

## TEXTILE HISTORY TRIVIA

*The Return of Polyester (Adapted from Clothing: Concepts and Construction, Prentice Hall)*

When DuPont first introduced polyester to the apparel industry in 1953, it became an instant success. Polyester clothing looked crisp and colorful and was much easier to care for than 100 percent natural fabrics. Twenty years later, however, polyester fell out of favor with both clothing designers and consumers. Today, polyester is back in style, and new technologies have made the fibers and the fabrics better than ever.

Polyester's negative image developed during the early 1970s when the garment industry was quickly turning out inexpensive double knit pants and leisure suits. Double-knit fabric is made from a long, continuous polyester thread or filament. Hot in summer and cold in winter, the fabric snagged, pilled, and stained easily. Despite differences in color and styling, clothes made from this seemingly textureless material all looked the same. It is no wonder polyester developed a bad reputation.

Producers of man-made fibers some began working on new technologies to correct polyester's most serious problems. They made improvements in the short-spun polyester threads previously used in blends. Today, short spun fibers are turned into a variety of fabrics that weight less, pill less, absorb rich colors and move more easily with the wearer. These synthetics also look and feel more natural. Chemical fuzz, for example is added to polyester to make it seem more like nubby, imperfect cotton.

Polyester and other synthetics--when blended with natural fibers--offer simplify clothing care. They can be machine washed and dried and do not shrink or wrinkle easily.. Wool knits and woven garments hold their shape better when polyester is blended into the fabric and pleats stay crisp through repeated wearing and laundering.

In today's busy world, people want to wear clothes that are not only stylish and fashionable, but easy to care for as well. Many of the name designers are now including polyester and polyester blends in their collections. Perhaps this time, polyester is here to stay!

### WHAT DOES THE FUTURE OF TEXTILES HOLD??

Technology will continue to advance, perhaps to the point that clothes will not ever get dirty, wrinkled or wear out! One editor from Vogue magazine said "clothing will become simple and comfortable, more modern and more high tech. I already know what it will be! A friend of mine, a very incredible guy, has developed a system for --I'm not kidding- MOLDING clothes. Dresses by injection!."

"It's utterly modern, You won't sew anything, there will be no seams whatsoever. It will be a 3 dimensional garment. Molded to you around you, and could possibly improve what their is of you!"