

The Isle Mill

CARE OF WOOL FURNISHING

● **COMFORT**

Besides being soft and resilient, wool upholstery covers have low thermal conductivity and, therefore, feel warm to the touch in cold weather and cool in warm weather.

Wool also has the ability to absorb up to 30% of its weight in moisture vapour without feeling wet, thus remaining comfortable in hot, humid weather. Some other commonly used upholstery fabrics absorb moisture poorly so that there can be a steady build-up of dampness between the seat cover and the individual, particularly in warm temperatures and high humidity.

A scientific study by TEFO, the Swedish textile institute, confirmed wool's superior comfort properties when comparing seat covers of wool-rich blends, leather, vinyl, polyester and acrylic with a foam seat filling.

● **APPEARANCE RETENTION**

Pilling, wrinkling, soiling and damage from cigarette burns are minimised on wool upholstery and, therefore, it has excellent long-term appearance retention.

Wool fabrics do not usually pill (form little balls of fibre on the fabric surface). Wool fibres break before they can be entangled and, if the balls do form, they wear off easily – unlike some synthetics.

Creasing and wrinkling are minimised because of the wool fibre's unique coiled structure which makes the fibre resilient and able to spring back to its original shape after compression.

The complex surface structure of the wool fibre has two major functions. The first is to act as a water shield, keeping spills on the surface where they can be wiped off easily. The second is to act as a barrier to prevent soil particles becoming embedded in the fabric. In addition, wool produces less static electricity in normal humidity than other fibres, so, wool attracts less dust.

A comparison of seat covers by the Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand (WRONZ) concluded that “the considerably lower soiling rate of the wool-rich fabrics and the much less damage from cigarette burns indicates that ... such fabrics would have superior appearance retention”.

● **AESTHETICS**

Both woollen-spun and worsted-spun yarns are excellent for use in upholstery, providing a soft handle and “true” deep-dyed colours.

Wool has enormous potential because it is a protein fibre and has an affinity for all dyes, which are chemically bonded deep inside the core of the wool fibre where they hold fast. Wool also has a beautiful lustre that enhances the colour.

The design possibilities of wool are as endless as the colour possibilities. It is easily woven in different patterns (jacquards and dobbies) and surface effects (plushes, flat-wovens, moquettes and textures) and provides an ideal cloth for printing.

And whether the wool upholsteries are woollen, plain or patterned, flat-woven or textured, they mould beautifully to furniture shapes and wear well.

- **MAINTENANCE**

Weekly light vacuuming is desirable in order to keep wool fabrics looking their best, and occasional cleaning is recommended. Cleaning should be done with a reputable brand of upholstery shampoo following the manufacturer's instructions exactly. NB – The Isle Mill policy is to always recommend Dry Cleaning Only.

Ammonia, bleach or other cleaners intended for use on hard surfaces should never be applied to wool upholstery and care should be taken not to over-wet the fabric.

- **SPOT AND STAIN REMOVAL**

Staining is minimised on wool upholstery. The outer cuticle and epicuticle allow it to shed liquids yet readily absorb moisture vapour. This means that liquid spills do not enter the fibre's core rapidly, so staining is prevented if spills are promptly removed and treated.

First, mop any excess liquid or semi-solids with white absorbent tissues or a clean cloth. Scoop up dry solids with a spoon. Use the cleaning method shown on the chart overleaf. Always work inwards from the edge of the stain to prevent it spreading. Use small amounts of cleaning liquid at a time and blot between applications. Avoid pressing liquid through the fabric. If possible, place a wad of white tissue between the fabric and the filling, Continue until the stain has disappeared. Never rush or panic, work patiently and thoroughly.

CARE OF WOOL FURNISHING – SPOT REMOVAL CHART

Alcoholic Beverages	2	-	-
Blood	6	1	-
Burn or Scorch Marks	16	15	-
Butter	4	2	-
Candle Wax	8	7	4
Chewing Gum	8	3	-
Chocolate	2	4	-
Coffee	1	15	14
Colas and Soft Drinks	5	2	-
Cooking Oils	4	2	-
Cream	6	1	4/3
Egg	6	1	4/3
Felt Tip Pen	9	3	-
Floor Wax	3	2	-
Fruit Juice	6	2	9
Furniture Polish	4	2	9/11
Gravy and Sauces	5	1	2
Ink (Fountain Pen)	5	2	9

Ink (Ball Point Pen)	9	2	-
Lipstick	4	2	-
Metal Polish	4	11	2
Milk	5	1	2
Mustard	2	-	-
Nail Polish	10	4	-
Oil and Grease	4/3	2	-
Paint (Emulsion)	6	2	4
Paint (Oil)	11	4	2
Salad Dressing	4	2	-
Shoe Polish	4	11	-
Soot	12	4	2
Tar	3	17	-
Tea	5	14	1
Urine (Fresh Stain)	5	1	-
Urine (Old Stain)	5	2	17
Vomit	5	1	2
Wine	13	5	9

- 1 Biological washing powder (2 g / 100 ml)
- 2 Proprietary upholstery shampoo solution
- 3 Dry cleaning fluid (preferably 1.1.1 trichloroethane)
- 4 Proprietary agent for removing greasy stains
- 5 Clean warm water
- 6 Cold water
- 7 Absorbent paper and hot iron
- 8 Chill with aerosol freezing agent or ice cubes in a plastic bag; pick or scrape off excess
- 9 Surgical alcohol or methylated spirits
- 10 Nail polish remover (preferably acetone)
- 11 Turpentine or white spirit
- 12 Vacuum
- 13 Proprietary absorbent powders
- 14 Spirit vinegar (acetic acid)
- 15 Hydrogen peroxide diluted to 5 volumes (1.9 g peroxide / 100 ml water)
- 16 Scrape lightly with fingers or a coin
- 17 Call professional cleaner

If the first treatment is not successful, leave to dry and then try the second and, if necessary, resort to the third. If the stain is not removed, call in a professional cleaner at once.

CAUTION: Dry cleaning fluids may be toxic and / or flammable. The usual precautions should be taken when handling these products – proper ventilation during and after cleaning and no naked flames.