

# TEXTURE

Texture is the element of design that describes surface appearance and feel. It also means the appearance of the fabric. Texture is a sensory feeling understood by sight as well as by touch. It is quality of roughness or smoothness, dullness or glossiness, stiffness or softness. Some words to describe the texture of fabrics are: rough, smooth, dull, shiny, firm, crisp, fuzzy, bulky, dull, etc. Textures can also be described as lightweight, medium weight, or heavy weight. There are two types of textures- structural texture, which is created when fabrics or garments are manufactured, and added visual textures, which come when a design is printed onto the fabric surface. There are various components like fibers, yarns, fabrics and finishes that determine texture.

## A. Determinants of texture

**Fibres:** Fibres are hairline strands that are made into yarns. Fibers of wool produce soft textures while that of linen produce a crisp textures. The short fuzzy fibers of cotton will produce a dull appearance due the fuzz. The smooth and long filaments like silk fibers and synthetic fibers make fabrics that are shinny, smooth and cool touch fabrics.

**Yarn:** Yarns are made from fibers when they are twisted together. A yarn which has a low twist will produce a shinny texture because the natural gloss of fiber is not lost in the twist, where as a highly twisted yarn on the other hand will give a rough texture since the fiber gloss gets lost in the twist. Yarns that are looped or coiled in manufacture of yarn produce stretch fabrics. Such novelty yarns create interesting surface contours too.

**Fabric:** Fabric is constructed either by weaving, knitting, felting, bonding, crocheting or braiding techniques. Often this construction of the fabric determines the texture. A satin weave of loosely twisted yarns produces shinny textures whereas knits absorb light and are dull textured.

**Finish:** Finish is given to fabric after it is constructed. It can impart or change the texture. Some finishes like sizing gives stiffness, moireing adds shine and watermark design to



the fabric, calendaring gives shine to the fabric, singeing makes the surface smooth and napping makes the fabric fuzzy.

**B. Effect of texture on color:** Colors generally seem lighter on a shiny surface than a dull one. Colors from "textured" and wrinkled fabrics seem darker because of more shadows and colors on fuzzy surfaces mix with fiber highlights and shadows, dulling them slightly. Colors on firm, smooth surfaces seem flat.

**C. Effect of texture on physical proportion:** Textures have the physical properties of weight size, bulk, shape light absorption and reflection. Texture can produce illusions that change apparent body size. Textures can make one look heavier or thinner.

1. *Smooth, flat textures* make people look smaller. They are suitable for almost all figures and physiques. They can hide some figure irregularities because they can hold their own shape.
2. *Rough textures* tend to subdue the colours of fabrics. Sheer fabrics also tend to do the same as the skin of the wearer is seen through them.
3. *Soft and clingy fabrics:* Fabrics that are soft and drapable, cling to the body and show every contour and reveal body irregularities. Their use should be limited to those people who wish to reveal their body. This fabric clinginess to the body can be changed by the addition of lining to a garment (Fig: 1).
4. *Stiff fabrics -bulky fabrics:* Textures that are stiff stand away from the body hide body irregularities. Exclusively stiff fabrics appear to add and weight to the body. Persons, who are average to tall in height, having either average or thin body, are benefited by wearing very stiff fabrics. Small physique persons should avoid these fabrics, as they look dwarfed. Over weight people look heavier because these fabrics stand away from the body, creating the illusion of additional thickness (Fig: 2). A moderate amount of



stiffness is desirable for over weight people as it does not cling and reveal the exact contours.

5. *Shinny textures—dull textures*: Shinny texture reflects light and make the person wearing them appear larger. Fabrics that absorb light are dull and do not enlarge body. These textures are suitable for all body types, provided they do not posses other qualities such as bulk, softness and crispness that would contribute undesirable characteristics people who do not wish to call attention to their body irregularities should select textures that are not extreme - very thin or thick, very soft or stiff or very shiny. These fabrics are not structurally interesting so other features such as colour and line are often used to add interest to garments designed of such fabrics.

**FIG: 1 EFFECT OF SMOOTH & FLAT AND SOFT & CLINGY FABRICS ON THIN**





Complement

Interact

advanc

Adapt

undesirable

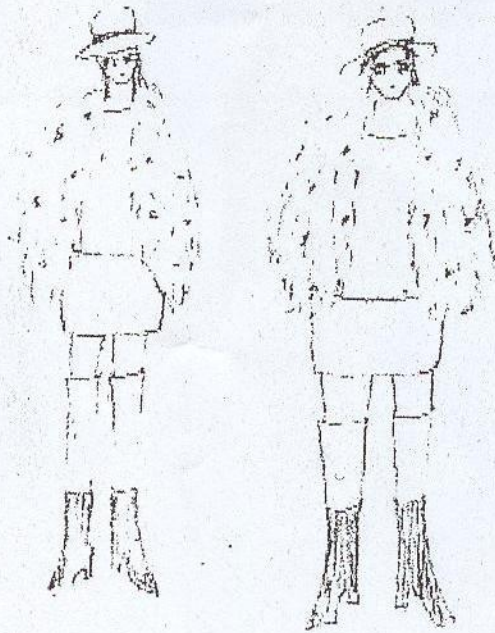
Character

Possess

Possess

Resistive

FIG: 2 EFFECT OF STIFF & BULKY FABRICS ON THIN & THICK PERSON



**D. Proportion of textures in dress:** The selection of scale of textures should be analyzed in relationship to the size of the person wearing them. A contrast in texture will emphasize form. A small sized body wearing large scale textures can get lost in the textures because of the extreme contrast between fabric surface and figure dimensions. On the other hand pettiness is emphasized by the large-scale texture. Very heavy people who wear large-scale texture will appear heavier because there is repetition of size.

Added visual texture can affect the apparent size of the wearer just as structural texture does. If the print designs are large and bold, the structural designs will become secondary to the print. Large, bold patterns emphasize the area where they are used and increase the apparent size of the wearer.



Texture should be used for its advantage considering the effects to be created for a pleasing personality. Good structural and added visual textures must be planned and organised in interesting ways.

## Synthetic Fibers: Nylon

### Nylon Applications

Nylon is widely used in fabric for apparel, home furnishings, industrial applications, and geotextiles. It has proved to be the <sup>most</sup> leading fiber in the manufacture of women's hosiery and lingerie. For outerwear, it is used in woven and knitted fabrics. In addition, it is often used with other fibers in blends to <sup>provide</sup> provide fabrics with good dimensional stability, elastic recovery, shape retention, and abrasion resistance.

Many carpeting materials and upholstery fabrics are made of nylon because it wears well, is easy to clean, and does not require special protection against moths and carpet beetles. Trilobal and hollow filament nylons are popular in carpeting because they resist crushing, do not show soil quickly, and retain an attractive appearance.

Nylon is easy to launder. It can be washed safely at all laundry temperatures and drip-dried or tumble-dried. However, it is best to launder at medium to low temperatures and iron at low temperatures when necessary, in order to reduce unnecessary wrinkling, or imparting wrinkles that cannot be removed by normal home care.

A major Problem encountered in laundering nylon items is that they tend to scavenge color and soil from other items during the washing. This result in gray or discolored articles that may be difficult, if not impossible to restore to their original appearance. White nylon fabrics are particularly vulnerable to such behaviour and therefore should be washed alone or with other white items only. It is important to rinse nylon articles thoroughly; sometimes colored detergents, if not completely removed by rinsing, may leave color in white nylon fabrics.