

What are your requirements when you select a fabric for something you want to make?

Think about how the product you're making will be used—by you or another person. If you are making the product for someone, ask them what they want, what are their priorities? The list below may give you some ideas on what to consider:

APPEARANCE/AESTHETICS: Is the fabric attractive and appropriate for its end use? What should it “look” like? Do you have color and surface design preferences? Is appearance the priority?

CARE: How will the fabric be cleaned or cared for? Does the fabric include a recommended care procedure (see more information on care labels)? Will care procedures affect cost? Are you willing to dry-clean the product or do you want easy care, wash-dry-and-wear?

APPEARANCE RETENTION: Will the fabric retain its new look with use and care? Will it resist wrinkling, shrinkage, abrasion, soiling, stretching, pilling, sagging, or other changes you don't want?

DURABILITY: Is the product used often or just occasionally? Will the fabric hold up in use? Will fabric in a product continue to be usable for as long as expected? Should the fabric be strong, resist abrasion, withstand “kid wear,” etc.?

COMFORT: If the product is worn on the body or comes in close contact (like upholstery fabrics), will it feel good? Can the fabric interact with the body, keeping the body warm or cool? Will the fabric insulate, allow heat release, easily absorb perspiration or allow perspiration evaporation?

SAFETY: Are there safety requirements for the product? For example, if you are designing sleepwear for children, be concerned about flammability. Commercially produced children's pajamas must meet *U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission* regulations. Even if you're not producing pajamas commercially, you may find the CPSC web site helpful:
<https://www.cpsc.gov/FAQ/Childrens-Sleepwear>

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: Home crafters, home-sewers, and textile artists are becoming concerned about environmental effects of fabrics. Factors may include: how the fabric is produced, used, cared for, and disposed of. Will any of these factors have adverse effects on the environment? Can the fabric be recycled? Is the fabric made of recycled materials?

COST: Are the fabric costs reasonable for how the product will be used? Are care costs reasonable/acceptable? What are you willing to pay?

After you decide your requirements—consider each fabric variable & put it all together

Look at the Fabric Analysis Matrix™—use it as you evaluate fabric choices. As you learn about each variable on this web site, you can make informed decisions. While considering use requirements, analyze the four variables for the fabrics available to you. Change one of the variables and the fabric appearance and performance changes. Map out a matrix in your shopping list or just keep the matrix in mind—you'll get used to using it to make fabric choices.

$$\text{Fiber} + \text{Yarn} + \text{Structure} + \text{Finish} = \text{Fabric}$$

Making a fabric purchase decision on-line can be difficult. Choosing a fabric is easier if you can see and touch it. Read all information on a site carefully. If possible and you have time, order swatch samples.

Make a matrix or copy the one below to help you analyze each fabric. Make notes, use pluses and minuses for each variable and it's use requirement.

Fabric Analysis Matrix™ (The matrix is trademarked by K LaBat. Users of the *drkrin-fabricprof* website are welcome to use it for personal use)

	Fiber	Yarn	Structure	Finish
Appearance/Aesthetics				
Care				
Appearance Retention				
Durability				
Comfort				
Safety				
Environmental Impact				
Cost				