

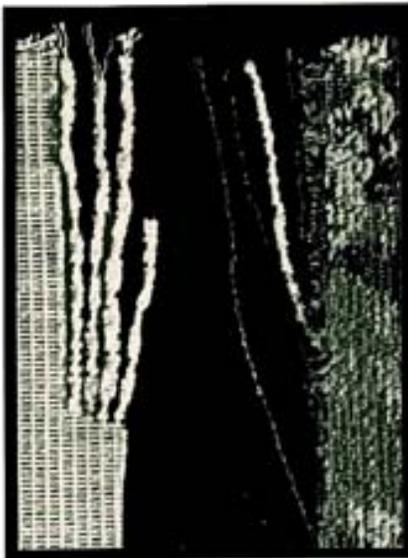


SPECIAL CARE FOR SPECIAL FABRICS...

Chenille

Interesting textures and a very soft hand makes chenille among the most popular choices for upholstery fabrics.

The term “chenille” refers to both a specialty yarn and the various fabrics, which make use of these yarns. The manufacture of chenille yarns is accomplished by first creating a special doup weave fabric, then slitting the fabric into narrow, warp-wise strips that serve as yarn.



(Left) Chenille yarn is made by cutting warp-wise strips from specially woven fabric. *(Right)*

Upholstery fabric made from chenille yarn. As the fabric is slit, the loose ends of the crosswise yarns form a fuzzy, pile-like surface, making the yarn look something like a caterpillar (“chenille” is the French word for caterpillar). These strips become the filling yarns in the woven chenille fabric. The surface pile of these fabrics is much like velvets, but not as dense.

Chenille yarns can be made from any fiber, but most commonly they are composed of cotton, wool, rayon or nylon.

General Comments

While the aesthetics of chenille are pleasing, one must consider the practicality of using such a fabric in high use areas. Many manufacturers have recognized the need for new and improved back-coatings to help offset durability limitations.

Chenille offers several different challenges when it comes to maintenance, spot removal and overall cleaning. The most important aspect of chenille relates to its loosely woven pile. The short pile fibers may be dislodged with minimal agitation.

If the chenille happens to be made of rayon, dramatic and irreversible distortion can be expected when the fabric is subjected to water-based substances.

Color Changes

Many times what appears to be a color change is nothing more than nap distortion. This phenomenon is typical of most velvet-type fabrics. Also, water-based substances can sometimes cause such dramatic nap distortion that the affected area appears to be bleached.

Sunlight, back-coatings, nap distortion and improper spotting techniques can all contribute to these sometimes, permanent visual changes.

Spot Cleaning

As mentioned before, water-based chemicals will often distort the nap of chenille fabrics, leaving a bleached appearance that may be difficult or impossible to restore.

Solvent-based (“dry cleaning”) chemicals are generally safer to use, but must be used sparingly. Since chenille fabrics are usually stabilized by

latex back-coatings, the biggest concern with any type of solvent is the possibility of damaging this latex.

Compromised back-coatings can lead to loss of pile fibers or, in extreme situations, splits or tears in the fabric.

Spot Removal 101

FIBER-SEAL teaches classes in both basic and advanced cleaning and maintenance techniques. The most important rule in fabric care is stressed in every class: TEST! TEST! TEST! It is the only way to stay out of trouble in a world full of delicate constructions and sensitive dyes.

Before using any cleaning agent, apply the product to an inconspicuous area of the fabric and leave it to dry. If there is

any sign of nap distortion, color change or other damage, do not continue.

Both water-based and solvent-based spotting chemicals can cause damage, so everything must be tested first.

Client Care

Loose cushions should be rotated monthly with light vacuuming. When spills occur, wick-up the spill with the corner of a paper towel. If necessary, blot gently to avoid distorting the nap. Never rub.

Reducing Absorbency

Fiber-Seal Fabric Care System provides an array of fine treatment products, which can benefit chenille fabrics and other interior furnishings by

reducing the absorbency of the fabric, thereby providing an added measure of defense against some of the potential problems mentioned here.

Tie Spray

FIBER-SEAL has introduced a spray-on protector with a new, quick-dry formulation that does not contain ozone-depleting compounds. In addition to neckwear, TIE SPRAY can be used to provide outstanding stain repellency to other small items of fabric or suede (handbags, shoes, coats, etc.). Call your local Fiber-Seal Service Center for a demonstration!

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