

Environmentally sound machine washable wool upholstery fabrics

Since the development of the "Superwash" treatment, machine-washable woollen knitwear has become increasingly popular. Clothes are laundered clean, body odour disappears and they retain their original appearance. Woollen underwear requiring considerably more cleaning may also be machine washed with excellent results.

Cotton and synthetic based garments retain their soiling and bad odour far better and therefore have to be washed more severely. This means higher washing temperatures and more vigorous mechanical action when being washed.

Trough the use of a special shrink- and flame resistant treatment for wool upholstery fabrics Gudbrandsdalens is able to supply fabrics that permit machine washing and tumble drying.

The upholstery fabric may be washed at 40° C (wool cycle) using a bio-degradable detergent (ph 6).

A specially engineered polymer immobilises the wool yarns and fibres in the fabric structure, thus preventing felting during washing. This treatment allows tumble drying of washed seat covers without any creasing and the need for ironing. It also ensures a superior appearance retention of easy-care wool seat covers, without loss of flame-resistance.

By using the recommended washing programme and wool detergents (ph 6), the upholstery will withstand at least ten machine washes and tumble drying cycles, without shrinking more than 3.0 % in length or width.



Advantages of washable wool upholstery fabrics

- Bacterial growth and odour is practically eliminated in these fabrics. The improved fire-safety properties are also associated with a particularly strong disinfectant effect. Comprehensive tests have been made in which it was attempted to grow cultures of the following bacteria on the fabric:
 - Staphylococcus aureus (also methicillin-resistant - MRSA)
 - Escherichia coli
 - Pseudomonas aeruginosa
 - Salmonella enteritidis

The tests resulted in all the cultures being completely destroyed within six hours, even though they had the opportunity to grow in a highly nourishing medium. The tests were made at Nottingham Trent University in England and the conclusion was that this is a property, which is highly desirable in a material intended for use in institutions.

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- Even after ten machine washes and tumble drying, the chemical composition of the recommended bio-degradable detergents ensures compliance with vertical flammability standards for contract upholstery. EN ISO 1021 parts 1 and 2 1994 and IMO A652 (16) are also maintained.
- Please contact us for compliance with FAA, Airbus and Boeing safety requirements such as flame resistance and limitation of smoke and toxic gas emission, before and after washing.
- Washable wool upholstery fabrics have a life expectancy at least 10 % longer than non-washable upholstery. The easy-care treatment of the wool fabrics and the simple and careful wool wash specified will prevent felting and appearance changes caused by fibres otherwise coming out of the fabric structure and fuzzing. In cases where the only possibility of cleaning is by means of dry-cleaning the fabrics may now be given a pre-soak in water.
- In comparison with conventional wool upholstery fabrics, these washable wool fabrics have improved properties such as:
 - greater Martindale abrasion resistance,
 - less pilling,
 - less seam slippage,
 - better snagging resistance,
 - better dimensional stability,
 - better appearance retention,
 - stronger disinfectant effect.
- Compared to dry-cleaning, the washing of upholstery fabrics have the following advantages:
 - washing is more cost effective (20-40%),
 - more environmentally friendly and hygienic because environmentally dangerous chlorinated solvents are avoided,
 - effective removal of difficult drink and food stains, such as coffee, tea, red wine, sauces, Coca-Cola, etc, as well as perspiration and body odour,
 - rinse additives can make the fabrics smell clean. This may be an advantage for seat covers in, for example, hospitals and aircraft.
 - the option of dry-cleaning, charged dry-cleaning with emulsified water or washing offers fully flexible cleansing options.Overall, this provides the freedom to choose from among a wide range of available cleaning methods.
- The natural and superior comfort properties of wool, such as its ability to absorb perspiration and body odour while protecting and insulating against extremes of cold and heat, are fully maintained.