

FIBERFACTS



MOHAIR...

Our Top Choice for Durable Pile Fabrics

Mohair is Wool, Right?

Mohair is fiber that is produced from the fleece of the Angora goat. Though technically it is a type of wool, mohair is rarely referred to as “wool” (this term being reserved almost exclusively for the fiber that comes from various breeds of sheep). Likewise, it is not to be confused with the hair of the Angora rabbit, which is often called “angora.”

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) allows the use of the term “wool” for fiber made from the fleece of the sheep or lamb, and the hair of the following:

- Angora goat
- Cashmere goat
- Camel
- Alpaca
- Llama
- Vicuna

The Angora goat is thought to have descended from wild herds of Central Asia and its name is derived from Ankara, the capital city of Turkey. Introduced to many countries of the world in the last two centuries, the two largest producers of Angora goats are South Africa and the U.S.

About 90% of U.S. mohair comes from Texas.

Mohair Fiber

As a hair fiber, mohair shares many of the characteristics of wool, most importantly its resiliency. This means that mohair in pile constructions tends to recover readily from crushing.



Angora Goat

Unlike most wools, mohair is also a lustrous fiber. This is due primarily to the nature of the scales on the outside of the fiber. Compared to wool, the scales on mohair are much thinner and are anchored more

closely to the body of the fiber. This smoother surface causes more light to be reflected, resulting in higher luster.

Mohair Fabrics

Though used in plain woven fabric for apparel (most often in blends with wool), mohair upholstery fabrics are almost exclusively velvets. This makes mohair unique, because all other upholstery fibers are commonly used in several different constructions.

As with other velvet fabrics, the ground yarns (the ones holding the velvet in place) are typically cotton. The 100% mohair pile forms the surface of the fabric and thus is the determining factor for all cleaning and maintenance.

Maintenance

In discussing the care and cleaning of mohair fabrics, we'll refer primarily to velvets, since this is the predominant style. The good news is that, as velvets go, mohair is one of the top performers.



As previously mentioned, mohair is very resilient, so velvets made with this fiber will tend to resist crushing and hold their appearance over time.

General soiling is usually controlled by gentle vacuuming and routine damp dusting. When it is necessary to do overall cleaning, a professional upholstery cleaning will most often yield good results. In spite of the fact that many mohair fabrics are labeled as “dry clean only,” companies that specialize in cleaning fine fabrics will typically – after proper pre-testing – use a gentle, water-based cleaning method.

Mohair is susceptible to stains, but a quality fabric protection can help in this area. Soils and spills should always be lightly blotted, never rubbed. After spot cleaning, the nap should be gently brushed in one direction.

Gaufrage Is Difficult

Having mentioned that mohair fabrics respond well to wet cleaning, there is one important exception: gaufrage patterns.

Gaufrage, a fancy term for *embossing*, is sometimes used to create interesting designs on pile fabrics of various types. The process uses heat and pressure to create areas of flattened pile.



Elegant gaufrage mohair velvet

The gaufrage effect is somewhat fragile on mohair velvets, as it is with velvets made from cotton, silk and all other natural fibers. Any type of rubbing (as on seating fabrics) will tend to diminish the effect. Certainly, any water-based spill or spot cleaning agent will tend to “relax” the pile and cause it

to begin to regain its original, upright orientation. Embossed mohair fabrics cannot be wet cleaned without damage to the pattern.

Dry cleaning solvents do not have any significant effect on embossed designs.

We Can Help!

No other company has more experience taking care of mohair fabrics and all other fine interior textiles. Offering the highest quality protective finishes and professional aftercare services for over forty years...Fiber-Seal is the most trusted name in our industry.

Designers' Corner

Have you visited www.FiberSeal.com to see what's new? Lots of great information can be found in Designers' Corner, including back issues of FIBERFACTS!

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