

Selling Wearables Made Easy!



The Information
You Need to
Sell More and
Sell More
Profitably!



Presented by



www.orderacc.com

Step-By-Step Guide To Selling & Ordering Apparel

1. Open an account with ACC.
2. Gather all 3 versions of ACC's catalog: Wholesale, ASI and Generic.
3. Establish a contract relationship with a decorator (screen printer and/or embroiderer) in your town. Ask your ACC sales rep if you need assistance with this.
4. Review this pamphlet to become familiar with core product information and jargon.
5. Review ACC's wholesale catalog to become familiar with the apparel you think your customers will buy. Also, see the prices for blank apparel. This catalog remains on your desk for use when ordering.
6. Review ACC's ASI catalog with coded price list. These are suggested end-user prices for a screen printed garment; one color/one location. The back page of the price list provides information for pricing multiple colors and locations, and embroidery. This is the catalog to show to your customers.
7. By combining the contract decorating price (don't forget freight charges) and the blank apparel price, you get your net pricing on the finished garment. Build your mark-up into your pricing, using the ASI price grid as a guideline.
8. The ACC generic catalog can be customized with your logo. In this manner, it becomes your catalog. This is the one you will want to leave behind with your customers.
9. Inventory levels on items can be unpredictable due to variances in mill production rate, shipping times and schedules. In addition, prices are always subject to change. ACC has one of the best in-stock ratios in the industry. We strive to keep pricing low and to inform our customers of fluctuations. You should always verify both availability and current pricing with ACC before finalizing your customer's order.
10. When you are ready to order blanks, call ACC and ship goods directly to your contract decorator. Upon credit approval, your order will ship from ACC the same day ordered, subject to certain restrictions posted in the back of the price list. You'll find that the hours of our "same-day shipping window" are very generous! And our 24/7/365 website means you can place orders any time, from anywhere.
11. Go online to www.orderacc.com in order to check inventory availability, pricing, and place orders any time. Orders placed prior to 4pm EST will be shipped the same day upon credit approval. (Needs to make reference to remote ship cut off times)
12. Follow the same precautions you would when ordering any imprinted item. Make certain your customer approves:
 - a. The color of the garment from a sample, as colors can vary from the catalog photographs.
 - b. Artwork proofs from your printer, or a "stitch-out" from your embroiderer, especially if the design is complicated. Remember that setup times for screen printers can be lengthy, so demanding from them a single printed example for approval is usually not possible without added time and expense. Most embroiderers, however, will keep single-head machines in-house expressly to do samples before the main run. Ask your decorator for their policies on this matter.
 - c. Quantities and sizes. (If the order is on a "quick turnaround" schedule, suggest to your customers that they add a few extra pieces in case a defective garment or two slips by.)
13. Your agreement with your decorator should include a stipulation requiring inspection of the goods against your PO. A good decorator will take responsibility for accuracy before beginning production.
14. Finished goods can be sent to you for inspection and delivery, or drop-shipped directly from your decorator to your customer.

Tap Into A Multi-Billion Dollar Market

Are you getting your share of that business?

By industry standards alone, decorated wearables should account for **at least 28% of your total sales.** With today's booming market, many distributors are reporting that selling decorated wearables now account for over 80% of their business.

This pamphlet is intended to give you the information you need to make decorated wearables a larger part of your business, and to give you some of the tools and knowledge to sell them with confidence.

In many ways, selling decorated wearables is no different from selling any other imprinted item. You have the same concerns over print and reproduction quality, accuracy and delivery.

However, some considerations make decorated wearables unique. Your understanding of these factors will help you be a more confident and effective purveyor of them.

Among the considerations are:

- ▶ ***Fabric Composition***
- ▶ ***Fabric Weight***
- ▶ ***Size***
- ▶ ***Shrinkage***
- ▶ ***Style***
- ▶ ***Color***
- ▶ ***Durability***
- ▶ ***Fashion***



Sell Wearables **With The Benefits**

What makes decorated wearables such a booming product? According to **Richie Sacks, CEO of Atlantic Coast Cotton:**

1. To be seen wearing and carrying items decorated with national brand logos has made way for just about any business to create its own decorated sportswear.
2. Casual attire is much more acceptable in the corporate work place. Also, functionality in attire in the modern workplace is desirable, especially when it does not sacrifice anything to fit and form. "Distinguished" doesn't have to mean "uncomfortable."
3. The service industry has in many instances shied away from garments that look like industrial uniforms, replacing them with decorated shirts, jackets and caps.
4. Clothing has a highly perceived value as an advertising specialty item.
5. When customers receive apparel that has been decorated with attractive designs, they wear them and in effect become walking billboards for the advertiser.

You should quote any of these benefits on your next sales call.



Order Wearables

For Maximum Profit

Where possible, we recommend ordering blank apparel from ACC, then having the goods decorated by a company local to you for the following reasons:

- 1. Creative control.** In the event of any questions or problems with color, tone, screens, thread, etc., you will be dealing with a company that you can visit and actually see the work being done.
- 2. Profit margin.** By coordinating the decorating yourself, you remove one level of markup on the finished goods, thereby improving your margin.
- 3. Competitive Pricing.** In bidding situations you can be more competitive because you are getting the price advantages of wholesale goods and contract printing. Wholesale pricing always improves as your volume goes up, and contract printing can be negotiated based on quantity.

We realize there will be occasions when it is necessary, because of time or other constraints, to order finished goods from a single source. Keep in mind; this may be slightly more costly.



T-SHIRTS: A Competitive Game You Can Win

T-shirts are arguably, the most price sensitive item in imprinted wearables. With strong competition from independent screen printers in every location in the country, profit margins on tees may be narrow. Orders must be planned carefully.

The most important value-added service as a promotional products distributor will be your ability to plan and execute an entire campaign, which includes a wide range of other items to match the T-shirt and its designs. The knowledge you've gained from this pamphlet will help you and your customers make informed buying decisions.

Fabric composition:

Tees are made mostly of 100% cotton, a blend of cotton and polyester or 100% polyester. Recently, nylon, rayon and even bamboo (where naturally occurring anti-microbial properties are desirable) have shown up in blends.

Keep in mind that most 100% cotton fabric has a softer feel, but 50/50 will be more durable, holding up under more washings and retaining its shape longer.



Blends and Weights

Consider 50/50 or 60/40 cotton/poly blends: For sports teams, service workers, recreational staff members, and for other customers that require functionality in basic shirts and colors.

Consider Tri-blends (50/25/25 cotton/poly/rayon): Where fashion plays a role in the order: the polyester content will help the garment retain shape and elasticity. Cotton lends comfort and durability, and the addition of rayon gives the garment a unique texture that drapes for a slimming look.

Consider 100% Cotton: For concerts or promotional events, museum sales, souvenirs, or when your customer requires a heavier weight shirt that has more styles and diverse color selection.

Consider 100% polyester: This works great for sports teams, road crews, landscapers, etc. where fabric treatments such as wicking and anti-microbial properties are important, or for printing techniques that involve sublimation.

Fabric weight: T-shirts are produced in a variety of weights. In 50/50 blends, tees usually range from a fabric weight of 5.4 to 5.6 oz (per square yard of fabric). In 100% cotton, tees can range from fabric weights of 3.7 to 6.1 oz. The weight does not describe how much the garment itself weighs, but rather the weight of a square yard of fabric from which the garment was cut. In some cases, you won't be able to tell the difference between fabric weights by touching the shirts.

Generally, the heavier the fabric weight, the longer lasting the shirt will be from wash-to-wash.

Consider lightweights, 3.7 - 4.5 ounces: when fashion is an issue, and/or where a fine drape is desired.

Consider mid-weights, 5.4 - 5.6 ounces: For warmer weather areas, promotions, and give-away promotions such as 10K races or for inexpensive shirts a radio station might require.

Consider heavyweights, 6.0 - 6.1 ounces:

When intended for re-sale, a high-end promotion, larger and more complicated prints, or for embroidery.

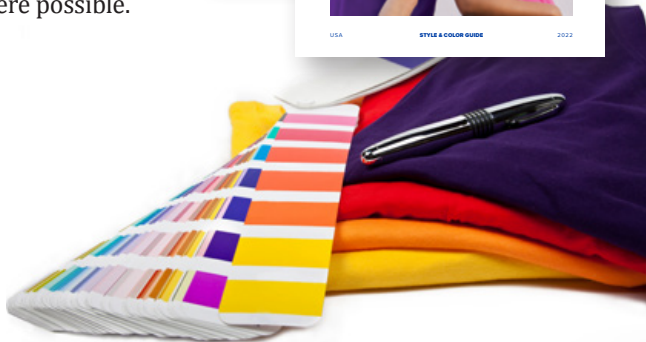
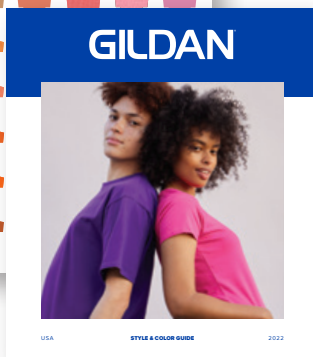
Size, Shrinkage and Color

Size: When recommending sizes to your customers keep this in mind: not everyone wants tight-fitting garments. Today's fashions run the gamut, usually as a function of age: Older customers generally want garments to hang loosely. Others - mostly teens and young adults - want them to be more form fitting. When fitting shirts to a disparately sized group of people, you may want to order larger. Consult with a sales representative for specs, or request samples for sizing. Our website has spec sheets for all garments we sell.



Shrinkage: 100% pre-shrunk cotton tees will shrink about 3% to 5% on first washing, or about half a size. Remember to inform your customers that t-shirts will shrink more in the length of the garment than width. Shrinkage in 50/50 is negligible, maybe 2% to 3%. Remember, tees are cut larger to begin with. Consider ordering samples for sizing ahead of time.

Color: Fabric colors do not use the same numerical identification as ink colors (e.g., PMS), so matching corporate colors in fabric is more guesswork than science. Care should be taken when considering ink colors so they will be compatible with fabric color. Remember that due to inconsistencies in paper printing processes, printed color charts may not reflect reality. Rely instead on fabric swatch cards, where possible.



Plackets, Golf and Polo Shirts

Placket shirts, also known as polo's, sport shirts, and golf shirts, may be the fastest growing category in the entire apparel industry. Historically, a "polo shirt" was simply a "golf shirt" in a more form-fitting cut with smaller armholes, but nowadays the terms are used interchangeably. By whatever name, the current market demand makes them some of the most popular garments in the promotional products industry.



Fabric Composition: As with t-shirts, fabrics generally consist of 50/50 blend, 60/40, 100% cotton or 100% polyester (performance fabrics). However, a variety of knits are available, such as:

Pique Knit: A tightly woven mesh fabric, giving the shirt a textured surface. Because of the rough surface, pique is usually best decorated with embroidery than screen printing.

Jersey Knit: A texture much like a T-shirt's. The smooth surface makes it ideal for screen printing or embroidery.

Interlock Knit: Provides a smooth surface, achieved by knitting together (interlocking) two pieces of fabric to create a heavier, more luxurious feel. With higher end polos, almost always 100% cotton, fashion is generally the primary consideration. 50/50 blends may be used for utility as much as for style.

Fabric weight: Fashion-forward and corporate polo shirts range from 6.5 to 7.5 ounces. When ordering heavier weight fabrics, you should give consideration to climate and comfort, as well as style. 50/50 staff shirts are generally in the range of 4.5 to 5.5 ounces, a good weight if the user will be doing physical work in the shirt.

Size: Unlike the fit of T-shirts, you will want to provide a more natural fit for the polo wearer. Not often will pre-shrunk cotton be found in polos, so plan for the garment to shrink as much as one full size when consulting with your customers.

Colors: Because of the galaxy of different style and color combinations available, polos offer a multitude of sales opportunities. Matching corporate colors with the styles that appeal to the customer makes for an outstanding sales presentation.

Wovens and Dress Shirts



Woven garments offer an excellent opportunity to break into the corporate world.

Whether casual, like a denim or camp shirt, or slightly dressier, like sanded gabardine or an oxford, the possibilities are endless. Think hotels, restaurants, sporting clubs, corporate offices, etc.

Consider 50/50 poly-cotton blends for: Staff shirts: restaurant uniforms, service uniforms; auto dealers' sales staff.

Consider 100% cotton for: Corporate casual office dress, corporate outings and events, trade show staff.

Fabric weight: Fabric weights are not as much of a factor in woven garments, as they are in tees or polos. Generally, however, standard twill woven shirts are usually found in the 6.0 to 6.8 ounce range, oxfords come in at 4.0 to 5.0 ounces, and finer wovens like silky poplins and dress twills will be lighter, say 3.5 to 4.0 ounce.

Size: Sizing is of paramount importance when fitting woven shirts to customers. Rely on spec charts, and make sure to offer woven shirts that are made in both men's and women's sizes.

Colors: Most woven styles come in a short list of a few popular shades (white, blue, khaki), intended to receive the gamut of corporate colors. If a wide array of colors is desired, stick to basic twill shirts.



Fleecewear

Depending on what part of the country you are in, sweats may be seasonal or year round items. Sweats aren't just for cleaning up the house on the weekends any more. Practically no one travels to a beach, even in the middle of summer, without a sweatshirt to protect against a cool evening.



Many stylish sweatshirts can be seen on chilly early mornings on golf courses around the country. Whereas the crewneck was king in past years, hooded sweats have made great inroads into the industry.

Fabric Composition: Federal law requires that the material used by domestic manufacturers for sweats be blended for maximum fire resistance. By adjusting the cotton content and the weight of the sweatshirt or pant, mills have created a variety of products for every price range and market niche. However, it is possible to find 100% cotton sweats; they will be made overseas.

Fabric Weight: The basic promotional weight sweat is a 7.5 to 8.0 ounce. We also carry 9.0, 10.2, 11.0 and 12.0 ounce. Lately, lighter weight sweats have come to the fore, with 7.2 ounce sheer fabrics being most popular. The climate in your region will play heavily in your decision on the weight of the sweats you should promote. Ultimately, the decision on what weight and fabric you should promote is as easy as matching the item to your customers' price point.

Size: Current styles dictate that sweats, like other garments, are usually worn to fit loosely. However, a move towards 100% performance (wicking) sweats means that the buyers will want something more athletic and form-fitting.

Shrinkage: This is a greater consideration in sizing sweats, particularly with higher cotton content. Also remember that as "outerwear," sweatshirts are usually worn over another garment. It's best to order "up" one size from what you normally wear.

Colors: In general, color selection in fleece will not be as broad as in Tees or Polos. Embellishments that will coordinate with corporate colors may work best by selecting the appropriate ink or thread colors and choosing a garment in a basic or neutral color.

Jackets and Other Outerwear

From the club house to the fraternity house, you will find scores of customers in search of embellished outerwear.

Consider rain ponchos for school teams, wind shirts for country clubs, and fleece lined or 3 season jackets for construction companies. Also available are coach's jackets and classic baseball jackets.

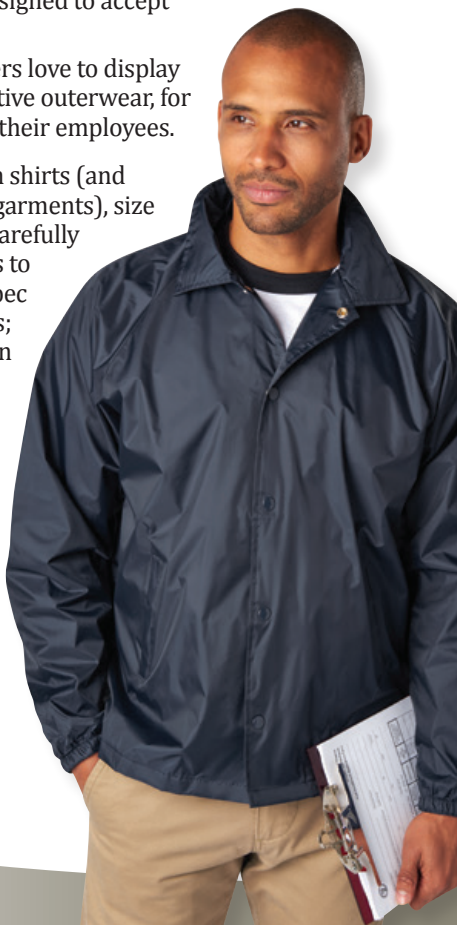
Consider heavier jackets for customers in cooler regions. These garments will tend to be more expensive, due to "bells and whistles" additions like more stitching, more padding, extra snaps and zippers and more pockets.

Look for value-added extras like earbud holes, cell-phone pockets and heavier zippers. Also keep in mind that most jackets have linings, which can pose problems for embroiderers. Look for jackets with zippers between placket and lining, designed to accept embroidery loops.

Proud business owners love to display their logos on distinctive outerwear, for both themselves and their employees.

Sizing: As with woven shirts (and any more-expensive garments), size must be considered carefully when matching styles to customers. Rely on spec sheets and size charts; request samples when feasible. Fortunately, most jackets come in sizes ranging from Small to 6XL, reflecting the fact that outerwear is just that: meant to be worn over bulky clothing.

Shrinkage: Fortunately, this is not usually an issue with outerwear.



Teamwear & Performance Wear

For your active clients (and there are more of those lately!), we carry garments geared towards baseball, softball, basketball, soccer, lacrosse, spirit and fitness.

Much of the teamwear made any more falls under the umbrella term: performance wear. This can mean moisture-wicking or anti-microbial. Moisture wicking means that perspiration is drawn away from the skin fast, allowing the airflow to evaporate moisture quickly. Anti-microbial is just that; sometimes by means of an inherent chemical composition to the fabric, or from the nature of the material the fabric is constructed from; for instance, bamboo has a natural anti-microbial effect. Look also for high-tech fabrics like “vapor control” which are designed to change properties as the wearer heats up or cools down.

Speaking of teams, think about “teaming up” your sales with jackets or wind shirts with golf shirts, sports bags with reversible tanks and mesh shorts, hats with baseball shirts, and wind pants and jackets with cheerleader tops and shorts. There is a multitude of ideas you can use to outfit the team more completely.

Performance wear has another use, among workers in garden nurseries, road crews, fire and police departments. The fabric is ideal for anyone who must work outside, where heat may be a problem.

Sizing and colors follow the advice given above, depending whether the teamwear is tees, polos or outerwear.



Caps/Hats



At ACC our selection of hats includes a variety of caps, visors, knit beanies, fitted caps, moisture wicking caps, camouflage beanies and hats, and more.

Your first concern when taking an order for ball caps is whether they are to be screen printed or embroidered.

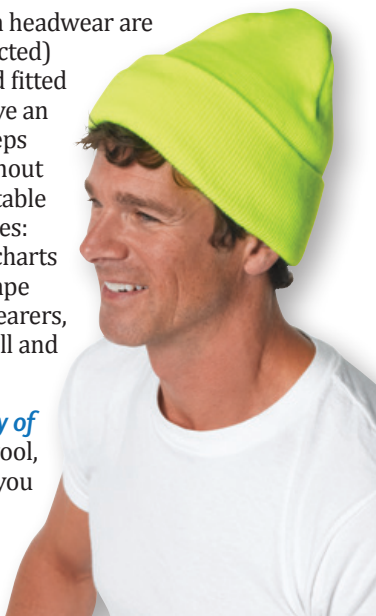
This decision will determine whether you need a 5 panel seamless front cap, better for screen printing, or a 6 panel cap with a seam in front, which is fine for embroidery.

Currently, the hottest items in headwear are the low profile (or unconstructed) fashion ball cap, knit caps and fitted baseball caps. Fitted caps have an inside band of elastic that keeps the crown fitted to heads without having plastic or fabric adjustable straps. These come in two sizes: S/M and L/XL. Refer to spec charts for crown sizing. Also, the shape of the brim is important to wearers, some demanding a curved ball and others, a flat profile.

Caps can be found in a variety of materials: nylon, polyester, wool, cotton, twill; each providing you with a slightly different look, feel and price point.

Cotton caps come in a variety of finishes: poplin, twill, pigment dyed. Straps and buckles contribute to the durability and cost of the cap. Buckram backing behind the front panel improves the embroidery platform and helps keep the cap's shape. The braid found above the brim changes the look of a ball cap into one a golfer or a trucker may prefer.

Cap wearers are a different breed. Headwear is as much a statement as it is fashion, so be careful when selecting styles, colors, fits... and in the end, what designs will be put on them. Also remember that the type of camouflage pattern is important to those who wear the caps for hunting. There is a big difference in what a deer hunter will want as opposed to a bird hunter!





Workwear

Almost any garment or hat can be considered workwear, but in the strict definition of the term it refers to clothing made specifically in which to perform manual labor, without extra fabric (loose-fitting) to get in the way of motion, and made of finer-stitched, better fabrics to impart durability.

Other factors include soil-release, anti-wrinkling, wicking and/or anti-microbial properties.

Look for properties like double-needle stitching, under-arm or crotch gussets, reinforced pockets and tool loops, and side vents on shirts so they can look good whether tucked in or worn outside pants.

Sizing: Sizing is extremely important. Garments must fit well, without being too loose or too tight. In some cases, an ill-fitting garment can be dangerous to a worker! Rely on spec charts, or get samples where feasible. Encourage customers to think of the end user's comfort as well as appearance (fit and function).



Bags, Totes & Towels

Don't forget tote bags and sports bags! From promotional bags to fine attaché's you're sure to find a style for every need. Promotional canvas totes make great giveaway items for libraries, fairs and tradeshow. Shoe bags are wonderful corporate gifts for the commuter, or the golfer. And there's a variety of sport and duffel

bags for teams and gyms. Nylon sport pacs are all the rage with school kids, replacing in many instances the traditional bulky backpack. These come in dozens of colors, shapes and sizes.

Towels are another great promotional item from giveaways to deluxe beach towels. Golf towels with grommet and hooks can be used as a fishing towel for yacht clubs as well as for golf. Spirit towels can be seen at almost all sporting events. Many of our towels are available in colors as well as white. Currently, a polka-dot towel is a best-seller.

Robes make nice corporate gifts and ours is deluxe. Think about spas, swim teams, hotels, and company stores when considering a robe.

Understanding the Process

SCREEN PRINTING

The screen printing process is so named because the printer literally presses ink through a framed, mesh screen. Ink density is determined by the mesh count; that is, the number of holes in the mesh. Generally speaking, a finer mesh screen will allow a more detailed print.

The process starts when the screen is coated to fill in all the mesh so that no ink can pass through.

Using a light box, the screen is “burned” using a positive image of the camera-ready art work. This process removes the coating from the screen to match the design, thus allowing ink to pass through in the exact pattern as the design.

Each color in a design requires a separate positive (known as color separations), from which the printer will create a separate screen. That’s why you incur a screen charge for each color.



Printing begins when the garment is placed on a palette. The screen is lowered into place and the ink is squeezed through the screen onto the garment's surface. The palette is then moved to the next screen that will apply the next color, and so on, until the design is complete.

The garment is then put through a dryer to set the ink, thereby "curing" it.

Lastly, digital direct-to-garment printing has made great inroads into the industry. Also known as DTG printing, digital apparel printing and/or inkjet printing, this process uses a special inkjet technology, consisting of a transport mechanism for the garment and specialty inks that are applied to and absorbed directly by the fabric. An advantage of DTG printing is the very low set-up cost, and quick turnaround times not found with traditional garment printing methods.



EMBROIDERY

The craft of embroidery has rocketed into the computer age over the past few years. The equipment that sews thread into a monogram or design is now very efficient and high tech.

Prices for embroidery are determined by the number of stitches required to execute a design and are usually quoted as a cost per 1000 stitches. The number of colors usually does not change the cost of the job, as in screen printing.

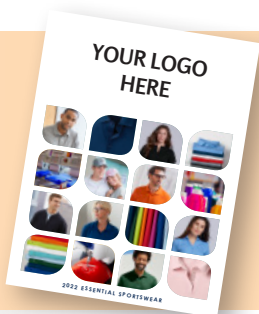
Retaining the lingo from earlier days, the computer file that contains the design and the instructions for the embroidery machine is called a "Tape." The cost of creating this file is often referred to as the "Tape Charge" or in today's terms the "digitizing fee". This is usually a one-time charge.

Marketing Tools

► For more Marketing Tools, visit: www.orderacc.com

Imprinted Generic Catalogs

Put your company logo and contact information on a generic version of our catalog and give it out as your own.



Online Image Catalog

Download high-resolution images of everything we sell.



Sample Program

30 Day refund on all samples purchased.



Swatch Card Kits—
for exact color matches.

Generic Website

Our entire generic catalog is on the web at www.imprintablecatalog.com so you can use it as your customer website, or add a link to a site you already have.



Online Ordering

Five customizable website designs are available with a blind link to our catalog with order taking capabilities! Call ACC for details!

Customizable Sell Sheets—
that can be downloaded from
our website.



Glossary of Terms

BANDED CUFFS

A piece of single-ply material, usually ribbed, which is added to the ends of sleeves to form a cuff.

COLLARETTE

A crewneck collar shaped as a single piece with no vertical seam.

COMBED COTTON

Raking a comb-like device over cotton fibers captures only the longest, strongest fibers, which are then spun into a very durable thread.

COOL KNIT

Also known as “cool weave”, is a 100% cotton pique that has a small box type weave that allows for extra ventilation in the fabric.

FLASH

Flashing is necessary when screen printing a light color over dark fabric. A layer of white must be laid down first and “flashed” or dried before adding secondary colors.

GARMENT WASHED

A process applied to a garment after manufacturing to impart a weathered, or “washed”, look.

HAND

Describes the relative softness, of “feel” of a fabric

JACQUARD

A fabric with an intricately woven pattern.

MICRO FIBER

100% polyester or nylon yarns, tightly woven polyester or nylon fabric that uses ultra fine denier yarns to produce a fabric that is lightweight, drapable and soft.

MOISTURE WICKING

Moisture is pulled away from the body, through the garment to the surface, where it evaporates.

PFD

Prepared For Dye. PFD shirts are not “bleached” to the color we know as “white”. Instead, the fabric is left in its natural state, better for absorbing dye. Also, PFD shirts are cut slightly larger to allow for shrinkage incurred during the over dye process, and is sewn together with cotton thread.

PLACKET

The material at the front of a polo or golf shirt that contains buttons on one side, and button holes on the other.

PRE-SHRUNK

Does not mean “pre-washed”. Instead, the term refers to a manufacturing process whereby the fabric is compressed before a garment is sewn from it. The fabric de-compresses during washing, compensating for any natural shrinkage.

REINFORCED PLACKET

Stitching in the shape of a rectangle at the bottom of a placket, for reinforcement.

RESORT CUFF

Also know as a “logo cuff”, describes a cuff that has a small blank space in the pattern to provide a spot for embroidering.

RINGSPUN COTTON

A process that spins the cotton prior to knitting, creating a softer feel to the fabric. Found in more expensive tees and polos.

RINGER

A t-shirt with collar and sleeve cuffs of a different color than the body of the tee.

SINGLE NEEDLE

Found in better polos, a single stitch provides a more comfortable seam for the wearer.

SINGLES

A gauge used in fabric descriptions to denote the size of the yarn used to make the fabric. Expressed as “18/1” or “16/1”, the smaller the number, the denser (generally) the fabric.

TAPING

Additional pieces of fabric sewn over a finished seam, adding comfort and durability to a garment.



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