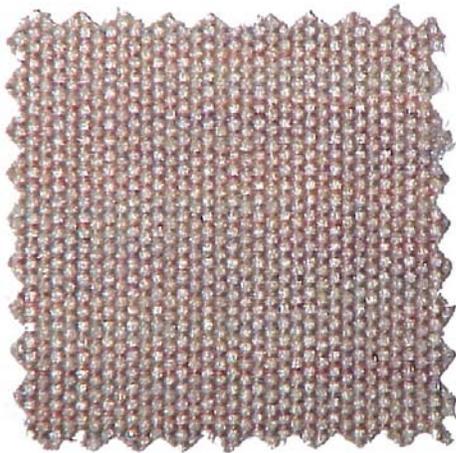


OLEFIN

WHAT IS OLEFIN?

Olefin is a manufactured fiber comprised of polypropylene or polyethylene (in home furnishings, the word almost always refers to polypropylene). Olefin is used in above-the-floor fabrics as well as floor coverings.

The sample below is an olefin fabric that might be found in a contract setting.



SOILING AND MATTING CAN BE A PROBLEM

Two potential problems with olefin (especially floor coverings) are soiling and matting. While one is correctable the other is not. Soiling is directly related to the oleophilic (oil-loving) properties of the fiber. Oils, which are attracted to the olefin fiber, act as magnets for dry soils which may have otherwise been removed by normal maintenance procedures such as vacuuming. Most professional cleaners can generally remove both soils and oils with proper efforts.

Matting, on the other hand, is a much more serious problem. Once an olefin carpet has become matted, it can be extremely difficult

to return it to a presentable condition. Pile lifting and grooming may be of some short-term use, but matting generally returns with traffic.

To combat the matting problem, manufacturers are usually careful to construct olefin carpets in relatively dense styles. Several years ago, a handful of mills tried to penetrate the residential market with a saxony olefin ("Genesis" carpets), but the project died fairly quickly.

FADING IS NOT A CONCERN

Olefin is colored by a process called solution dyeing. In this method, color pigments are added to a molten polymer solution before it is extruded into fibers. These pigments are literally a part of the fiber, making the color very resistant to sunlight, ozone, harsh chemicals and other causes of fading and dye migration.

NO DYE-SITES...NO STAINING

Unlike most fibers, olefin has NO dye-sites. Another characteristic of olefin is that it has virtually no affinity for water. Waterborne spots and spills have no way of entering into the fiber. This leaves the unwanted residues on the surface of the fibers, making stain removal much easier.

DON'T GET BURNED

Olefin has a lower melting point than nylon or polyester. A scuffmark can result in enough heat to soften the fibers, creating visible damage. The olefin melts when exposed to heat caused by friction. Never

slide heavy furnishings across olefin carpet, simply pick it up so you won't get burned.

CLEANING IS MADE EASY

One of the biggest advantages of olefin is that it cleans so well. Common detergents and a little hot water will remove the worst of spots and spills.

Because it is solution dyed, there is no need to worry about bleeding or the migration of dyes. Even harsh, water-based detergents have little effect on the integrity of the fiber although you must always test before proceeding with any chemical or procedure.

PROTECTIVE TREATMENTS CAN BE A BENEFIT

Even with all the great advantages of olefin, there is still a need for Fiber-Seal brand protectors. Products that can decrease the oleophilic tendencies and increase the vacuumability of these fibers can be very beneficial in maintaining a "like new" appearance.

ALWAYS PRE-TEST CHEMICALS AND PROCEDURE IN AN INCONSPICUOUS PLACE.