



Designation: D3938 – 07

Standard Guide for Determining or Confirming Care Instructions for Apparel and Other Textile Products¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D3938; 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 reappraisal. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reappraisal.

1. Scope

1.1 This guide may be used to determine and confirm the appropriate care label instructions for apparel, piece goods, and other textile products excluding textile floor coverings and upholstery.

1.2 This guide encompasses the following care procedures: home laundering, professional textile care, and other alternative cleaning methods.

1.3 This guide includes provision for evaluating the complete textile product and the product components.

1.4 This guide covers the performance characteristics as a result of refurbishing that are important in determining the acceptability of a textile product.

1.5 This guide is appropriate for the evaluation of all garments and household textiles that are sold with care labels.

1.5.1 This guide may also be used in connection with the evaluation of similar materials that do not have a care label.

1.6 *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:*²

[D123 Terminology Relating to Textiles](#)

[D3136 Terminology Relating to Care Labeling for Apparel, Textile, Home Furnishing, and Leather Products](#)

2.2 *AATCC Methods:*

[Technical Manual of the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists](#)

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

Current edition approved Jan. 1, 2007. Published April 2007. Originally approved in 1993. Last previous edition approved in 2000 as D3938 – 00. DOI: 10.1520/D3938-07.

² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

[Method 188 Colorfastness to Sodium Hypochlorite Bleach in Home Laundering](#)³

2.3 *Other Standards:*

[Federal Trade Commission Trade Regulation Rule. Care Labeling of Textile Wearing Apparel and Certain Piece Goods. Effective July 3, 1972, As Amended January 2, 1984 \(cited as 16 CFR 423\)](#)⁴

[The National Standard of Canada—Care Labeling of Textiles \(CAN/CSGB-86.1-M91\)](#)⁵

3. Terminology

3.1 For all terminology relating to D13.61, Apparel, , refer to Terminology [D3136](#).

3.1.1 The following terms are relevant to this standard: care instructions, main components.

3.2 For all other terms are related to textiles, refer to Terminology [D123](#).

3.3 *Definitions:*

3.3.1 For definitions of other textile terms used in this guide, refer to Terminology [D123](#). For definitions of terms related to care instructions, refer to Terminology [D3136](#).

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This is a guide to help a manufacturer distributor, or importer establish a reasonable basis for care information.

4.2 The manufacturer, distributor, or importer should possess, prior to sale, reliable evidence that the product was not harmed when refurbished reasonably often according to the instructions. Additionally they should possess reliable evidence that the product or a fair sample of the product would be harmed when refurbished by methods warned against on the label.

4.3 This guide is intended for general use by those who wish to determine whether apparel or other textile products will

³ Available from American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists, P.O. Box 12215, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709. <http://www.aatcc.org>.

⁴ Available from Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20580. <http://www.ftc.gov>.

⁵ Available from Canadian Government Publishing Centre, Supply and Services Canada, Publication Section, Hull (Quebec) K1A 0S9.

perform in an acceptable manner when the care instructions on the label are followed.

4.4 Refurbished products are evaluated against previously selected product performance specifications to determine whether the products can be refurbished successfully by following the instructions on the care label.

5. Summary of Guide

5.1 This guide describes general procedures for determining and confirming instructions on a care label for a textile product.

5.2 General procedures include setting minimum or maximum performance specifications for the product, selecting appropriate standards and test methods to match the care label instructions, conducting the testing and evaluation process, and writing the report.

5.3 The products are evaluated for change in dimension, hand, appearance, or other performance characteristics as a result of refurbishing.

6. General Considerations

6.1 Care instructions can be determined by testing the component parts or by testing the completed textile product or both if necessary.

6.1.1 When confirming the care label the testing shall be done on the completed textile product.

6.2 The test methods and evaluation processes selected to represent the washing, bleaching, drying, ironing, and dry-cleaning care label instructions shall simulate at least 3 complete refurbishing cycles.

6.2.1 The actual number of complete refurbishing cycles shall be agreed upon by the purchaser and the supplier.

6.2.2 One complete refurbishing cycle includes either (1) laundering including washing and drying, and, if appropriate, bleaching and/or ironing; (2) drycleaning and pressing; or, (3) wet cleaning and restorative treatment.

6.3 Test results that meet or exceed the preset specifications for performance characteristic confirm the selection of the suitable care label instructions.

7. Product Characteristics for Evaluation as a Result of Refurbishing

7.1 *Change in Dimensions:*

7.1.1 Shrinkage.

7.1.2 Growth.

7.1.3 Distortion caused by uneven growth or shrinkage.

7.1.4 Distortion caused by incompatible shrinkage of components including basic fabrics and items such as zippers, linings, interfacings, interlinings, sewing thread, waist bands, pockets, seam bindings or tape, textile trim, nontextile trim, and labels.

7.2 *Change in Hand:*

7.2.1 Changes in the physical properties related to the hand of fabrics listed in Annex A3 of Terminology **D123**.

7.3 *Change in Appearance:*

7.3.1 Loss or change of color.

7.3.2 Staining or self-staining, that is transference, or running of original color from one product to another or from one area to another area on the same product.

7.3.3 Distortion and loss or change in surface appearance or structure (such as, pilling, fuzzing, snagging, or matting; or loss of nap, flocking, embossing, or fabric smoothness; or other effects).

7.3.4 Change in appearance caused by incompatibility of components resulting in defects such as puckering of seams.

7.3.5 Change in appearance caused by ineffectiveness of recommended cleaning procedure, such that the textile product is no longer wearable or acceptable. Stain removal is not to be considered in this context.

7.4 *Change in Performance:*

7.4.1 Loss of claimed functional properties (stated or implied) such as durable press, water repellency, anti-static, flame-resistant, or soil release.

7.4.2 Loss of performance of construction or design caused by sewing (such as, needle cutting, feed-dog abrasion, raveling of seams, removal of appliques and trim, and malfunction of closures or other hardware).

7.4.3 Failure of textile structure resulting from laundering or dry cleaning (for example, delamination).

8. Selection of Performance Specifications and Test Methods

8.1 If the textile product to be evaluated has no care label, determine a set of care instructions suitable for the item.

8.1.1 On making the final determination consider factors such as fiber content, fabric construction, item construction, findings, color and finish applications, and end use.

8.2 If the textile product to be evaluated has an attached care label, then confirm the care by using the designated instructions on the label.

8.3 Select from the product characteristics listed in Section 7 those specific properties that are to be evaluated for the samples to be tested.

8.3.1 The specific properties are not limited to those examples listed, but may include all items which are agreed upon between the purchaser and supplier.

8.3.2 Select the performance specification level for each product characteristic to be evaluated.

8.4 Select test methods that are comparable with the care instructions to serve as the basis for evaluation of acceptable performance for the care label.

8.4.1 The test procedures must be at least as severe as the conditions specified in the care label instruction.

8.5 **Tables 1 and 2** list some of the common performance specifications and test methods.

8.5.1 Performance specifications and some test methods are found in the current editions of the *Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Vols 07.01 and 07.02*.

8.5.2 Some test methods are found in the current edition of the *Technical Manual of the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists*.