



Fabric Care

Before you cut into your new piece of fabric, it is advisable to decide how to care for the garment you will make from it. If you plan to wash the garment, you should probably prewash the fabric. That way, any potential shrinkage or other changes will occur before you have put in all time and effort to complete your project. But before putting the entire piece of fabric in the washer, please TEST!

Cut a square of fabric 3" x 3", as accurately as you can. Lay the 3" square on a piece of paper and carefully trace around it. Set the paper aside. Now consider whether this fabric will take hot, warm, or cold water, machine drying or air drying, or any other variables that you think might be important to determine how you will test your little sample.

Before actually washing your sample, try it for colorfastness. Dip one corner of your 3" square in some soapy water and lay it on a white paper towel. Tap the wet corner a few times and peek underneath to determine whether any color is bleeding from the fabric. That may influence your next steps.

At this point, you could hand wash the sample or put it in a lingerie bag to prevent it from raveling in the washer or dryer. Go ahead and test the fabric using the method you've decided on. When the sample is dry, carefully press it, again considering variables such as iron temperature, steam or no steam, need for a press cloth, and so on.

Once your sample is pressed, examine it carefully. Has the color changed? Is the surface different and do you like or dislike the change, if any? Place the sample back on the traced square from an earlier step. Has the fabric shrunk? If the shrinkage is significant, you may want to calculate how much your entire piece of fabric will shrink when and if it is washed and whether the shrinkage will be satisfactory.

If the results of your test are not what you wanted, you could cut another square, modify the treatment of this second sample, and try again. If none of your testing gives you the results you wanted, you may need to dry clean any garment made from this fabric.