

*Selling primer!*

# The Promowear Glossary

Here, for your review, is what has become an annual *Promowear*-reader favorite: our glossary of promotional-apparel-related terms that, once mastered, will help you confidently present apparel to your most questioning clients. It's the details that make the difference between a good-quality garment and a *great*-quality garment, between writing up a routine order and making a *sale*. Accordingly, here's a run-down of the most common—and most important—terms associated with the promotional-apparel industry.

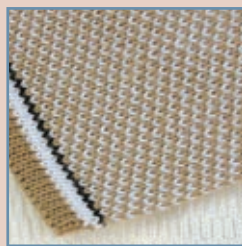
**Appliqué**—A separate, pre-cut piece of fabric that is decorated (or decorated and then cut), then applied to another piece of fabric, typically a garment.

**Back locker pad**—An additional piece of material that is sewn on the back of a shirt beneath the collar. It is semi-circular in shape and is designed to add strength to the area of the shirt that will experience stress from being hung from its locker loop (see Locker Loop entry) or simply hung by its collar from a locker hook, etc.

**Bedford cord**—A cousin of corduroy, but without the filling yarns that make the elevated wales that are characteristic of corduroy. This strong and durable cotton fabric has slightly raised ridges that flow lengthwise.



**Bird's eye**—A two-color fabric design associated with double-knit fabric.



**Blind hem**—A hem wherein only very tiny tack stitches appear on the fabric surface. Not always secure when sewn on knits, so may unravel after washing.

**Breathable**—When a fabric allows vapors to pass through its fibers.

**Buckram**—a stiff backing fabric that is often used to facilitate embroidery and add structure to cap fronts.

**Chambray**—A lightweight plain-woven fabric used for shirts and linings. Typically made of cotton, chambray can also be woven of silk or synthetics.

**Collars:** There are several, a few follow here:

**Crewneck**—This type of collar is considered a “collar-less” look on a shirt, which is characterized by a cuff-like, rounded finish.

**Johnny**—Although some variation exists, typically a traditional fashion collar sewn into a V-neck silhouette.



**Shawl**—A turned-over, continuous collar that drapes down slightly in the front.

**V-neck**—Collar that is cut in the shape of the letter “V”.

**Turtleneck**—A tubular (some have seams in the back), close-fitting collar that covers the neck. Because of its length, it is worn either turned over or scrunched down on the neck.

**Mock-turtle**—Like a turtleneck, but this collar sits lower on the neck, does not fit as close and is not designed to be turned down.

**Colorfast**—A term referring to the permanence and durability of the color of a fabric or print. A colorfast garment, embroidered design or screen print is usually fade- and run-resistant when exposed to washing, abrasion and the sun.

**Combed cotton**—Cotton fibers that have undergone an additional processing step beyond carding (the basic pre-spinning procedure that produces uniform, continuous strands of fiber). The combing process produces fibers that are more uniform in diameter, which make a more desirable and expensive yarn.

**Corduroy**—A durable woven cotton fabric that is often used in its medium-weight form for items such as shirts, slacks, jackets and trim. Its most recognizable characteristic is its lengthwise wales (also known as cords).

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**Cotton**—Grown on a cotton plant, the desirable fibers are harvested from within the seed pod. Average fiber length ranges from 1/2” to 2” long. The highest-quality fabrics are derived from Pima and Egyptian cotton, which typically produce fibers that are longer than 1-1/2”.

**Cover-stitch**—Double-needle stitch that is used to secure seams while also lending a finished look. Cover stitching is often found around armholes and the cuffs common to knit shirts.

**Cut**—This refers to the number of needles per inch on a circular-knitting machine. A machine with 22 needles per inch produces a 22-cut fabric. Higher cuts equate to finer fabrics.

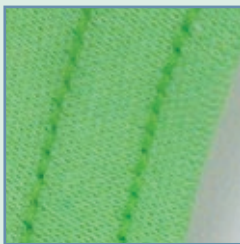
**Denim**—Woven cotton fabric, usually of medium weight, that is commonly used for making shirts, slacks and jackets. Indigo blue is its traditional color.



**Digitize**—To translate a graphic design or text into computer language (digital values) for output from computerized embroidery machines onto substrates.

**Dimensional stability**—Refers to the tendency of a garment to shrink or distort after washing. A garment that is dimensionally stable is one that is likely to maintain its intended shape through many washings.

**Double-needle hem**—Much like a cover-stitch in which two rows of stitching are sewn parallel to each other. This technique is used to securely hem a garment and give it a more finished appearance.



**Drop tail**—An extension of the back panel of a shirt at the point of the separation of side vents. The effect is designed for functionality rather than form as it helps the shirt stay tucked in during movement.



**Duck**—This plain-woven cotton fabric is typically heavyweight and is very strong and durable. It is often used for apparel that gets heavy use, such as work clothes and kidswear.

**Face**—The most attractive side of a fabric; the side of the fabric that makes up the outside of a garment; most suitable for decoration.

**Fleece**—Originally referring only to sheep’s wool, this type of fabric is now made of other natural and synthetic fibers and can be woven or knitted. It is typically thick with a napped or pile inner surface and is often used for jackets, blankets and sweatshirts.



**Forward shoulders**—The positioning of shoulder seams so they don’t lie directly across the top of the shoulders. Rather, the seams lie slightly forward. This prevents the neck from falling backwards, making an uncomfortable fit for the wearer.

**Garment-dyed**—When a garment is dyed after it has been manufactured. This produces variation in color throughout an individual garment and from garment to garment, even if they’re part of the same dye-lot. It’s usually considered a more casual look.

**Hand**—How a fabric or embellishment feels. The term is usually modified by an adjective such as soft, rough, firm, medium, etc.

**Herringbone**—This pattern is a variation of the twill weave, creating a repetitive zigzag pattern on the fabric’s face.

**Houndstooth**—Another variation of the twill weave, this one produces a broken-check pattern when woven with two different yarn colors.



**Interfacing**—A stiff material that is placed between two pieces of fabric to add shape to certain areas of a garment. It’s often used in the collars and plackets of shirts made of woven fabric.

**Interlock knit**—A fabric created when two single-faced knits (i.e., jersey knit) are knitted together, or interlocked, to form one piece of fabric. Both sides of the fabric look and feel the same. It has a very soft hand and good decorating surface for embroidery as well as screen-printing.

**Jacquard**—Can be woven or knit fabrics. Woven fabrics are produced by using the Jacquard attachment on the loom. This attachment provides versatility in designs and permits individual control of each of the warp yarns. Fabrics of almost any type or complexity can be made. For example, brocade and damask are types of woven jacquard fabrics. Knitting machines can also be fitted with a Jacquard-type mechanism. This device individually controls needles or small groups of needles, and allows very complex and highly patterned knits to be created.

**Jersey knit**—A single-faced knitted fabric that is the primary fabric used for T-shirts. The knit stitch on its face side (outside) is called the plain stitch; the stitch on the opposite side (inside) is called the purl stitch.

**Locker loop**—An additional piece of fabric sewn into the inside collar or on the outside rear of a shirt that allows the garment to be easily hung from a locker hook.



**Lyocell**—A fabric made from wood pulp. Tencel is a well-known brand name of this fabric.

**Mercerize**—To process yarn or fabric to give it luster and added strength.

**Microfiber**—A woven fabric that is made of synthetic yarn that is thinner than a standard strand of silk yarn.

**Oversized**—When a garment is intentionally cut larger than the standard size.

**Oxford**—A lightweight woven fabric that is usually made of cotton. It is most commonly used for shirts.

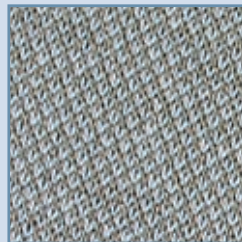


**Panel/piece program**—When a manufacturer sends out unfinished pieces of a garment or other item to be embroidered before it is sewn into the finished product.

**PFD (Prepared For Dyeing)**—Refers to a garment or other item that is specifically made to be dyed after finishing.

**Piece-dyed**—Dyeing that occurs after a fabric is made (knitted or woven), but before it is assembled into a garment.

**Piqué knit**—This type of knit fabric is popularly used in its medium to heavy-weight form for placket shirts. It can be easily recognized by its honeycomb or waffle-like surface appearance.



Two-color piqué

**Plackets**—There are three types:

**Set-on**—A separate piece of fabric, making the placket, is sewn onto the shirt.

**Allan Solly**—A set-on placket, but it is sewn to the inside of the garment. The face of the placket is made of the front of the shirt.

**Henley**—No separate piece of fabric is attached, the fabric of the shirt itself is folded back and tacked at the bottom.

**Reinforced box**—A square sewn at the bottom of a placket to add strength to that area.



**Rib fabric**—A type of knitted fabric that features a vertical “striped” texture.

**Side vents**—Slits in the bottom side seams of a shirt. (See drop tail)

**Single-needle hem**—A single row of stitches used to hem a garment. Typically not found on better garments because of its lack of finished appearance.

**Taped neck/shoulders**—Referring to a quarter-inch of fabric that is sewn over the inside seams of a shirt’s neck and shoulders. Not only is it considered a more finished look on garments, it also secures the seams and helps maintain shape.

**Tricot**—A class of knitted fabric that is made from filament or textured yarn. Characteristically, it is dimensionally stable and is often used for swimwear, foundation wear and garments intended for activities such as running and dance.

**Twill**—A type of weave that is characterized by diagonal patterns throughout the fabric.

**Waterproof**—When a fabric is impermeable to wetness. It should be noted that a garment can’t be waterproof unless its outwardly exposed seams are sealed. Also, it is difficult, if not impossible, to screen print on this type of fabric.

**Water-repellent**—When a fabric is air-permeable, but blocks the passage of liquid to a certain degree. Fabrics are treated with a type of finish to achieve this effect. Like waterproof fabric, it is very difficult to print on this type of fabric.

**Weight** (also known as yield)—Expressed in terms of ounces per square yard of fabric. Generally, fabrics weighing less than 4 oz. are considered lightweight, while medium weight is from 4 to 5 oz. and heavyweight is 5 to 6 oz. (although these weight categories vary from fabric to fabric).

**Welt cuffs**—Achieved when the fabric of the sleeve is folded over and sewn down.

**Yarn-dyed**—Dyeing that occurs at the yarn stage, before it is made into fabric.

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