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Training  
session

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Raw Materials  
and End of Life

This guide is designed to accompany the teacher during the development of the mini-workshop. We recommend, therefore, that you read it before starting the activity, print out useful templates for the number of students or groups that will participate in the training session, and prepare useful materials.

**Have fun!**

## Fashion choices!

**Time:** 1 hour and half

**Working groups:** 5-6 people

### **Objective:**

Raise awareness of purchases within the fashion sphere, through an analysis of clothes bought and worn.

### **Tools:**

- One's own clothes
- Template
- Pen

### **Instructions – for the teachers:**

Print from page 03 to page 12 (including the template on page 12) and print as many copies as the number of students who participate in the activity.

Split the class into working groups of 5/6 students and start the activity!

### **Instructions – for students:**

**01.** Split into groups of 5-6 students.

The activity to follow will be done individually but will require a final discussion among the group members.

 [You have 5 minutes for this part.](#)

**02.** Read pages 03 to 11 individually and thoroughly in order to acquire the knowledge needed to read garment labels.

 [You have 30 minutes for this part.](#)

**03.** Once you have finished reading, take the inside label of one of the garments you are wearing and analyse it following the template

on page 12 and 13.

 [You have 20 minutes for this part.](#)

**04.** Compare your template with that of the other group members and discuss your fashion choices.

To 'kick-start' the discussion, we leave you a useful template (page 14).

**Advice:** It is not important that all students read their labels (it is optional), what is important is to create an informed discussion on the topic of fast fashion! Start by reading a label and get carried away by the wave :)

 [You have 20 minutes for this part.](#)

As mentioned in the previous section, avoiding buying fast fashion is difficult (but not impossible). We can however make our purchases 'more sustainable' with a little extra awareness. That's why we want to provide you with some useful guidelines to learn how to read labels (from all over the European Union!) so that you know what you're buying, where your garment comes from, and where you can dispose of it. In fact, these contain all useful information for the consumer to identify the recyclability level of the textile product (i.e. the definition of the raw materials) and to delay its end-of-life as much as possible (e.g. by proper washing).

Let's take a step back.

Each garment is marked with a label (or mark) that as of 7 November 2011 must follow the regulations called for by the European Union, i.e. **'Regulation (EU) no. 1007/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council'**.

Since 2012, the year in which the above-mentioned law came into force, every textile product placed on the market must be marked with a label or marking specifying the fibre composition of the garment sold.

#### **Some definitions:**

**Label:** 'Affixing the required information to the textile product(...)'<sup>08</sup>

**Marking:** 'indicating the required information directly on the textile product by way of sewing, embroidering, printing, embossing or any other application technology'<sup>08</sup>

**Textile product:** means not only an item of clothing, but 'any raw, semi-worked, worked, semi-manufactured, manufactured, semi-made-up or made-up product which is exclusively composed of textile fibres, regardless of the mixing or assembly process employed'. So garments, scarves, socks, fabrics, etc.<sup>08</sup>

**Placing on the market:** 'the first making available of a product on

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08. Source: nd. (nd). 'Guide to the Correct Compilation of Textile Composition Labels'. Unioncamere.

the Community market. Making available on the market is any supply of a product for distribution, consumption or use on the Community market in the course of a commercial activity, whether in return for payment or free of charge<sup>108</sup>.

**Labels and markings must be durable, easily readable, visible and accessible.**

Furthermore, they must state:

- The fibrous composition of the product.
- The possible presence (in any component of the product) of non-textile parts of animal origin, indicated by the phrase: 'Contains non-textile parts of animal origin'.
- The identity and contact details of the producer, reference to the type of product or, possibly, the batch of products it belongs to.

**Fibrous composition**

**Products composed of a single fiber:**

When a textile product is composed of a single fibre on the label (or marking) we will find the term '100%' or 'pure' or 'all'. In fact, when more than one fibre is present, it is prohibited to use these terms. This element helps us greatly in the conscious purchase of a garment, since when a garment is made of only one fibre it will be easier to recycle.

**Multi-fibre products:**

In the case of products composed of several fibres, on the label (or marking) we will find the name of the fibre alongside the percentage by weight present in the garment we are purchasing. In the label (or marker) the fibres will be listed in descending order, always by weight.

The labels (or markings) also include other wordings, such as:

- 'Miscellaneous fibres' or 'undetermined textile composition' permitted only when the composition of a product is difficult to specify at the time of manufacture.

- 'Other fibres' is only allowed when:
  - A fibre accounts for up to 5% of the total weight of the textile product.
  - Several fibres collectively account for up to 15% of the total weight of the textile product.
  - Other cases specified in the relevant regulations.

As for the fibre names mentioned on the label (or in the brand name), they can be classified according to natural, artificial or synthetic. In this way it will be easier to understand the impact of the garment you are buying and its possible and correct disposal.

#### **A small summary of the most popular fabrics:**

- **Natural fabrics** are often found in the form of cotton, wool, linen, hemp and silk.
- **Artificial fabrics**, which are obtained by chemical processes of cellulose transformation, are often found in the form of viscose, rayon, bamboo or Tencel.
- **Synthetic fabrics**, derived from non-renewable raw materials (and releasing micro-plastics), are found in the form of polyester, polyamide or nylon and elastane (also called Lycra or Spandex). We can find some synthetic fabrics in the form of recycled fibres.

#### **Maintenance**

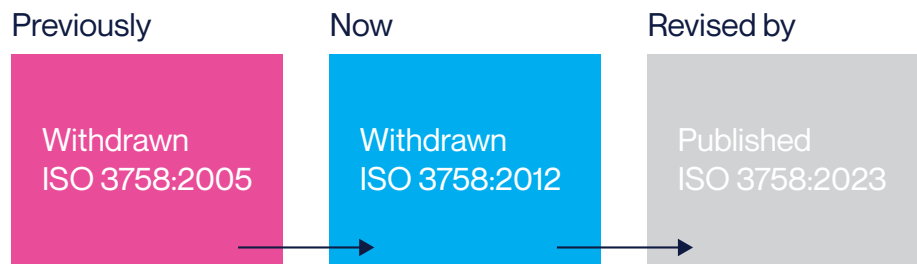
In the regulation issued by the European Union in 2011, there are no other information requirements apart from the obligation to indicate the fibre composition of textile products on the label, such as clothing sizes, care instructions and country of origin. This information is required by other regulations in force. For example, ISO 3758:2012 (revised 2023) which

“ (↔) establishes a system of graphic symbols, intended for use in the marking of textile articles, and for providing information on the most severe treatment that does not cause irreversible damage to the

article during the textile care process, and specifies the use of these symbols in care labelling<sup>09</sup>.

09. Source: [nd.](#) (December 2023). 'Textiles — Care labelling code using symbols'. ISO.

Image source: [nd.](#) (December 2023). 'Textiles — Care labelling code using symbols'. ISO.



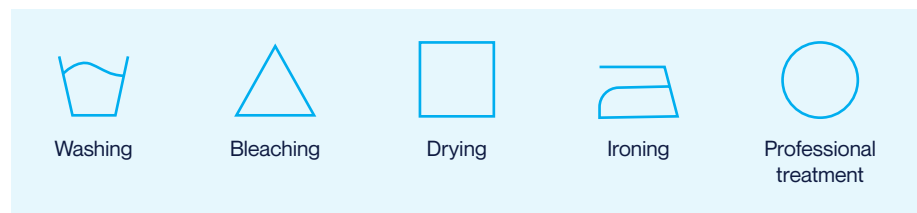
Specifically, this standard identifies the **GINETEX symbols**, their application and definition related to washing, bleaching, drying, ironing and professional treatment useful for the proper maintenance of the garment purchased.

GINETEX or 'Groupement International d'Etiquetage pour l'Entretien des Textiles' ensures the legal protection of graphic symbols that have been registered with the World Intellectual Property Organisation in Geneva as international trademarks. The member countries are Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia, United Kingdom.

**GINETEX symbols can be found in this form:**



The symbols must appear in the following order





Let's look at how to read these symbols according to different possible cases.

**Washing:**



Forecasted  
temperatures  
(30-40-60-95 °C)



|               |  |   |   |
|---------------|--|---|---|
|               |  |   |   |
| No water wash | Washing at a max temperature of 40°C very delicate cycle | Washing at a max temperature of 40°C delicate cycle | Washing at a max temperature of 40°C normal cycle |

**Bleaching:**

|              |   |  |
|--------------|---|--|
|              |   |  |
| No bleaching | Bleach with chlorine-free oxidizing products only: hydrogen peroxide... | Bleach with any oxidizing products: sodium hypochlorite and hydrogen peroxide... |

**Drying:**



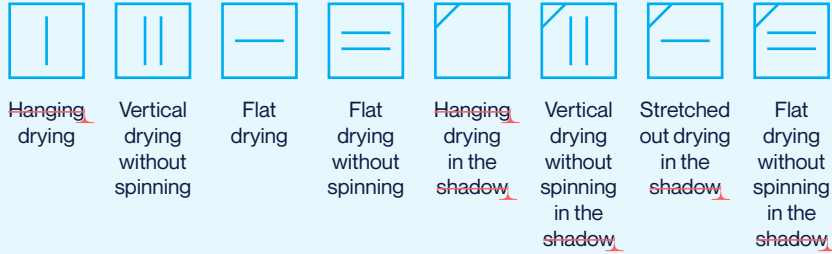
Drying in tumble  
dryer



|                   |                                   |                                  |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|                   |                                   |                                  |
| Do not tumble dry | Tumble dry at reduced temperature | Tumble dry at normal temperature |



Natural drying



### Ironing:



The dot inside the symbol indicate the maximum temperatures that can be used



Max 110°C



Max 150°C



Max 200°C

### Professional treatment:



The circle indicates a professional treatment



Wet cleaning normal cycle



Wet cleaning delicate cycle



Wet cleaning very delicate cycle



Dry cleaning



Do not dry clean



Dry clean normal cycle



Dry clean delicate cycle



Dry clean normal cycle

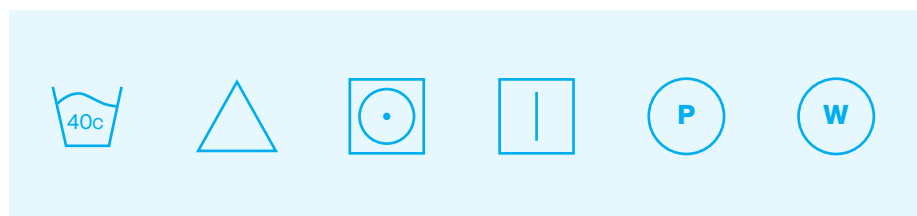


Dry clean delicate cycle

P: to carry out the cleaning using perchloroethylene as solvent and the solvents indicated by the symbol F.  
F: to clean using only hydrocarbons as solvent.

Moreover, the labels (or markings):

- Must be made of a **material with a resistance** to the maintenance cycles indicated on the label that is at least equal to that of the article they are placed on.
- Must be **legible** throughout the product life cycle.
- If they do not display one of the five symbols, it is understood that any maintenance treatment envisaged by that symbol may be used.
- May present additional phrases, which should be kept to a minimum, such as:
  - Wash separately
  - Wash with similar colours
  - Wash before use
  - Wash inside out
  - Iron only inside out
  - Do not iron decorative elements
  - Do not steam iron
  - Dry away from direct heat sources
- If they have **more than one drying symbol or more than one professional treatment symbol**, they must appear in the following order:



### Country of production

The name of the country of production must also be made explicit on the label or marking, using the words 'Made in ...'.

It's important to emphasise that this does not correspond to where the item was designed, only produced. In fact, **large fast fashion**

**brands often outsource their production in order to avoid having to cope with current strict regulations within the European Union**, enacted with the aim of safeguarding our planet.

As things stand, there is no express obligation in EU regulations to label the origin of the product. The European Court of Justice has shown its opposition to making the 'Made in' indication compulsory by member states as it is considered to be a wording that could lead to prejudice.

However, for determining the origin, the rules set by European customs regulations apply. **These rules state that the country named in the 'Made in' label must be the one where the significant processing that defines the product as new took place.**

For example: in the case of footwear, one declares the origin in relation to where the upper (soft outer part) is joined to the sole, thus producing the finished product.

In order to structure this regulation, standard processing steps were established for each commodity. In order for the garment to be labelled 'Made in', at least two of these processing steps must be carried out in the country specified:

- **Textile sector:** spinning, weaving, stitching and finishing (decorative finishes, buttons, etc.).
- **Leather goods sector:** tanning, cutting, preparation, assembly and finishing.
- **Footwear sector:** tanning, cutting, upper processing, assembly and finishing.
- **Tanning sector:** tanning, retanning, dyeing, fattening and finishing.

The labels (or markings) also include other information, such as the **brand name**, the **warranty** (if required), the **product dimensions** (if required), etc.

**The label is the 'identity document' of a product**, whether textile or not. **That's why it's very important to avoid removing it when**

**using the garment.** We do this for comfort (because it's often a real nuisance), but it helps us understand how to manage the end of life of our garments: how to delay it via the 'maintenance' section and the GINETEX symbols, or how to recycle it or re-introduce it into the market via knowledge of the fibre composition.

Next time you buy a garment remove one less label: this is already a conscious gesture and increases (even if only slightly) the sustainability level of your wardrobe!

**Now look for the label of one of the garments you are wearing and read it according to the directions we have provided!**

**Fiber composition** (find more at pages 04 and 05 of the Training Session): What fibers is the material you are wearing made of?

**Certifications** (find more at pages 14, 15 and 16 of the ~~Interactive Book chapter 'The Materials Journey', Large Module~~): Are there any certifications within the label of the garment you wear? If yes, which ones?

**Maintenance:** How should the garment you wear be maintained? What symbols are present inside the label?

**Country of Production:**

**Other informations** (i.e. brand, type of garment - T-shirt/trousers/hoodie/etc.):

**Greenwashing:** Comparing the label of your garment with the advertising of the relevant brand, do you think there are grounds for talking about Greenwashing?

**Yes**

**No**

**How sustainable do you think your garment is from 0 to 5?**



**How often do you cut the abel of garments from 0 to 5?**



## Some questions to start the discussion!

- 01.** How many of your garments were produced in Global South countries?
- 02.** Are the fibres that make up your garments more synthetic, artificial or natural? In the first case, do you experience any difficulties when wearing them (e.g. sweating, itching, etc.)?
- 03.** How often have you come across the issue of 'Greenwashing' when shopping?
- 04.** Do you ever buy second-hand clothes?
- 05.** Did you really need the garment you are wearing or was it an impulsive purchase?
- 06.** How many of the clothes in your wardrobe do you actually wear?
- 07.** Do you often buy in fast fashion shops? If yes, why?
- 08.** Make a 'good resolution' that you will try to keep in your next fashion purchases!



## References

### Training session

nd. (2019). 'Guide to the Correct Compilation of Textile Composition Labels'. Unioncamere.

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nd. (December 2023). 'Textiles — Care labelling code using symbols'. ISO.

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nd. (January 21<sup>st</sup> 2022). TEXTILE MAINTENANCE - Maintenance Labels, the Ginetex Symbology (part two). Detergo.

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