



# DESIGN DECISIONS

## Characteristics of Fabric Fibers

Fiber	Characteristics*	Care* (See label)	Durability*	Resist Sun Damage*
Nylon	Easy to dye, drapes well, retains shape,	Washable at low temp.	Very strong, durable, resists abrasion	Fair but can be modified
Olefin	Easy care, resist moisture Stained easily by grease and oil	Washable Do not dry clean	Very strong, durable, resist abrasion	Fair – can add stabilizers
Polyester	Retains shape well, resists wrinkles	Washable	Strong, durable, resist abrasion	Good to excellent
Acrylic	Soft like wool, colorfast	Some washable or dry clean	May form “pills,”	Excellent
Acetate	Soft feel, silky look, drapes well. Poor wrinkle recovery. Weaker when wet.	Dry clean or some hand washable	Low or poor resistance to abrasion.	Weakened by long exposure unless modified for sunlight resistance
Rayon	Similar to cotton, easy to dye, drapes well, wrinkles easily unless treated, may shrink	Dry clean or some hand washable	Not as durable or abrasion resistant.	Poor, not recommended for draperies
Cotton	Absorbent, easy to dye, may wrinkle easily	Washable – may shrink unless treated	Good abrasion resistance	Good, may weaken after long exposure
Silk	Strong fiber but lightweight, dyes well, drapes well	Usually dry cleaned.	Not as durable or abrasion resistant.	Poor – yellows and degrades
Wool	Holds shape well, drapes well, resists wrinkles, may shrink & felt when wet and agitated	Dry clean unless special finish to wash.	Fair to good abrasion resistance	Fair – eventually loses strength

Prepared by: Shirley Niemeyer, Extension Specialist, University of Nebraska Lincoln Extension

Find more at <http://4h.unl.edu/designdecisions>

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