



Standard Guide for Care Symbols for Care Instructions on Textile Products¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D 5489; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ε) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope

1.1 This guide provides a uniform system of symbols for the disclosure of care instructions on textile products such as apparel, piece goods, and household and institutional articles, hereinafter referred to as “textile,” or “textile product.”

1.2 This guide provides a comprehensive system of symbols to represent care instructions in order to reduce language-dependent care instructions.

1.3 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as the standard. The values given in parentheses are for information only.

1.4 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:

D 123 Terminology Relating to Textile Materials²

D 3136 Terminology Relating to Care Labels for Textile and Leather Products Other than Textile Floor Coverings and Upholstery²

D 3938 Guide for Determining or Confirming Care Instructions for Apparel and Other Textile Products³

2.2 ASTM Adjunct:

Care Symbol Chart⁴

2.3 AATCC Standard:

A Glossary of AATCC Standard Terminology, Current Edition⁵

2.4 Other Standards:

Federal Trade Commission Amendment to Trade Regulation Rule Concerning Care Labeling of Textile Wearing Apparel, and Certain Piece Goods, *Federal Register*, Vol 48, No. 99, May 20, 1983 (cited as 16 CFR 423).⁶

The National Standard of Canada —Care Labelling of Textiles (CAN/CGSB-86.1-M91)⁷

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For definitions of terms related to care labeling, refer to Terminology D 3136. For definitions of other textile terms used in this guide, refer to Terminology D 123.

3.1.1 *care instructions, n—in textiles*, a series of directions that describe practices which should refurbish a product without adverse effects, and that warn against any part of the directions which one could reasonably be expected to use that may harm the item. **D3136**

3.1.2 *care label, n—in textiles*, a label or other affixed instructions that report how a product should be refurbished.

3.1.2.1 *Discussion*—The Federal Trade Commission, in Rule 16 CFK 423, requires care instructions on most apparel and certain other textile items. In relation to these products, the FTC definition states: “Care Label means a permanent label or tag, containing regular care information and instruction, that is attached or affixed in some manner that will not become separated from the product and will remain legible during the useful life of the product.” **D3136**

3.1.3 *care symbol, n*—a pictorial symbol that gives directions for refurbishing a consumer textile product.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This guide provides symbols and a system for their use by which care instructions for textile products can be conveyed in a simple, space-saving, and easily understood pictorial format that is not language dependent.

4.2 Care symbols are an important means for identifying the appropriate care procedure for home laundering, commercial laundering, professional textile care, and coin-operated dry-cleaning, of textile products.

4.3 Care labeling using symbols can be used by the purchaser to select textiles on the basis of the care method required without knowledge of the language.

4.4 In countries in which a word-based care labeling system is required, the care symbol system may be used as a supplemental system.

4.5 The word-based instructions for each symbol in this guide are harmonious with Terminology D 123, and D 3136,

¹ This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D13 on Textiles and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D13.62 on Textile Care Labeling.

Current edition approved April 10, 2001. Published August 2001. Originally published as D 5489 – 93. Last previous edition D 5489 – 00.

² *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 07.01.

³ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 07.02.

⁴ An adjunct is available from ASTM Headquarters. Request PCN ADJD5489.

⁵ *Annual AATCC Technical Manual*, available from the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists, P.O. Box 12215, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709.

⁶ Available from U.S. Government Printing Office, North Capital and H Streets, NW, Washington, DC 20401.

⁷ Available from CGSB, Sales Unit, Ottawa, Canada. (819) 956-0425 or (819) 956-0426.

the United States Federal Trade Commission Care Labeling Rule, 16 CFR 423 and industry practice (see Figs. 1 and 2).

4.6 The care label symbol system is based on five basic care symbols representing five operations: washing, bleaching, drying, ironing, and professional textile care.

4.7 One color is used for all care symbols in this care labeling system.

NOTE 1—While this symbol system uses one color, it is harmonious with tri-color systems such as the Canadian system because the instructions are clear whether printed in one or three colors.

4.8 This guide does not specify the type of label material or fabric to use. However, appropriateness for consumer comfort is recommended.

5. Procedure

5.1 *Introduction*—This section defines the basic symbols and prohibitive symbols: the washing, bleaching, drying,

ironing, and professional textile care processes; the required number and order of symbols; supplementary care information; and appropriate instructions and labels.










































5.2 *Basic Symbols:*

5.2.1 There are five basic symbols: the washtub, triangle, square, iron, and circle.

5.2.2 The washtub represents the washing process, the triangle represents the bleaching process, the square represents the drying process, the iron represents the ironing or pressing process, and the circle represents the professional textile care process (Fig. 3).

5.3 *Prohibitive Symbols*—The prohibitive “X” symbol may be used only when evidence can be provided that the care procedure on which it is superimposed would adversely change the dimensions, hand, appearance, or performance of the textile. (Fig. 4).

5.4 *The Washing Process—The Washtub Symbol:*


























ASTM GUIDE TO CARE SYMBOLS																				
 Wash	Machine wash cycles   			 hand wash	Warning symbols for laundering  do not wash  do not bleach  do not dry (used with do not wash)  do not iron															
	Water temperatures (maximum) symbol (s) dots & °C. <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>(200F)</td> <td>(160F)</td> <td>(140F)</td> <td>(120F)</td> <td>(105F)</td> <td>(65F-85F)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>95</td> <td>70</td> <td>60</td> <td>50</td> <td>40</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>•••••</td> <td>••••</td> <td>•••</td> <td>•••</td> <td>••</td> <td>•</td> </tr> </table>				(200F)	(160F)	(140F)	(120F)	(105F)	(65F-85F)	95	70	60	50	40	30	•••••	••••	•••	•••
(200F)	(160F)	(140F)	(120F)	(105F)	(65F-85F)															
95	70	60	50	40	30															
•••••	••••	•••	•••	••	•															
 Bleach	 			Additional instructions (in symbols or words)  do not wring  do not tumble dry  dry flat  in the shade (added to line dry, drip dry, or dry flat)  no steam (added to iron)																
	Tumble dry cycles   			 line dry / hang to dry  drip dry  dry flat																
 Dry	Tumble dry heat setting     																			
	Iron when needed—dry or steam   																			
 Iron	maximum temperature 200°C (390F) high 150°C (300F) medium 110°C (230F) low																			
	Professional Textile Care 		Dryclean normal cycle  tetrachloroethylene or petroleum solvent mild cycle  petroleum solvent only	Do not dryclean 	Wetclean normal  mild  very mild 	Do not wetclean 														

Note: This figure illustrates the symbols to use for laundering and drycleaning instructions. As a minimum, laundering instructions shall include, in order, four symbols: washing, bleaching, drying, and ironing; and, professional textile care instructions shall include one symbol. Additional symbols or words may be used to clarify the instructions.

FIG. 1 Commercial and Home Laundering and Drycleaning Symbols

GUIDE TO ORDER OF COMMERCIAL AND HOME LAUNDERING AND DRYCLEANING SYMBOLS

The care instruction symbols shall be in the following order:

WASH	=	   
		WASH BLEACH DRY IRON
WASH DO NOT DRYCLEAN	=	    
		WASH BLEACH DRY IRON DRYCLEAN
WASH OR DRYCLEAN	=	    
		WASH BLEACH DRY IRON DRYCLEAN
DO NOT WASH DO NOT DRYCLEAN	=	    
		WASH BLEACH DRY IRON DRYCLEAN
DRYCLEAN	=	
		DRYCLEAN
DRYCLEAN DO NOT WASH	=	    
		DRYCLEAN WASH BLEACH DRY IRON

Examples of care instructions:











    	
 =	Machine wash, 40C (105F) Permanent press
 =	Only non-chlorine bleach when needed
 =	Tumble dry, low Permanent press
 =	Steam iron, medium
 =	Dryclean, short Any solvent

FIG. 2 Guide to Order of Commercial and Home Laundering and Drycleaning Symbols

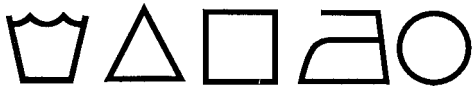


FIG. 3 Basic Symbols



FIG. 4 Prohibitive Symbols

5.4.1 The washtub with a water wave represents the washing process in a home laundering or commercial laundering setting.

5.4.1.1 The washtub without a water wave may be used to present the washing process.

NOTE 2—The washtub without a water wave is used in the Canadian care symbol system.

5.4.2 Additional symbols inside the washtub indicate the suggested water temperature and hand-washing process.

5.4.3 Additional symbols below the tub indicate the permanent press cycle (one underline, minus sign, or bar) and delicate-gentle washing cycle (two underlines, minus signs, or bars).

5.4.3.1 Permanent dress and gentle/delicate cycle instructions may be reported in symbols or words on a label with the symbolic instructions for machine wash and the water temperature.

5.4.4 The numerical or the dot system or both illustrated in Fig. 1 may be used to represent the maximum water temperature for machine and hand washing.

5.4.4.1 The six washing temperatures are 30°C (80°F), 40°C (105°F), 50°C (120°F), 60°C (140°F), 70°C (160°F), and 95°C (200°F) and shall be in Celsius when using the numerical water temperature system.