

Wonderful Wool

Wool is a green, renewable natural fiber with versatile fashion sense - it can be thick or thin, rough or smooth, bulky or airy and covers all the bases with high quality characteristics. With careful maintenance, wool garments will last many years and look beautiful the entire time.

Here are some of the popular wonderful woolen fabrics —

Gauze - a sheer fabric that is often loosely woven. This wool will keep you cool on hot and humid days. It makes lovely skirts and over blouses.

Challis - a lightweight fabric made from tightly spun yarns and is one of the few printed wools. This soft fabric drapes beautifully and shows off unpressed pleats, gathers, and draped details.

Tropical Weight - this is an airy, lightweight fabric made from tightly twisted two-ply yarns and woven in a plain weave. An ideal fabric for suits, dresses, and tops for hot climates, tropical weight fabric will hold crisp pleats and creases.

Crepe - a very popular lightweight fabric with a crinkled or grainy texture, crepe makes excellent dresses, jackets, and tops. Crepe is made from yarns so tightly twisted they kink.

Menswear Suiting - is a broad term applied to high quality fabrics used to make men's tailored suits. These range from very lightweight at 6-10 ounces up to 20 ounces per yard for the heavier ones and are available in traditional neutral suiting colors. These fabrics will have the body needed to hold the shape of a suit, but can be difficult to ease since they are tightly woven.

Knits - are available in a wide variety of weights and jersey is one of the most popular. Jersey is a soft, lightweight, single knit fabric and works up well in soft, fluid styles that can be casual, classic, or dressy.

Flannel – has a soft fuzzy surface on one or both sides and is available in a variety of weights. Flannel is easy to cut and sew and makes beautiful shirts, skirts, dresses and lightly tailored jackets.

Melton - is more readily available, less expensive, and is similar to boiled wool. Used for simple designs, this fabric will make a lovely cold weather outerwear as well as unlined or unstructured jackets.

I call wool a top 10 performer because of all its impressive characteristics that no other natural fiber possesses — Wool is . . .

Absorbent - wool can hold 30 percent of its weight in moisture, allowing the garment to stay comfortable and not get cold or clammy.

Breathable - the wool fiber is porous and will allow the wearer's skin to breathe

Clean - the fiber will shed dirt, allowing it to be brushed away. Spills can often be blotted away.

Dyeable - the wool fiber accepts color right to the core and holds it permanently, helping the fabrics keep their new look for the life of the garment. Almost any color is possible.

Ecologically Smart - a green, renewable resource.

Fire Resistant - slow to burn and will self extinguish when removed from flame.

Relatively Lightweight - even thick, bulky fabrics are not very heavy. The wool fiber structure adds volume without comparable weight.

Temperature Control - will keep you warm on cold days and cool on warm days.

Versatile - fabrics and yarns are available from very thin and sheer to heavy and chunky.

Wrinkle Resistant - even though many of the fabrics will hold creases and pleats, the fiber's natural crimp allows wool fabrics to shed wrinkles.

Pre planning will make the challenging parts of working with wool less troublesome —
Know . . .

Bleach will dissolve the wool fiber.

Regular laundry soaps are harsh and destroy the luster and strength of the wool fiber.

Clothes Moths delight in snacking on wool fibers and are attracted to soiled areas.

The wool fiber can be easily and permanently damaged by over pressing with an iron.

Heat and agitation can result in shrinkage and felting - Hand washing can be a preferred method of cleaning.