

GINETEX®

GINETEX SWITZERLAND



## TEXTILE CARE SYMBOLS

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Education and Culture DG



# TEXTILE CARE SYMBOLS

## BASIC PRINCIPLES

WASHING



BLEACHING



DRYING



IRONING



PROFESSIONAL TEXTILE CARE



# CARE LABELLING

## BASIC PRINCIPLES

The GINETEX care symbols are protected under trademark law. The trademarks are owned by the Groupement International d'Etiquetage pour l'Entretien des Textiles (GINETEX – International Association for Textile Care Labelling). The GINETEX symbols are also the origin of the international standards (ISO / EN 3758).

The care symbols may not be reproduced, issued or used without a special agreement with GINETEX. The contracting companies undertake to make correct use of these symbols at all times within the meaning of the relevant guidelines. Improper and unlawful use of the symbols is followed up and may lead to legal action.

Commercial companies (wholesalers, retailers, importers etc.) are required to ensure correct information of the care treatment of textile products and appropriate labelling in compliance with the Swiss directives in their orders for deliveries.

The label provides information on the most severe treatment that does not cause irreversible damage to the article during the textile care process.

The symbols refer to the part most sensible to the care treatment of a textile article. This includes: Colouring, finishing, accessories (such as buttons, zips) and applications.

The care procedures applied according to the information given on the label guarantee that the article will not be damaged. However, there is no guarantee that soil and stains are completely removed.

Milder treatments and lower temperatures than indicated on the label are always allowed.

Consumers are asked to make sure the textile articles are labelled with the care labelling symbols before buying textiles.

# WASHING

## CARE INSTRUCTIONS AND SYMBOLS

The symbol indicates whether domestic washing is possible and applies both to hand and machine washes. The numbers in the washing tub specify the maximum washing temperatures in degrees Celsius which must not be exceeded.

- The care symbols indicate the maximal severity of the care treatment. Washing and ironing at lower temperatures preserves the environment through smaller power requirement.
- Keep dirty laundry in a well aired and dry place and do not leave lying around for too long.
- Pre-treat stains or heavily soiled pieces suitably; check colourfastness in advance.
- Before washing, pre-sort laundry according to the degree of soiling, type of treatment (washing temperature), colour and, if no care label is provided, according to the indicated fibre content. Note any instructions on exposure to reduced mechanical strain (mild washing cycle).
- In the case of coloured items, a separation into articles with bright and dark colours is appropriate. A separate first wash of new coloured textiles may be appropriate.
- Fabrics made of synthetic fibres or mixed fabrics should not be washed together with linen (risk of pilling).
- When washing textiles marked as „easy-care“ articles, use a mild washing cycle. Reduce the quantity of laundry and spin carefully (risk of creasing).



**Boiling wash** (normal process): Articles e.g. in cotton or linen, white, suitable for boiling, dyed or printed. Fill the drum completely. Pre-treat stubborn stains.



**60° C coloured wash** (normal process): Coloured articles which must not be washed at boiling temperature e.g. made of cotton, modal, polyester and mixed fabrics.



**“Easy care” articles** (mild process): Reduce the quantity of laundry. The drum must not be more than two-thirds full. Pre-wash only if the textiles are heavily soiled. Avoid spinning or do spin for short periods only to minimise the risk of creasing.



**40° C coloured wash** (normal process): Washing cycle e.g. for dark coloured articles made of cotton, polyester, mixed fabrics etc.



**40° C “Easy care” articles** (mild process): Fine laundry, e.g. in modal, viscose, synthetic fibres (polyacryl, polyester and polyamide). Reduce the quantity of laundry. Pre-wash only heavily soiled textiles. Avoid spinning or do spin for short periods only to minimise the risk of creasing.



**40° C very mild process** (gentle process/wool wash cycle): For articles e.g. in machine-washable wool. This washing cycle ensures a much reduced mechanical treatment. Reduce the quantity of laundry substantially. The drum should be not more than one-third full.

# WASHING

## CARE INSTRUCTIONS AND SYMBOLS

- Washing machine manufacturers offer special wash programs for textiles, which are to correspond to the hand wash, e.g. for woollen articles marked by machine laundry
- Always add detergents according to the dosing instructions, taking due account of the degree of soiling, water hardness and load. Make sure to choose the right detergent. In the case of coloured textiles, do not use a universal detergent which contains oxygen for bleaching purposes, unless the bleaching symbol ( $\Delta$ ) allows its use. Otherwise, a risk of colour change cannot be ruled out. The use of special detergents is recommended.
- When treating coloured textiles the use of mild or colour detergents is recommended to prevent changes in colour.
- Insufficient detergent use may give poor washing results. Deposits may be formed on the laundry (grey coloration) and in the machine. This will reduce the life cycle of the textiles and also that of the washing machine.
- A too high dosage of detergent does not necessarily lead to a better wash result, but has unnecessarily a bad impact on the environment.
- Set the appropriate washing program according to the care symbol (normal process, mild process, gentle process).
- Do not use the „pre-wash“ program unless the laundry is very dirty. Comply with the machine manufacturer's recommendations. If wet laundry is to be washed, only half-fill the drum.
- Hygienically strongly stained laundry is preferably to be washed with the maximal permissible temperature.



**30° C coloured wash** (normal process): Washing cycle, e.g. for dark coloured articles in **cotton, polyester, mixed fabrics etc.**



**30° C “Easy care” articles** (mild process): For articles, e.g. in **modal, viscose, polyacryl, polyester and polyamide**. Reduce the quantity of laundry. Avoid spinning or do spin for short periods only to minimise the risk of creasing.



**30° C very mild process** (gentle process / wool wash cycle): Articles made, e.g. of **machine-washable wool**. This washing cycle ensures a much reduced mechanical treatment. Reduce the quantity of laundry substantially.



**wash by hand:** Hand wash at a water temperature of maximum of 40° C, depending on the particular article. First dissolve a mild detergent in plenty of water. Allow the textiles to float in the solution and agitate carefully. Do not rub, pull and wring out. Then rinse the textiles well, press the superfluous water out carefully and pull into shape. Treat coloured and sensitive pieces rapidly and do not leave lying in the wet state. Washing machine supplies offer special hand wash-programs corresponding to hand wash e.g. for woollen articles marked with machine wash.



**do not wash:** Articles marked in this way must not be washed.

# BLEACHING

## CARE INSTRUCTIONS AND SYMBOLS

The triangle indicates whether the article may or may not be bleached.

Bleaching is a process carried out in an aqueous medium before, during or after washing, requiring the use of an oxidizing agent including either chlorine or oxygen / non-chlorine products, for the purpose of improving soil and stain removal and / or improving whiteness. Applied are active chlorine products (e.g. Javel water) or oxygen / non-chlorine products contained in universal detergents.

Oxygen / non-chlorine products offer a wide spectrum of different activated and non-activated systems (e.g. Oxy-products).

- If no bleaching is allowed use only bleach-free detergents. Be careful with stain removing products. A test on a concealed part of the article is advisable beforehand.



The empty triangle is the symbol for chlorine and oxygen bleach. Any bleaching agent is allowed.



The triangle with two oblique lines indicates that only oxygen / non chlorine bleach (contained in most universal detergents) is permitted but not chlorine bleach.



**Do not bleach:** The triangle with a diagonal cross (St. Andrews Cross) indicates that bleaching is not allowed. Use only bleach-free detergents.

# DRYING CARE INSTRUCTIONS AND SYMBOLS

The square is the symbol of the drying process. The circle inside the square is a reference to tumble drying, the line (s) inside the square symbolizes natural drying after the washing process.

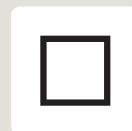
## TUMBLE DRYING

The dots in the dryer drum indicate the severity as regard to temperature of the tumble drying treatment. Some articles (e.g. cotton knitwear because of shrinkage, wool because of felt formation, silk and polyacryl articles because of heat damage and curtains because of the risk of creasing) should preferably not be tumble dried (note the care symbols).

- Extract water well before drying if the washing symbol so allows.
- Do not overfill the drying drum.
- Only place articles which require the same drying time together in the drier. Cotton and synthetics for example have a different drying time and reach the requested residual humidity after a different drying time.
- Dimensionally- and heat-sensitive pieces should not be placed in a tumble dryer.

## NATURAL DRYING

The symbol containing horizontal or vertical line (s) in the square indicate the natural drying process, line drying, drip line drying, flat drying, drip flat drying. The oblique line symbolizes the respective natural drying process to be carried out in the shade.



## TUMBLE DRYING



**Normal drying process:** Drying in the tumbler is possible under normal load and temperature (80 °C) without limitations.



**Mild drying process:** Caution is appropriate when tumble drying. Select mild process with reduced thermal action (lower temperature (60 °C), duration of treatment).



**Do not tumble dry:** Articles unsuitable for drying in the tumbler.

## NATURAL DRYING



Line drying



Line drying in the shade



Drip line drying



Drip line drying in the shade



Flat drying



Flat drying in the shade



Drip flat drying



Drip flat drying in the shade

# IRONING

## CARE INSTRUCTIONS AND SYMBOLS

The dots indicate the temperature ranges for ironing (regulator, steam, travel irons and ironing machines). On the ironing appliances which are habitually used, particular fibres are sometimes associated with these adjustment ranges.

- The maximum temperature has to be selected solely on the basis of the care label and not according to the fibre content of a textile article.
- If no care label is provided, it is preferable to be guided by the number of dots rather than the fibre content as small fibre contents are often not indicated. Caution is also appropriate when the fabrics have embossed effects or applications (note the care label).
- However, some articles (e.g. with a bar below the washing tub) must not be ironed if they have been hung up immediately after spinning and reshaped whilst damp or if they are dried in the horizontal position.



**Hot iron:** Iron at maximal sole plate temperature of 200 °C. Corresponding to the **Cotton / linen** setting: Iron whilst damp: Treat and if necessary moisten: Shiny- or pressure-sensitive pieces should be ironed with press cloth or ironed inside out. A steam iron may be used.



**Iron at moderate temperature:** Iron at maximal sole plate temperature of 150 °C. Corresponding to the **wool / silk / polyester / viscose** setting: Iron under a moderately moist intermediate cloth. A steam iron can be used. Avoid heavy pressure. Do not deform.



**Iron at low temperature:** Iron at maximal sole plate temperature of 120 °C. Corresponding to the **polyacryl, polyamide (nylon), acetate** setting: If necessary, shiny- or pressure-sensitive pieces should be ironed with a press cloth or inside out. Caution when using steam irons (as a rule, work without steam). Do not deform.



**Do not iron:** Irreversible changes must be expected if an iron is used.



# PROFESSIONAL TEXTILE CARE CARE INSTRUCTIONS AND SYMBOLS

The symbol gives information on the possibility of professional dry or wet cleaning. The circle symbolizes the dry cleaning and wet cleaning process for textile articles carried out by professionals. It provides information relative to different cleaning processes.

In professional textile care different solvents are used, organic or water based. Therefore care labelling differs between dry cleaning and wet cleaning.

## PROFESSIONAL DRY CLEANING

The letters within the circle are intended for professional textile cleaners. They give information in particular on the solvents that can be used.

The bar below the circle indicates that certain limitations in the dry cleaning process are required. These may concern mechanical action, addition of moisture, lye and / or drying temperature.

When choosing the cleaning process, the professional textile cleaner must also take into account the nature of the textile materials and their degree of soiling ( normal / mild process ).



**Professional dry cleaning in:** Tetrachloroethene. Normal cleaning process with no restrictions. Commercial stain removers on a solvent base may be used with some restrictions. A test on a concealed part of the article is advisable beforehand.



**Professional dry cleaning in:** Tetrachloroethene. Mild cleaning process with stringent limitation of added humidity and / or mechanical action and / or temperature. Commercial stain removers on a solvent base may be used with some restrictions. A test on a concealed part of the article is advisable beforehand.



**Professional dry cleaning in:** Hydrocarbons ( heavy benzines ). Normal cleaning process with no limitations. Commercial stain removers on a solvent base may not be used.



**Professional dry cleaning in:** Hydrocarbons ( heavy benzines ). Mild cleaning process with stringent limitation of added humidity and / or mechanical action and / or temperature. Commercial stain removers on a solvent base may not be used.



**Do not dry clean:** No professional dry cleaning allowed. Do not use stain removers which contain solvents.

# PROFESSIONAL TEXTILE CARE CARE INSTRUCTIONS AND SYMBOLS

## PROFESSIONAL WET CLEANING

The symbol for wet cleaning is used for articles which may be treated in water by professionals using special technologies (cleaning, rinsing, spinning), detergents and additives to minimize adverse effects.

The requirements placed on the professional equipment, the aids used and the finishing methods cannot be achieved with the possible wash cycles provided in household washing machines.



**Professional wet cleaning:** Normal wet cleaning process with no restrictions.



**Mild professional wet cleaning:** Wet cleaning process for sensitive textiles with reduced mechanical action.



**Gentle professional wet cleaning:** Wet cleaning process for very sensitive textiles with much reduced mechanical action.



**Do not wet clean:** No professional wet cleaning allowed.

# LABELLING

Several types of textile labels are common: care, fibre denomination, size, origin, quality, brand name, logo, environmental or social impact.

The legislation on textile labelling may vary from country to country. Care labelling is mostly voluntary, however it can also be legally required. The fibre composition of textile goods is mandatory in the European Union, however, not in Switzerland where it is facultative. Sometimes labelling specifications are also given by standards.

Manufacturers have the option to specify the different information in a written language, understandable for consumers, or by using pictograms (i.e. registered care symbols/copyrights!).

Labelling provides relevant information to guide users in the purchase, use and care of textiles articles. The basic principle of labelling is that the information should be unambiguous. A label that could mislead the consumer must be avoided.

In addition textile labels are also a source of information for the vendors in their advisory task and for professional cleaners. The information given on the labels also facilitates the communication between the links in the textile chain (textile manufacturers, apparel producers, distribution and trade).

The manufacturer who decides to put information on a label is always responsible for its content (product responsibility).

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# TABLE OF TEXTILE CARE SYMBOLS

WASHING	BLEACHING	DRYING	IRONING	PROFESSIONAL TEXTILE CARE
normal process	any bleaching agent allowed	tumble drying possible normal temperature 80 °C	Iron at maximum sole plate temperature (200 °C)	professional dry cleaning normal process
normal process	only oxygen / non-chlorine bleach allowed	tumble drying possible lower temperature 60 °C	Iron at maximum sole plate temperature (150 °C)	professional dry cleaning mild process
mild process	do not bleach	do not tumble dry	Iron at maximum sole plate temperature (110 °C)	professional dry cleaning normal process
normal process		The dots indicate the severity as regards to temperature of the tumble drying process.	do not iron	professional dry cleaning mild process
mild process		line drying		do not dry clean
very mild process		drip line drying	The number of dots indicates the severity as regards to temperature of the hand iron.	
normal process		flat drying		The letters within the circle specify the solvents that can be used.
mild process		drip flat drying		professional wet cleaning normal process
very mild process		line drying in the shade		professional wet cleaning mild process
wash by hand maximum temperature (40 °C)		drip line drying in the shade		professional wet cleaning gentle process
do not wash		flat drying in the shade		do not wet clean
The numbers in the washing tub specify the maximum temperature.		drip flat drying in the shade		The letters "W" within the circle specify the wet cleaning process.
		The lines indicate type and position of the natural drying process.		General remarks: The bar under the care symbols indicates a mild process (e.g. for easy care articles). The double bar symbolizes a gentle process.