



Designation: ~~D3938~~—~~13~~ **D3938** – 18

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 reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

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, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

1.7 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

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](#)

[D5489 Guide for Care Symbols for Care Instructions on Textile Products](#)

2.2 *AATCC Methods:*³

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

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

2.3 *Other Standards:*⁴

[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—most recent version](#) (cited as 16 CFR 423)

[The National Standard of Canada—Care Labeling of Textiles CAN/CGSB-86.1 \(CAN/CSGB-86.1-M91\) The National Standard of Canada – Care Labelling of Textiles \(most recent version\)](#)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.

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, 2013; Jan. 1, 2018. Published January 2013; January 2018. Originally approved in 1993. Last previous edition approved in 2007 as [D3938-07](#); [D3938-13](#). DOI: [10.1520/D3938-13](#); [10.1520/D3938-18](#).

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.

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.

3.2 For all other terms 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.~~

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

4.1.1 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.

4.2 This guide is intended for general use by those who wish to ~~determine~~evaluate whether apparel or other textile products will perform in an acceptable manner when ~~the care instructions on the label are followed.~~ refurbished according to particular care instructions.

4.3 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.~~ label or other care instructions.

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~~changes 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 drycleaning 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. product characteristics indicate that the determined or labeled care instructions represented by testing are appropriate for the tested product.

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.~~ shrinkage (skewness).

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 of components including base fabrics and items such as zippers, linings, interfacings, interlinings sewing thread, waist bands, pockets, seam bindings or tape, textile trim, nontextile trim, and labels.~~

~~7.3.5 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. Other changes in appearance not listed in 7.3.1 – 7.3.4 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, ravelling of seams, removal of appliques and trim, and malfunction of closures or other hardware) due to impairment or malfunction of items such as seams, bonding, trim, closures, or other hardware.~~

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

7.4.4 Other changes in performance not listed in 7.4.1 – 7.4.3.

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~~ product characteristics 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 representative of the care instructions.~~

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

~~8.4.2 Where less common care instructions, for example, “wipe with a damp cloth,” are to be used, an appropriate care practice shall be used to evaluate the product.~~

8.5 Select test methods for evaluation of functional properties such as those listed in 7.4.1.

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

8.6.1 Product specifications should be agreed upon by the purchaser and supplier, or the end-use standards of ASTM Committee D13 shall be used.

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

8.7.1 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.

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

8.8 Subject the product to a minimum of ~~3 refurbishing~~ three refurbishing cycles or equivalent cycles.

8.8.1 The actual number of complete ~~refurbishing~~ cycles shall be agreed upon between the purchaser and seller.

8.9 The apparatus and materials used in this guide are those specified in the standards and test methods.

8.10 Sampling and conditioning methods used in this guide are those specified in the test methods.

~~8.9 Where less common care instructions, for example, “wipe with a damp cloth,” are to be used, an appropriate care practice shall be used to evaluate the product.~~

9. Evaluation

9.1 Make all evaluations on the refurbished product. In some cases (for example, dimensional changes testing), evaluation after refurbishing may require benchmark measurement or rating of the product prior to refurbishment.

9.2 Evaluate the performance of each refurbished sample with respect to each of the previously designated characteristics.