

# INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

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## **Textiles — Care labelling code using symbols**

*Textiles — Code d'étiquetage d'entretien au moyen de symboles*

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Reference number  
ISO 3758:1991(E)

## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

International Standard ISO 3758 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 38, *Textiles*.

Annex A of this International Standard is for information only.

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## Introduction

The variety of fibres, materials and finishes used in the production of textile articles together with the development of cleansing procedures makes it difficult and often impossible to decide on the appropriate cleansing treatment for each article simply by inspecting it. To help those who have to make such a decision (principally the consumer but also launderers and dry-cleaners), this code of graphic symbols has been established for use in the permanent marking of textile articles with information on their care in use.

In order to make this code "easily understandable and recognizable" for the consumer, symbols have been limited as to types and numbers as far as practicable.

This International Standard is the result of a compromise between two requirements: being simple enough to be understood by users in all countries — irrespective of the language they speak — yet providing as much information as possible to prevent damage caused during care treatments. When deemed necessary, words may be added to the symbols.

The symbols used in the code are the subject of international trademarks. A statement made by the holder of these marks is given in annex A which is not an integral part of this International Standard.

This International Standard has been made sufficiently flexible to accommodate the needs of practically all who may wish to use it. This has been achieved by providing a sufficiently large selection of care treatments (washing, chlorine-based bleaching, ironing, dry cleaning and tumble drying) from which the user may select the most suitable for any particular need.

It is intended to develop further annexes for test methods, criteria and a glossary specifying additional care labelling terms.

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## Textiles — Care labelling code using symbols

### 1 Scope

This International Standard

- establishes a system of graphic symbols, intended for use in the permanent marking of textile articles, providing information essential for their proper care;
- specifies the use of these symbols in care labelling.

The following treatments are covered: washing, chlorine-bleaching, ironing, dry-cleaning and tumble drying after washing.

This International Standard applies to all textile articles in the form in which they are supplied to the consumer.

### 2 Definitions

For the purposes of this International Standard, the following definitions apply.

**2.1 textile articles:** Yarns, piece goods and made-up articles consisting mainly of textile materials.

**2.2 washing:** A process designed to clean textile articles in an aqueous bath.

Washing includes all or some of the following operations in relevant combinations:

- soaking, pre-washing and proper washing — carried out usually with heating, mechanical action and in the presence of detergents or other products — and rinsing;
- water extraction, i.e. spinning or wringing performed during and/or at the end of the operations mentioned above.

These operations may be carried out by machine or by hand.

**2.3 chlorine-based bleaching:** A process carried out in an aqueous medium before, during or after washing processes, requiring the use of a chlorine-based bleaching agent for the purpose of removing stains and/or improving whiteness.

**2.4 ironing and pressing:** A process carried out on a textile article to restore its shape and appearance, by means of an appropriate appliance using heat and pressure.

**2.5 dry-cleaning:** A process for cleaning textile articles by means of organic solvents. This process consists of cleaning, rinsing, spinning and drying.

**2.6 tumble drying:** A process carried out on a textile article after washing, with the intention of removing residual water by treatment with hot air in a rotating drum.

### 3 Description and definition of symbols

#### 3.1 Basic symbols and additional symbols

Five basic symbols and three additional symbols are provided.

##### 3.1.1 Washing process

For the washing process, a washtub as shown in figure 1.



Figure 1

**3.1.2 Chlorine-based bleaching process**

For the chlorine-based bleaching process, a triangle as shown in figure 2.



Figure 2

**3.1.3 Ironing process**

For the ironing process, a hand iron shape as shown in figure 3.



Figure 3

**3.1.4 Dry-cleaning process**

For the dry-cleaning process, a circle as shown in figure 4.



Figure 4

**3.1.5 Tumble drying**

For drying in a tumbler after a washing process, a square with a circle inscribed as shown in figure 5.

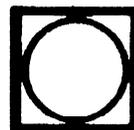


Figure 5

**3.1.6 Treatment not permitted**

In addition to the five symbols 3.1.1 to 3.1.5, the St Andrew's cross superimposed on any of them means that the treatment represented by that symbol shall not be used.



Figure 6

**3.1.7 Mild treatment**

In addition to the five symbols 3.1.1 to 3.1.5, a bar under the washtub or circle means that the treatment should be milder than that indicated by the same symbol without a bar.



Figure 7

**3.1.8 Very mild treatment**

In addition to the five symbols 3.1.1 to 3.1.5, a broken bar under the washtub describes a very mild washing process at 40 °C.



Figure 8

### 3.2 Washing

The washtub symbolizes the domestic washing treatment (by hand or machine) (see figure 1). It is used to convey information regarding the maximum washing temperature and the maximum washing-process severity, as shown in table 1.

**Table 1**

Symbol	Washing process
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— maximum temperature 95 °C</li> <li>— mechanical action normal</li> <li>— rinsing normal</li> <li>— spinning normal</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— maximum temperature 95 °C</li> <li>— mechanical action reduced</li> <li>— rinsing at gradually decreasing temperature (cool down)</li> <li>— spinning reduced</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— maximum temperature 70 °C</li> <li>— mechanical action normal</li> <li>— rinsing normal</li> <li>— spinning normal</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— maximum temperature 60 °C</li> <li>— mechanical action normal</li> <li>— rinsing normal</li> <li>— spinning normal</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— maximum temperature 60 °C</li> <li>— mechanical action reduced</li> <li>— rinsing at gradually decreasing temperature (cool down)</li> <li>— spinning reduced</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— maximum temperature 50 °C</li> <li>— mechanical action reduced</li> <li>— rinsing at gradually decreasing temperature (cool down)</li> <li>— spinning reduced</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— maximum temperature 40 °C</li> <li>— mechanical action normal</li> <li>— rinsing normal</li> <li>— spinning normal</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— maximum temperature 40 °C</li> <li>— mechanical action reduced</li> <li>— rinsing at gradually decreasing temperature (cool down)</li> <li>— spinning reduced</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— maximum temperature 40 °C</li> <li>— mechanical action much reduced</li> <li>— rinsing normal</li> <li>— spinning normal</li> <li>— do not wring by hand</li> </ul>

Symbol	Washing process
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— maximum temperature 30 °C</li> <li>— mechanical action much reduced</li> <li>— rinsing normal</li> <li>— spinning reduced</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— hand wash only</li> <li>— do not machine wash</li> <li>— maximum temperature 40 °C</li> <li>— handle with care</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— do not wash</li> <li>— be cautious when treating in wet stage</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Chlorine-based bleaching

The triangle symbolizes the bleaching process (chlorine process) (see figure 2 and table 2).

**Table 2**

Symbol	Process
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— chlorine-based bleaching allowed</li> <li>— only cold and dilute solution</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— do not use chlorine-based bleach</li> </ul>

### 3.4 Ironing

The iron symbolizes the domestic ironing process (see figure 3), maximum temperature levels being indicated by one, two or three dots placed within the symbol, as shown in table 3.

Table 3

Symbol	Process
	— iron at a maximum sole-plate temperature of 200 °C
	— iron at a maximum sole-plate temperature of 150 °C
	— iron at a maximum sole-plate temperature of 110 °C — steam-ironing may be risky
	— do not iron — steaming and steam treatments are not allowed

### 3.5 Dry-cleaning

The circle (see figure 4) symbolizes the dry-cleaning process for textile articles (excluding genuine leather and furs). It provides information relative to the different cleaning processes described in table 4.

Table 4

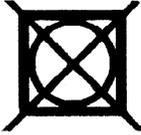
Symbol	Process
	— dry-cleaning in all solvents normally used for dry-cleaning — this includes all solvents listed for the symbol P, plus trichloroethylene and 1,1,1-trichloroethane
	— dry-cleaning in tetrachloroethylene, monofluorotrichloromethane and all solvents listed for the symbol F — normal cleansing procedures without restrictions
	— dry-cleaning in the solvents listed in the previous paragraph — strict limitations on the addition of water and/or mechanical action and/or temperature during cleaning and/or drying — no self-service cleaning allowed
	— dry-cleaning in trifluorotrichloroethane, white spirit (distillation temperature between 150 °C and 210 °C, flash point 38 °C to 60 °C) — normal cleansing procedures without restrictions
	— dry-cleaning in the solvents listed in the previous paragraph — strict limitations on the addition of water and/or mechanical action and/or temperature during cleaning and/or drying — no self-service cleaning allowed
	— do not dry-clean — no stain removal with solvents

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### 3.6 Tumble drying

The circle in a square symbolizes tumble drying after a washing process (see figure 5), maximum severity levels being indicated by one or two dots placed within the symbol, as shown in table 5.

Table 5

Symbol	Process
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— tumble drying possible</li> <li>— normal drying cycle</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— tumble drying possible</li> <li>— drying at lower temperature setting</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— do not tumble dry</li> </ul>

## 4 Application and use of symbols

### 4.1 Application of symbols

The symbols defined in clause 3 shall be placed either directly on the article or on a label which shall be affixed in a permanent manner. The symbols may be produced by weaving, printing or other processes, and they shall bear and retain in a readily

legible manner the stipulated care information throughout the useful life of the article.

Labels shall be made of suitable material with resistance to the care treatment indicated on the label at least equal to that of the article on which they are placed.

Label and symbols shall be large enough for the symbols to be easy to read.

It is very important that the labels and symbols are designed in such a way that they can easily be read by the consumer. They shall be permanently affixed to the textile material in such a way that they can be easily located and read by the consumer and that no part of the symbols is hidden, e.g. the bar in a stitched seam.

Care symbols may also be placed for example on a label attached in a non-permanent manner to the article or its wrapping, provided that identical symbols are also permanently affixed to the article, except in the case of textile material sold by length.

### 4.2 Use of symbols

For any given article, care information expressed by the symbols shall refer to all treatments in the order washing, chlorine-based bleaching, ironing, dry-cleaning and tumble drying.

The treatments represented by the symbols apply to the whole of the textile article.

NOTE 1 The symbols used in this Standard are the subject of international trademarks. Information on the right to use the trademarks is given in informative annex A.

## Annex A (informative)

### Use of textile care symbols covered by WIPO international trademarks

#### A.1 General

GINETEX (the International Association for Textile Care Labelling), headquartered in Paris, took over in 1975 from the "International Symposium on Textile Care Labelling" which had been established in 1963. GINETEX has set itself the task of developing a system of language-independent symbols.

These symbols are covered by international marks No. 211 246, No. 211 247 and No. 492 423, which are registered with WIPO<sup>1)</sup> in Geneva. GINETEX is the owner of the marks and, in the case of mark 492 423, is joint owner with the French textile care labelling committee (COFREET).

GINETEX has delegated to its national committees, i.e. its members, the task of promoting the implementation of textile care labelling symbols, of granting the right to reproduce and use the symbols, and of monitoring their use. The list of these national committees can be obtained from the ISO Central Secretariat.

The owners of the registered marks, while safeguarding their rights as such, agree that ISO take over the system and embody it in an International Standard.

#### A.2 Agreement between ISO and GINETEX

With a view to facilitating standards work on textile care labelling at international level, within the framework of the *IEC/ISO Directives, Part 1: Procedures for the technical work*, and in observance of the above-mentioned ownership right, ISO and GINETEX have agreed on the following principles:

**A.2.1** GINETEX's ownership rights related to the marks are preserved under the terms of this agreement, as well as the structure, rights and obligations of its national committees.

**A.2.2** In countries where there is a GINETEX national committee, the national standards body which is a member of ISO shall acknowledge this situation and shall establish by mutual agreement the rules governing the implementation in that country of the ISO standard on textile care labelling.

Such agreement shall provide that the GINETEX national committee, in its capacity as agent for the owner of the registered marks, be entrusted with its maintenance.

**A.2.3** In countries signatory to the Madrid Agreement where GINETEX has no national committee as yet, GINETEX may, by agreement with the national ISO member body:

- either admit the latter as a member under the terms provided by the GINETEX statutes and General Assembly, granting the ISO member body exclusive right to use the marks (for a nominal fee of FRF 100), provided it is representative of the parties concerned with textile care labelling and has established satisfactory rules governing the use of the marks;
- or initiate the setting up of a national committee meeting under the same conditions.

**A.2.4** In countries where there is no national committee and where GINETEX marks are not registered, the application of the ISO standard on textile care labelling shall be subject to no restrictions other than those imposed by the national ISO member body. However, attention of the national ISO member bodies is drawn to the need to ensure proper application of the textile care labelling symbols defined in the ISO standard. For the sake of liaison between GINETEX and ISO, GINETEX is prepared to welcome these ISO member organizations among its membership under the terms of A.2.3.

#### A.3 List of GINETEX members

The list and the addresses of the national care labelling organizations as well as the address of the Executive Secretariat can be obtained from the ISO Central Secretariat.

1) World Intellectual Property Organization.

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