

TABS

TEXTILE ANALYSIS BULLETIN SERVICE

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Wear Causes Fabric Damage

What Is The Problem?

Local fraying, pilling, thinning, and/or tears in the fabric that appear after a period of time in normal wear.

What Does It Look Like?

The surface of the fabric can appear rough, pilled, frayed, thin, or even torn. Such local damage can occur anywhere but is most often seen in the elbows, seat, waistband, crotch, edges, folds, or other areas that are abraded or stressed during use.

What Caused It?

Such damage occurs when an area of the garment is repeatedly abraded and rubbed during the circumstances of individual wear. After a period of time, the fabric in these local areas becomes thin and threadbare. Eventually, the fabric will separate and pull apart, but may not become objectionable until the agitation of some later professional cleaning process aggravates already thin, frayed, and weak areas. Since this type of fabric damage is a condition of use, it could appear anywhere depending on individual wear circumstances.

Can It Be Prevented?

The type of construction, dye, and finish of a fabric may decrease its overall life expectancy to some degree. Heavier, thicker fabrics with tighter weaves will be more durable than soft fabrics with low-twist yarn or looser weaves. However, wear abrasion is a circumstance of individual use and eventual damage cannot be prevented.

Who Is Responsible?

Unless a garment is very new and it can be shown that it has not been subjected to unusual circumstances of wear, this type of damage cannot be associated with defective fabric. Professional drycleaning and wet cleaning processes use total immersion to subject the entire garment and all of its components to the same treatment. Thus, they cannot create localized frayed, thin, or weak areas.

Is There A Remedy?

In some instances with some fabric constructions, the damaged area can be satisfactorily mended or professionally re-woven, but the original conditions of abrasion may still exist, meaning that the same damage might re-appear.



The neck fold on the collar of this shirt has been worn thin from wear.



The rear waistband and belt loops of these slacks are beginning to rip from repeated abrasion in use.



Stress and abrasion damage can be seen on this shirt in the sleeve above the placket near the elbow.

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