape after pulling with no thread breakage.

5. Stitching should be done with a needle of appropriate type and size to prevent damage to the fabric.

Specialty fabrics – water resistance

1. Terminology. The term “waterproof” implies an absolute denial of water penetration and is rarely used. Fabric is tightly woven, completely coated and not “breathable”. The term “water repellent” is given to a finished garment which may offer a varying degree of resistance to water penetration; however air can pass through the fabric. A “water resistant” fabric resists wetting by water and the fabric remains virtually unchanged. (Definitions from Industry Canada.)
2. In order that a garment may be labelled as “waterproof”, seams must be sealed. Samples must be accompanied by a written description of how the sealing is done.
3. Craftspeople using any fabric with one of the above claims should indicate the brand name of the fabric used on a hangtag.
4. To protect the waterproof coating, a breathable lining is recommended.
5. During the construction process, pins should be used only in the seam allowance.
6. Stitching should be done with a needle of appropriate type and size to prevent damage to the fabric.

* Fibre content labelling for textiles is subject to Industry Canada regulation. Garments must carry correct labelling noting fibre content and maker identity. In addition, the Craft Council recommends that instructions for use and care accompany each article.

Fibre content

* A minimum of 75% of work to be sold at Craft Council sponsored events, in either content or volume, must be of natural fibres.

* Exceptions to the fibre content ruling may be made in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Standards Committee. Specific application must be made for such exceptions and each case will be judged individually. Generally, such circumstances occur in the suitability of the fibre/fabric to the function of the article, or in the innovative use of new and exciting materials. Craftspeople wishing to have the Standards Committee consider a request for an exception should state the reasons for their request in writing with their submission of samples.

* Mixtures of fibres should be compatible for care and durability.

* Wrappers, labels or a written statement of fibre content must accompany all samples submitted.