

HAITIAN COTTON

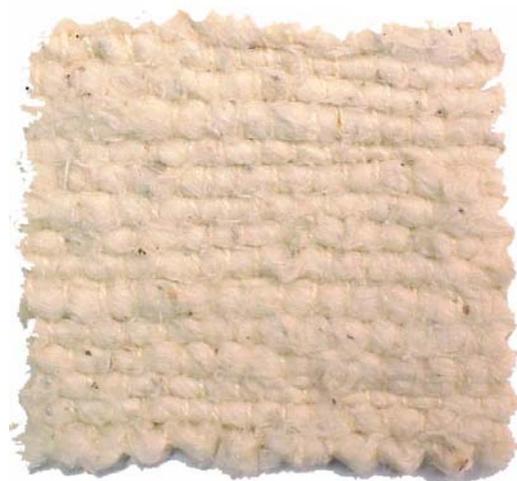
STYLES HAVE A WAY OF REOCCURRING

Although we do not see as much Haitian Cotton as we once did, we still have to deal with it on a regular basis. Like chenille it may have its own revival.

WHAT IS HAITIAN COTTON?

Haitian Cotton is more of a look than it is fiber content, although to be a true Haitian Cotton it must contain a high percentage of cotton. They are easily recognizable by their widely spaced warp threads, and “fluffy” cotton weft or filling threads.

Generally they contain a certain amount of “trash”, as seen below, which differs due to the refining processes. The more refined the less trash will be in evidence.



WHY ARE THEY BACK-COATED?

The warp threads are spaced far apart creating a fabric, which is NOT dimensionally stable. Back-coatings add stability to the fabric so they will wear better.

Problems can occur when the latex starts to break down. It may be seen as severe cracking as the latex ages and gets brittle. Sometimes the latex turns yellow with age, which may be seen through the face fibers causing a yellowish tint.

HAITIAN COTTON DOESN'T WEAR WELL!

One of the biggest problems is the wearability of Haitian Cotton fabrics. In high use areas the fluffy weft yarns tend to wear down leaving the thin warp yarns more exposed. These areas can look dingy and unclean but in reality it may only be wear.

SPOT CLEANING

Cotton by nature is very hydrophilic (water loving) and will readily absorb liquid spills. Unfortunately the lignin (sugars and glues), which are generally present in Haitian Cottons will add to the staining problem by causing browning and/or yellowing.

Water-based spills will need immediate care to prevent or limit the browning problem. Blotting, and drying quickly with a hair dryer will limit the amount of browning that can occur.

If the water-based stain have had a chance to dry, it will be necessary to re-liquefy the stained area. This is best done with a neutral or slightly acidic cleaner (pHnominal). Drying time is a major factor and needs to be accelerated as much as possible.

Greasy type stains can be removed effectively with dry cleaning solvents although, **it is very important NOT to destroy the back coating.** Destroying the back coating can lead to poor fabric stability and possibly holes.

Sometimes a small stain cannot be effectively removed without causing damage. If it is confined to a thread running in the weft direction it is possible to cover or plug the area.

Extra fabric can generally be found on the inside of the zipper and carefully pulled off. It is then possible to tuck the new piece, between the warp threads, over the stained area with a needle.

CLIENT CARE

The safest product that will cause the least amount of problems on dry stains is the chemical sponge although it too can cause fiber loss if not properly used. The proper use would be to only wipe lightly in the direction of the weft yarns.

Kleen-Tec and pHnominal applied from a rag are the safest way a client can deal with

stains, which the sponge may not work on. However, pHnominal could cause some browning.

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

With proper care Haitian Cotton can last for years. Vacuuming, rotating and flipping cushions, damp dusting are all tools that can effectively add life to the fabric.

Browning is usually correctable with a variety of methods and chemicals. Peroxide is one of the most effective chemicals in dealing with cellulosic browning and/or yellowing.

Treatments will make the fibers less absorbent making spills less likely to be permanent while decreasing the possibility of browning.

**AS WITH ALL FABRICS AND FINISHES...
ALWAYS TEST THE CHEMICAL AND/ OR
PROCEDURE FIRST IN AN
INCONSPICUOUS PLACE!**