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CLOTHING CONSERVATION III

WOOLEN AND SILK MATERIALS*

Wearing value and the ability to prolong it are important factors at the present time in the discussion of economy of clothing. Correct care of garments lengthens the period of usefulness and saves expenditure for new clothing. The following suggestions will aid in prolonging the life of woolen clothing.

I. GENERAL CARE.

1. Hang where the garments will not fade.
2. Use clothes hangers to preserve shape.
3. Use bags or protectors to keep dust off those garments which are not worn every day.
4. Shake off dust before hanging away.
5. Catch any broken stitch at once.

II. BRUSHING.

1. Brushing reduces the amount of other cleaning required.
2. Brushing restores the nap.
3. Brushing helps remove shine. (Use circular motion in this brushing).

III. REMOVAL OF SPOTS AND STAINS.

Determine the character of the stain, if possible, and remove at once. See Farmer's Bulletin 861,** "Removal of Stains from Clothing," or Oregon Agricultural College Bulletin 218, "Methods of Cleaning," for methods of removing spots and stains.

IV. MENDING.

The success of mending depends on maintaining the soft appearance of the surface of the fabric, on duplicating the weave, and on using colors which match those in the garment. Darning is practically the only method used in mending wool garments that fulfills all of these requirements.

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In order that darning may be successful—

1. Use wool in mending. If the material is cotton in one direction and wool in the other, make the darn correspond.
2. Identify the weave and duplicate it as nearly as possible.
3. Use colors which match, or neutral tones with specks of color as near the shade as possible.
4. Use reinforcement such as net, tape, and mending tissue whenever possible.
5. Press the place which has been mended.

V. PRESSING.

In pressing, care should be taken that the material does not shrink and lose its soft fluffy nature.

Shrinkage and stiffening may be avoided by—

1. Using a moderate iron.
2. Using a pressing cloth wrung as dry as possible.
3. Placing a cloth on right side of garments and pressing until the cloth is dry. Remove the cloth. The surface of the material should look soft and fluffy. The wool material will not be entirely dry.
4. Pressing on the wrong side until dry. If pressed on the right side, any nap or fuzzy surface is pressed down so tightly that the garment appears shiny.

VI. CLEANING.

The cleaning of wool garments represents two types of problems, those connected with laundering and those with so-called "dry cleaning."

1. **Laundering.** In order to avoid "felting," follow these suggestions:
 - a. Do not use hot water—use lukewarm water.
 - b. Do not dry near a hot stove, register, or radiator.
 - c. All waters used in washing should be of same temperature; i. e., lukewarm.
 - d. Do not dry outdoors on a cold day after washing in warm water.
 - e. Do not rub soap on the garment, a soap paste is better.
 - f. Use a pure white soap. The yellow soaps with an excess of alkali make the wool harsh and weaken the material.
 - g. Avoid friction. Do not rub. Do not wring.
 - h. Do not use hot iron.
 - i. Material must be almost dry when ironed.
2. **Dry Cleaning.** Dry cleaning refers to all cleaning not done with water. The cleaning agent usually is gasoline, naphtha, benzine, ether, chloroform, carbon tetrachloride, or commercial cleansing preparations. Work with these inflammable materials must not be done in a room where there is a fire, or an oil or gas light. See directions in Farmer's Bulletin 861, "Removal of Stains from Clothing."

Success in dry cleaning depends upon observing these precautions:

- a. Know the stain and use the proper cleaning material.
- b. Use plenty of the cleaning material.
- c. Sponge with a long sweeping motion.
- d. Use a clean cloth underneath the garment to absorb the stain and extra cleaning material.
- e. Press after cleaning.
- f. Do **not** use cleaning fluids in a room in which there are oil or gas lights or fire. It is safer to use **outdoors** in a cool place.
- g. Avoid friction enough to generate heat.

VII. PROTECTION FROM MOTHS.

1. If the garments are to be used from time to time and must hang in a closet or wardrobe, they can be kept in good condition by following these suggestions:

- a. Keep the closet or wardrobe clean.
- b. Keep clothing free from spots. Moths attack soiled spots first.
- c. If possible have a window in the closet.
- d. Brush clothes thoroughly at regular intervals.
- e. Turn pockets wrong side out and brush.
- f. Turn cuffs down and brush.
- g. Brush under lapels, pleats, and the top of hems.

Dust collects in folds of clothing. If this dust is not allowed to remain, moths will not have a satisfactory lodging place. Directions for prevention of moths are given in Farmer's Bulletin 659, "True Clothes Moths,"**

2. If the garments are to be packed away or stored, they must be cleaned and brushed thoroughly first and packed as nearly air tight as possible. The purpose of the thorough brushing is to remove all moths and eggs. When the garment is thoroughly clean, it should be wrapped up in such a way that the moths cannot reach it. This can be done in the following ways:

- a. Sew up in strong brown wrapping paper.
- b. Use newspapers as wrappers. They can be used in the same way though they are more likely to tear than wrapping paper.
- c. Use pasteboard boxes, sealed with strips of gummed paper. They are very successful.
- d. Use paper bags, which are for sale for storage purposes.

Brushing and careful wrapping are the most successful moth preventives. If the garment has not been well brushed and carefully wrapped, the odor of camphor, cedar, or other similar substances will not keep the moths out. If the clothes are clean, free of moth eggs, and well packed, however, the addition of some anti-moth substance will aid.

**Farmer's Bulletins may be obtained by writing to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

VIII. DYEING.

In dyeing wool, the main consideration is to know whether the fabric is all wool or a mixture of wool and cotton. If it is all wool, use a wool dye. If it is wool and cotton, use a cotton dye, since wool dyes better with a cotton dye than cotton with a wool dye, or use a dye which dyes well either material. There are good commercial dyes which can be purchased at any drug store; all of these furnish accurate directions for dyeing. It is always well to experiment with a small piece of fabric in order to be sure that the right shade has been obtained. If the fabric is soiled, it should be cleaned before dyeing and the spots thoroughly removed. It is generally better to try a darker shade of the original color in all redyeing of fabrics; that is, a light blue material will dye a dark blue more satisfactorily than it will any other shade. Unevenness in dyeing can be avoided by having the wool material thoroughly wet before placing in the dye mixture and also by using a large enough kettle or dishpan so that the material can be thoroughly and frequently stirred. Generally the fabric should be thoroughly examined for other possible uses before dyeing is considered as dyeing often is not successful when undertaken by amateurs.

Silk Fabrics. In the care of silk fabrics the points to remember are that they are easily affected by heat, and that alkalies destroy them. In laundering silk use lukewarm water, avoid strong soaps; and iron with a moderate iron. These precautions are taken because of the yellowing and stiffening of silk with heat, and the destructive effect of the alkali. The use of the white china silk, crepe de chine, and georgette crepe, especially for collars, cuffs, and other trimming, has made the care of silk fabrics a matter of special interest. The period of service of garments made from any of these materials as well as white silk gloves and washable satin fabrics is greatly prolonged if the above precautions are taken.

Care of Velvet. Pile fabric, or velvet, a type of fabric peculiar to silk velvet, often has a silk pile and a cotton back or has silk pile and silk back. Velvet frequently is cleaned at home because it is generally used for collars, cuffs, or some such trimming, and the housewife often feels that she can clean it herself. Velvet must be clean before it is steamed. Failure to clean the velvet before steaming accounts for the dull and rather smeary appearance of the collars of overcoats and suits cleaned at home. Any of the dry-cleaning agents suggested for wool can be used to clean velvet or any other silk fabric. To restore the pile, the velvet should be steamed by drawing back and forth through the steam of a boiling tea-kettle, or by placing a wet cloth over a very hot iron and then placing the back of the velvet on the wet cloth and drawing it back and forth while brushing the pile gently.