

Labelling shows best care for garments

Care labelling is a series of symbols on a label which indicate to the consumer exactly how to clean an article, either a ready-made garment, or yarn, or fabric for home sewing.

It also gives the consumer some assurance that if the directions are followed, the garment will reach certain standards with regard to color fastness, shrinking and stretching.

However, it does not guarantee that an article is durable or meets any other performance criteria - it only relates to safe care of the article, says Margaret Loewen, clothing and textiles specialist of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food's rural organizations and services branch.

There are five symbols which might appear on a label. The wash tub stands for washing, the triangle for bleaching, the square for drying, the iron for pressing and the circle for dry cleaning.

These symbols also may appear in three different colors. They are the three familiar traffic colors - green, amber and red. If the symbol is printed in green, it means no special precautions are needed. An amber symbol means that caution is required, and of course a red symbol means - stop, don't do it! As well, the red symbols have a red X through the symbol to further re-enforce that the procedure is **not** to be used.

The Canadian Labelling Standards Committee decided that consumers would be better served by care labels using symbols rather than words, so the information could be understood by everyone. Most of the information, therefore, is in symbols and colors.

But, along with these, there may be other things such as temperatures inside the wash tub or iron symbols, to show which washing or ironing temperature is safe.

Also, the outline of a hand might appear inside the wash tub symbol to indicate that the article should be hand washed. Any other words in English and French may be used along with the symbols, but manufacturers tend to use the symbols only.

Use of the care labelling symbols by manufacturers is not mandatory, although it is currently being used on many textile products in Canada. If manufacturers choose to use this system, they must present the symbols and colors in the correct way

on a label which remains legible and firmly attached, even after repeated washing.

Also, it must be positioned in a conspicuous part of the garment, such as the neckline or waistband. Because it is a voluntary program, retail pressure and consumer demand are essential for wider use.




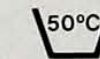
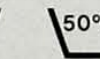















Care labelling benefits not only the consumers but dry cleaners and commercial laundries as well, by reducing the number of customer complaints about improper cleaning of garments.

Follow the Signs



Manufacturers have been encouraged to use these symbols on labels attached to textile articles. By following the symbols you are assured that your garment will not shrink, stretch or change colour

beyond acceptable limits. Care label information can help you choose textile articles by giving you an idea of the expense and time required to maintain a new purchase in good condition.

Washing						
	Do not wash	Hand wash in lukewarm water	Machine wash in lukewarm water at a gentle setting - reduced agitation	Machine wash in warm water at a gentle setting - reduced agitation	Machine wash in warm water at a normal setting	Machine wash in hot water at a normal setting
Chlorine Bleaching						
	Do not use chlorine bleach		Use chlorine bleach as directed			
Drying						
	Dry flat	Tumble dry low temperature	Tumble dry medium to high temperature	Hang to dry	Drip dry	
Ironing						
	Do not iron	Iron at low setting	Iron at medium setting	Iron at high setting		
Dry Cleaning						
	Do not dry clean	Dry clean - tumble dry at low temperature	Dry clean			