



Designation: D 3136 – 9900

Standard Terminology Relating to Care Labeling for Apparel, Textile, Home Furnishing, and Leather Products¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This terminology provides a uniform language for the disclosure of care instructions on labels that are to be attached to apparel, textile, home furnishing, and leather products.

1.2 In the United States, apparel care labels must be attached permanently except when exempted by Federal Trade Commission regulation (see section 2.2).

1.3 These definitions and descriptions employ common meanings used not only by textile technologists but by consumers.

1.4 These instructions may apply to some accessory products.

2. ~~Referenced Documents~~

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*

¹ This terminology is under the jurisdiction of Committee D-13 on Textiles and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D13.62 on Care Labeling.

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2.2 Other Standard:

Federal Trade Commission Ammendment to Trade Regulation Rule Concerning Care Labeling of Textile Wearing Apparel, and Certain Piece Goods Federal Register, Vol. 48, No. 99, May 20, 1983³

2.3 AATCC Standard:

AATCC Technical Manual 1985 Standardization of Home Laundry Test Conditions in AATCC Test Methods⁴

3. Significance and Use

3.1 The standardized terminology should be used on the label in a logical refurbishing sequence, in order to disclose maximum information in a small label space and to help the consumer understand recommended practices.

3.2 Preliminary instructions may be necessary for proper care of certain products (See Table 1, Preliminary Instructions).

3.3 The wording on a care label should be brief. Manufacturers are encouraged to place more detailed explanations in or on package covers, or in some temporary form of communication such as a sticker or hangtag. The terms used should be consistent with those used on care labels.

3.4 The word “only” in any term limits that portion of the procedure to the stated instruction.

3.5 A care instruction for a product is applicable to all components of the product including nonremovable linings, trim, and other details. Any exceptions should be a part of the labeled instruction. An intentionally removable component, such as a zip-out liner, is expected to be separately labeled when it must be cared for differently from the garment itself, or when there could be serious doubt about what procedure to use (See Federal Trade Commission Trade Regulation Rule).

3.6 Laundering temperatures are maximum and vary widely in national and international practice (See Table 2). Consumers may obtain water temperatures in their washing machines which are frequently below and sometimes higher than the stated maximum temperature. The actual water temperature obtained when using the washing machine settings of hot, warm, and cold vary in North America by region, season, water heater settings (including solar), and regulations governing factory-set mixes. In general, North American washing machines do not have internal heaters.

4. Terminology

4.1 Definitions:

bleach, *n—in care of textiles*, a product for brightening and aiding the removal of soils and stains from textile materials by oxidation that is inclusive of both chlorine and non-chlorine products

care instructions, *n—in textiles*, a series of directions that describes practices which should refurbish a product without adverse effects and warn against any part of the directions which one could reasonably be expected to use that may harm the item.

care label, *n—in textiles*, a label or other affixed instructions that report how a product should be refurbished.

DISCUSSION—The Federal Trade Commission, in Rule 16 CFR 423, requires care instructions on most apparel and certain other textile items. In relation to these products, the FTC definition states: “Care Label means a permanent label or tag, containing regular care information and instructions, that is attached or affixed in some manner that will not become separated from the product and will remain legible during the useful life of the product.”

care procedure, *n—in textiles*, one or more refurbishing methods to which products may be subjected for soil and stain removal and aesthetic improvement such as appearance restoration or hand.

² Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Vol 07.01.

³ Available from U.S. Government Printing Office, North Capital and H. Streets NW, Washington, DC 20401.

⁴ Available from American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists, P.O. Box 12215, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709.

TABLE 2 Laundering Water Temperatures In Common Use^A

Term	ASTM ISO ^B	FTC	AATCC ^C	Canada
...	95°C (200°F)			
...	70°C (160°F)			
Very Hot	60°C (140°F)		60°C (140°F)	
Hot	50°C (120°F)	66°C (150°F)	49°C (120°F)	70°C (160°F)
Warm	40°C (105°F)	32° to 43°C (90° to 110°F)	41°C (105°F)	50°C (120°F)
Lukewarm				40°C (105°F)
Cool				30°C (85°F)
Cold	30°C (85°F)	29°C (85°F)	27°C (80°F)	
Very Cold			16°C (60°F)	

^AThe laundering temperatures in Table 2 are maximum.

^BThe ISO standard, “ISO 3758 textiles-Care labeling code using symbols,” does not associate the terms hot, warm, and cold with water temperatures for laundering. The ISO washing symbols provide maximum water temperature options of 95°C, 70°C, 60°C, 50°C, 40°C, and 30°C in Celsius only. The Guide D 5489 requires as a minimum the laundering water temperatures reported within the washtub symbol either in degree Celsius or by using a dot system. The water temperature may also be reported in degrees Fahrenheit.

^CThe AATCC temperatures are test temperatures for home laundering, whereas the FTC and Canada temperatures are meant to reflect the upper end of temperatures in actual use, including temperatures used in commercial laundering.

DISCUSSION—The process employs appropriate equipment, materials and processes, and may include but need not be limited to the following: water or drycleaning solvent, detergent or soap, foam, absorption (powder) type compounds, bleach, agitation, drying, pressing or ironing.

chlorine bleach, *n*—a bleach that releases the hypochlorite ion in solution, for example, sodium hypochlorite.

cleaning agent, *n*—a chemical compound or formulation of several compounds which loosens, disperses, dissolves, or emulsifies soil to facilitate removal by mechanical action.

commercial laundering, *n*—a process by which textile products or specimens may be washed, bleached, rinsed, dried, and pressed typically at higher temperatures, higher pH, and longer times than used for home laundering.

consumer care, *n*—of consumer textile products, cleaning and maintenance procedures as customarily undertaken by the ultimate user.

consumer textile product, *n*—a textile item intended to satisfy human wants and needs.

DISCUSSION—Consumer textile products include such products as apparel, curtains, draperies, piece goods, sheets, slipcovers, table linens, towels, trims, yarns, zippers, and findings. The component parts of consumer textile products may include such other materials as suede, leather and fur.

detergent, *n*—in textile product care, a cleaning agent containing one or more surfactants as the active ingredient(s).

DISCUSSION—In popular usage, washing and cleaning agents with a composition other than soap that clean by much the same mechanism as does soap. The term detergent is used to describe both the basic surface active agents and finished products. The finished product may contain additional ingredients such as builders, antiredeposition agents, corrosion inhibitors, suds control agents, fluorescent whitening agents, etc.

drycleaning, *n*—in the care of textiles, the cleaning of consumer textile products with organic solvents such as a petroleum solvent or perchloroethylene.

DISCUSSION—The process may include moisture addition to solvent up to 75% relative humidity, a detergent addition hot tumble drying up to 70°C (160°F) and restoration by steam or steam air finishing.

hand washing, *n*—the most gentle form of home laundering using hand manipulation without the use of a machine or device such as a scrubbing board.

home laundering, *n*—a process by which textile products or parts thereof may be washed, bleached, dried, and pressed by any customary method designed for use in a residence, or non-professional use. (See also **professional care**).

ironing, *n*—a method of pressing using a heated hand iron, sometimes together with moisture or steam, and a gliding motion.

laundering, *n*—in textile product care, a process intended to remove soil or stains by treatment (washing) with an aqueous detergent solution (and possibly bleach) and normally including subsequent rinsing, extracting, and drying.

non-chlorine bleach, *n*—a bleach that does not release the hypochlorite ion in solution, for example, sodium perborate, sodium percarbonate.

permanent care label, *n*—as applied to textile products, a care label that remains legible and attached to a textile product throughout its useful life.

pressing, *n*—in the care of textiles, a process of smoothing and shaping by heat and pressure, with or without the presence of steam.

DISCUSSION—Pressing may be done with a hand iron or with a utility press such as used by commercial laundries and drycleaners.

professional care, *n*—for textile products, cleaning and maintenance procedures requiring the services of a person specially trained or skilled in their use.

refurbish, *n*—as applied to textile products, to brighten or freshen up and restore to wearability or use by cleaning such as drycleaning, laundering, or steam cleaning.

soap, *n*—a cleaning agent usually consisting of sodium or potassium salts of fatty acids.

solvent relative humidity, *n*—the humidity of air over a drycleaning bath and in equilibrium with the solvent and its small amount of water.

DISCUSSION—Every drycleaning solvent bath containing detergent can require a different absolute water content to reach the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) specified level of solvent relative humidity for a normal drycleaning. The actual solvent relative humidity in the air over a solvent must be measured by a hygrometer after equilibrium has been reached between the water content of air and the solvent.

spot and stain removal, *n*—a cleaning procedure for localized areas with cleaning agents and mechanical action specific to the removal of the foreign substances present.

tag, *n*—a paper item, such as a ticket or a slip, which is marked to provide information to the consumer at the time of purchase, and which is permanently affixed to the product.

4.2 *Other Definitions*—For the definitions of other textile terms used in this standard, refer to Terminology D 123.

5. Label Terms and Detailed Instructions for Apparel, Draperies, Slipcovers, Linens, Yarn, and Piece Goods

5.1 See Table 1 for a listing of label terms and the detailed instructions that apply to them.

6. Keywords

6.1 apparel; care label; drapery; knitted fabric; sheeting; table cloth; terminology; curtains; slip covers; linens; toweling; upholstery; woven fabric; yarn

TABLE 1 Label Terms and Detailed Instructions

Label Term	Detailed Instructions
<i>Preliminary Instructions</i>	
Remove ... before washing	Items may not be washed or may be cared for differently or separately than the item itself; assumes item can be removed.
Remove ... before	Component may not be cleaned or may be cared for differently or separately than the product itself; assumes component can be removed.
Close fasteners	Self explanatory. Action protects zippers and hook and loop tapes from damage or protects the garment from damage by the zipper and hook and loop tape.
Wash inside-out	Turn garment inside-out before washing to protect the face of fabric.
Inside-out	Turn garment inside-out before cleaning to protect the face of fabric.
With like colors	Wash with colors of similar hue and shade depth.
With like colors	Clean with colors of similar hue and shade depth.
Separately	Wash product by itself.
Separately	Clean product by itself.
Wash before use	Wash before first use.
Before use	Clean before first use.
<i>Home Laundering</i>	
Machine wash	Use any home-type or coin-operated washing machine following the manufacturer's instructions as appropriate for the product.
Hot	Set water temperature control on washer to use hot water directly from the hot water supply, maximum temperature 50°C (120°F) (See 3.6).
Warm	Set water temperature control on washer to use warm water, maximum 40°C (105°F) (See 3.6).
Cold	Set water temperature control on washer to use cold water directly from cold water supply, maximum temperature 30°C (85°F) (See 3.6).
Small load	Use smaller than normal load of products based on manufacturer's instructions.
Delicate or gentle cycle	Set machine to give slow agitation, slow spin, and reduced time.
Durable-press cycle or Permanent-press cycle	Use a cool-down rinse or cold rinse before reduced spinning.
Bleach when needed	Any household laundry bleach may be used when necessary.
Only non-chlorine bleach when needed	Use non-chlorine bleach only when necessary. Chlorine bleach may not be used.
Do not bleach	No bleaches may be used.
Warm rinse	Set water temperature control on washer to use warm rinse water, maximum temperature 40°C (105°F) (See 3.6).
Cold rinse	Set water temperature control on washer to use cold rinse water directly from cold water supply, maximum temperature 30°C (85°F) (See 3.6).
Rinse twice	Rinse at least two times to remove detergent, soap, and bleach.
Do not add fabric softener	No fabric softener may be used.
Do not spin	Remove material prior to start of final spin cycle.
Do not wring	Do not use roller wringer. Do not wring by hand.
Hand wash	Manually remove soil from products or specimen by gently squeezing them in a water solution of detergent or soap.
Dry promptly	Remove promptly after washing is complete and dry.
Do not allow to sit wet after washing	Color transfer may occur if items sit wet after washing.
Do not wash	Self-explanatory. Item may not be washed.
Damp wipe only	Surface clean with damp cloth or sponge.
Do not commercially launder	Do not employ a laundry which uses special formulations, sour rinses, extremely large loads or extremely high temperatures or which otherwise is employed for commercial, industrial or institutional use. Employ laundering methods designed for residential use or use in a self-service establishment.
<i>Drying, All Methods</i>	
Tumble dry	Use machine dryer.
Hot—high	Set dryer at high temperature.
—medium	Set dryer at medium temperature.
—low	Set dryer at low temperature.
Durable-press or permanent press	Set dryer at durable (permanent) press setting.
No heat or air fluff only	Set dryer to operate without heat.
Remove promptly	When items are dry, remove immediately to prevent wrinkling.
Drip dry	Hang dripping wet without twisting, wringing, or spinning, and without hand shaping and smoothing.
Line dry	Hang damp after twisting, wringing, spinning or squeezing by hand.
Dry flat	Dry away from the sun.
Dry flat	Lay out horizontally for drying.
Dry in shade	Dry away from the sun.
Block to dry	By hand while wet, reshape to original dimensions.
Smooth by hand	By hand while wet, remove wrinkles, straighten seams and facings.
Reshape and dry flat	By hand while wet, reshape to original dimensions.
<i>Ironing and Pressing</i>	
Iron, high	Use high temperature setting.
Iron, medium	Use medium temperature setting.
Iron on lowest setting	Use lowest temperature setting.

TABLE 1 *Continued*

Label Term	Detailed Instructions
Do not iron	Item not to be smoothed or finished with an iron.
Iron reverse side only	Turn article inside out for ironing or pressing.
Do not steam	Do not use steam in any form.
Steam only	Use steam without contact pressure.
Steam iron	Use iron containing water at steam setting.
Press	Commercial utility press may be used.
Iron damp	Moisten articles before ironing.
Use press cloth	Place either a dry or a damp cloth between the iron and the fabric.
Do not iron decoration	Avoid ironing decoration applied to textile product.
<i>Drycleaning, All Methods</i>	
Professionally dryclean	Use the drycleaning process but modified to aid in optimizing results either by a drycleaning attendant or through the use of a drycleaning machine which permits such modifications or both. Such modifications or special warnings must be included in the care instruction.
Petroleum, Fluorocarbon or Perchloroethylene	Employ solvent(s) specified to dryclean the item.
Short cycle	Use reduced or minimum cleaning time, the exact time to depend upon solvent used.
Minimum extraction	Use least possible extraction time.
Reduced moisture	Use decreased solvent relative humidity (S.R.H.). The decreased S.R.H. should be measured in the final stages of the drycleaning wash procedure.
No tumble or do not tumble	Do not tumble dry.
Tumble warm	Tumble dry up to 65°C (150°F), as measured at the outlet stack.
Tumble cool	Tumble dry with room temperature air.
Cabinet dry warm	Cabinet dry up to 50°C (120°F).
Cabinet dry cool	Cabinet dry with room temperature air.
Steam only	Employ no contact pressure when steaming.
No steam	Do not use steam in pressing, finishing, steam cabinets or wands.
Do not dryclean	Self-explanatory.
<i>Leather Cleaning</i>	
Suede leather clean	Use special leather care methods designed for sueded leathers having a raised surface.
Fur clean	Clean in a drum type machine using dry particle cleaning compounds. Follow with fur ironing or fur glazing as needed.
Professional leather clean only	Have cleaned only by a professional cleaner who uses special leather or suede care methods.

APPENDIX

(Nonmandatory Information)

X1. RATIONALE

X1.1 Work began on ASTM Standard D 3136 in October 1970, and the document was published in the 1972 ASTM Yearbook.

X1.2 In 1972, the standard was unique; its goal was to provide terminology understood by consumers. Consumers and their representatives helped to develop it, along with other ASTM colleagues, many of whom had contributed to a Voluntary Industry Guide on Consumer Textile Products.

X1.3 Concurrently, the Federal Trade Commission was developing a trade rule on care labeling for apparel that became effective on July 3, 1972.

X1.4 In the late nineteen seventies, data were collected by the Commission on the effectiveness of the regulation. Based on those findings, the trade rule was amended, effective January 2, 1984. This amendment included a Glossary of Standard Terms, based on ASTM D3136.

X1.5 In 1985, the attention of the ASTM D13.62 subcommittee has turned to the needs of professionals such as labelers and textile testing technologists to help consumers and manufacturers derive maximum benefit from care labeling. Work on a standard testing method for care instructions (home laundering) is nearing completion and drycleaning terminology has been expanded. Terminology for carpets and rugs is also being published.

X1.6 The latest revision of D3136 provides definitions of general terms and a table of label terms complete with detailed instructions. Upper limits of wash water temperatures are based on a 1984 nationally projectable market research study of consumer home laundry practices. Further, the laundering temperatures have been included that are consistent with the AATCC Technical Manual 1985, page 281, titled“ Standardization of Home Laundry Test Conditions in AATCC Test Methods.” The temperatures will be included in the Standard Method of Test for Care Instructions, now under development.

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