



Standard Guide for Care Symbols for Care Instructions on Textile Products¹

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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 Chart

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

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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 12-454890-18.

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.

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.

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 CFR 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.”

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 drycleaning, and coin-operated drycleaning, 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, D 3136, the United States Federal Trade Commission Care Labeling Rule, 16 CFR 423 and industry practice. (See Fig. 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 drycleaning.

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.

ASTM GUIDE TO CARE SYMBOLS																					
 Wash	Machine wash cycles normal permanent press delicate / gentle 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) <table border="1"> <tr> <td>(200F)</td> <td>(160F)</td> <td>(140F)</td> <td>(120F)</td> <td>(105F)</td> <td>(85F-85F)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>95C</td> <td>70C</td> <td>60C</td> <td>50C</td> <td>40C</td> <td>30C</td> </tr> <tr> <td>●●●●●</td> <td>●●●●</td> <td>●●●●</td> <td>●●●●</td> <td>●●</td> <td>●</td> </tr> </table>	(200F)	(160F)	(140F)	(120F)	(105F)	(85F-85F)	95C	70C	60C	50C	40C	30C	●●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●	●		
(200F)	(160F)	(140F)	(120F)	(105F)	(85F-85F)																
95C	70C	60C	50C	40C	30C																
●●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●	●																
 Bleach	any bleach when needed only non-chlorine bleach when needed	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 normal permanent press delicate / gentle line dry / hang to dry drip dry dry flat	Tumble dry heat setting any heat high medium low no heat / air																			
 Iron	Iron-dry or steam maximum temperature 200 C (390 F) high 150 C (300F) medium 110 C (230 F) low	Dryclean - normal cycle any solvent any solvent except trichloroethylene petroleum solvent only do not dryclean																			
	Dryclean 	Dryclean - additional instructions short cycle reduce moisture low heat no steam finishing																			

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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 drycleaning 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

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 drycleaning 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 drycleaning 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:

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