

**COMPETENCY #5:** Understand how labels and hangtags can help you make clothing decisions.

**CONCEPTS:** Clothing labels carry information to help you make an informed choice when buying clothing.

**MOTIVATOR:** Ask students to find a label on any article of clothing they are wearing and write down all of the information from it.

As a class make a list either orally, listing on the board, writing on a transparency, or at each table, etc. of the information they can find. Discuss how much information is given, what type and how useful is the information given.

### LECTURE/DISCUSSION

Discuss the following VOCABULARY:

**LABELS** are a permanently attached tag that tells information about the generic fiber content of the garment and how to care for it.

**HANGTAGS** are detachable labels that carry information about the garment, and can be attached to the garment by a string, plastic tag, staple, or pin.

**MANDATORY INFORMATION** - information the federal government requires be provided to the consumer of clothing apparel.

**VOLUNTARY INFORMATION** - information the manufacturer gives you about the clothing item that they are not required to give you by law.

Labels carry information to help you make a more informed choice when you buy your clothing. It will help you in your decisions as you fill in your wardrobe.

The information given will help you make your choice by knowing in advance what care each item will require.

Clothing is very expensive and if not properly taken care of, it will not last long enough to get your money's worth out of it.

**Discussion example:** You are buying clothes for school. You have taken on the responsibility to do your own laundry all year. There are two skirts that you like, one is 50% polyester and 50% cotton. The label says "machine wash and dry, requires no ironing". The other shirt is 100% rayon, needs to be hand washed, air dried and ironed with a cool iron, or dry cleaned. Because the label gives you fiber content and care instructions, you can make an informed decision.

**Question:** Which shirt would you buy? Why?

## MANDATORY INFORMATION ON LABELS AND HANGTAGS

Due to federal legislation governing textile products, certain information **must** be provided to the consumer. The following is mandatory information:

1. **FIBER CONTENT** - the generic name of any manufactured fiber that makes up more than 5% of the total fabric weight of the garment must be listed on the label.
2. **PERCENT OF FIBER BY WEIGHT** - fabrics are listed by generic name in order of the percent of the fiber weight. The fiber with the largest percent is listed first, then second etc. Example: Cotton 50% Raime 30% Acrylic 20%  
If a fiber makes up less than 5% but does affect the characteristics of the fabric, it still must be listed. Example: Spandex 4% or "other fibers" 4%
3. **MANUFACTURER IDENTIFICATION** - labels must show the name of the manufacturer and or the manufacturers identification number.
4. **COUNTRY OF ORIGIN** - the country that the garment was manufactured in must be on the label.
5. **CARE INSTRUCTIONS** - Care instructions must appear on the garment label. This information must be printed on or woven into material that will withstand washing or dry cleaning for the life of the garment. There are a few exceptions: sheer garments where labels would show, suede, fur, leather, footwear and hats. If suede or leather is used as trim, the care label is required.

**The care information label is the only label that must be a permanent part of the garment.** Any other information may be on a detachable hang tag.

## VOLUNTARY INFORMATION

In addition to the mandatory information, you might find additional information on the labels or hangtags. This is voluntary and not required by the government. Some types of voluntary information would include:

1. TRADEMARK NAMES for generic fibers such as Fortrel Polyester.
2. BRAND NAMES these are usually found on the permanent care label. This may help you make a choice if you have purchased that brand with success in the past.
3. COMMON NAMES FOR FABRIC may be given such as oxford cloth, denim, gingham, etc.
4. GUARANTEES of quality or wearability or the item maybe included.