

Cotton fabric – Different names and different types

You go to buy cotton and come away dazed at the different types of cotton before you. It has happened to me. There are a hundred types of cotton.

Aertex

A loosely woven cotton fabric, which is very lightweight, that is used to make shirts and underwear. It is a trademarked name

Baft

Cheap coarse cotton fabric .

Bark Cloth

Slightly textured, Rugged looking 100% cotton fabric (So named because of its resemblance to the original bark cloth made from the bark of trees), used for unlined jackets and skirts.

Basket weave

This cotton fabric has a checkerboard pattern in its weave. Usually used to make mens shirts

Broderie Anglaise

This is a cotton fabric with beautiful eyelets all over.

Brushed cotton

Cotton fabric which is brushed on the surface to remove extra lint and fibres, making it extra soft and smooth. Flannel is a brushed cotton fabric

Chambray

A lightweight cotton fabric woven with two coloured yarns

Cotton backed Satin

A very high lustre satin with a rayon face and a cotton back.

Cotton voile

Lightweight and somewhat sheer fabric, it is perfect for draping.

Cotton Lawn

Cotton Lawn is similar to cotton voile, but crisper.

Crinoline

A fabric used as stiffening for dresses. It was popular in the bygone days as the stiff fabric made of cotton or linen make the underskirt for gowns

Damask

A rich, glossy reversible fabric of silk, wool, linen, cotton, or synthetic fibres usually woven with a variety of elaborate patterns that are flat. It is used for table covers, napkins, curtains, upholstery cloth, etc. They can be reversible or one-sided only. Designs floral or geometrical.

Cotton Batiste

A fine lightweight semi sheer cloth used in heirloom sewing

Bengaline cotton

A woven fabric with criss cross ribs resembling cross grain

Batiste

A very thin and soft lightweight cotton fabric. Used to make summer clothes and handkerchiefs

Bedford cotton

A strong ribbed fabric that looks like corduroy. Usually used for bed sheets

Bipolished cotton

A type of cotton treated by an enzyme that removes the roughness on the surface

Broadcloth

A clothing fabric that is tightly woven in a plain weave with a crosswise rib. Similar to poplin, but finer. Earlier broadcloth used to be made of wool but nowadays it is made of cotton or cotton/polyester blends.

Calico

A plain weave cloth coarser than muslin made from unbleached and not fully processed cotton.

Cambric

A very fine fabric, without any weaving faults. It is made of cotton

Canvas

An extremely durable fabric made of cotton or linen. Canvas comes in two types – plain and duck.

Challis

A lightweight, woven fabric made of wool, cotton, or rayon, either in a single colour or in small prints. Its slightly brushed surface creates a silky finish that can easily be dyed and is usually machine washable.

Chambray / Chambric

A fine, lightweight cloth (usually cotton) in a plain weave with colour, lengthwise threads and a white fill.

Charmeuse

A soft, lightweight fabric woven with a satin weave. It is a silk, cotton, or manmade fabric with a smooth, semi-lustrous satin finish and a dull matte backing. It is a very drapable material and shiny silk and soft, so very popular to make dresses

Chenille

Fabric made with an incredibly soft, fuzzy cotton yarn with protruding pile; it is popularly used in upholstery or for making pillows, blankets

Cheese cloth

This is very loosely woven gauze like fabric which is used in preparation of cheese and for covering food

Chino

A durable cotton fabric made of twill, which has sheen. It was originally used in England for military uniforms. Washes and wears extremely well with a minimum of care

Chintz

A usually glazed printed cotton fabric with bright figures, large flower designs, birds and other designs. It also comes in plain colours. It is named after the Indian word "Chint" meaning "broad, gaudily printed fabric". Used widely in upholstery fabric.

Combed cotton

Refers to cotton with the highest thread count with highest quality. When cotton is "combed," the shortest, additional fibres of a batch are removed. This process produces high-quality yarns with excellent strength and softness. Combed cotton is finer, softer, stronger and more compact.

Corduroy

A medium- to heavyweight thick and ribbed fabric (usually cotton), often used for clothing. A distinct pattern of vertical ribs, tufted "cords" is formed by twisted fibres that lie parallel to one another with channels in between the cords. A durable cloth, it is used to make jackets, trousers etc.

Cottagora

An extremely soft and environmentally sound material made from a combination of Angora rabbit hair and organic cotton.

Crepe

A puckered looking cotton fabric; it is very popular for making gowns

Damask

A beautiful patterned cotton fabric made on a jacquard loom.

Denim / dungaree / jeans fabric

A sturdy warp faced heavy-weighted rugged coarse durable twill-weave cotton fabric; it is usually of colour blue and is used to make work clothes and prominently used to make jeans and casual wear. It does not stretch or drape well.

Double cloth

This a reversible cloth which is made by binding two different fabrics with yarn

Diaper cloth

A fabric (usually cotton or linen) with a twill dobby or plain weave; very absorbent

Dimity

A strong cotton fabric with a raised pattern; used for bedcovers and curtains; sheer, thin, white or printed fabric with lengthwise cords, stripes or checks.

Drill

Cotton twill fabric used in men's and women's slacks. When dyed a khaki colour, drill is also called "khaki".

Duck cloth

A plain woven cotton fabric medium-weight cloth (usually cotton) that is soft, breathable and durable. Tightly woven and retains colour beautifully. It is commonly called canvas. It is a sturdy utility cloth used in home décor projects.

Egyptian cotton

Egyptian cotton is finely woven, high-quality cotton from Egypt. This high grade of cotton boasts the longest and strongest fibres. It is known for its softness.

English net

Fabric made of threads knotted to form a mesh. English Net is usually heavier than nylon net. Usually made from cotton or polyester, it is much softer and used as a base on which to appliqué motifs.

Flannel

A soft medium weight cotton fabric with a napped finish. The nap may be present on one side or both sides. It is popular in making baby clothes and blankets

Fleece

Fleece may sometimes be made of cotton

Flannel cotton

This is a plain or twill weave fabric which has a nap on one or both sides.

Flannelette

A soft cotton fabric imitating flannel. It has a nap on one side.

French terry

This is a looped cotton fabric which is very absorbent. The wrong side of this fabric will be flat and is popular in making sportswear

Fustian

A term given to the class of cotton fabrics which includes corduroys, moleskins, constitution cords, cords, heavy Bedford cords, etc., used for clothing purposes. Fabric with a slight nap

Gauze

A sheer lightweight cotton fabric with a very loose weave. Usually found as a bandage dressing but also used to make clothes

Gabardine

A firm, tough tightly woven fabric with a subtle, diagonal line of twill and sometimes a high sheen. Used to make suits, overcoats, trousers, uniforms, windbreakers, and other garments; traditionally worsted wool, but may also be cotton, texturised polyester, or a blend

Gingham

A middle-weight, plain woven cotton fabric typically striped or checked in white and a bold colour or plaid using two or more colours with a plain weave made of cotton or cotton blend yarn. It derives from Malay word gingang which means striped. The pattern of coloured squares in a gingham cloth is very attractive

Irish poplin

Fine linen or cotton shirting also made in Ireland. It was originally a fabric constructed with silk warp and wool filling in plain weave with fine rib

Jaconet

A fine, sheer plain-weave cotton fabric

Jersey (Cotton)

A knit fabric that is made of cotton fibres. Soft and breathable, with extra “give “or stretch for comfort. It is a light to medium weight fabric which is very popular in making dresses, and tops

Khaki

Fabric made of cotton (can be of linen, wool, worsted, or manmade fibres and blends also); the name means earth colour and is derived from Indian word; this fabric is a Tan or dusty colour warp face twill.

Lawn

A finely-woven, semi-crisp fabric woven in cotton (or linen). It is very lightweight breathable and has a smooth texture. It is primarily used in heirloom dresses, blouses, collars, and cuffs. Also makes great underlining.

Lint

Cotton or linen fabric with the nap raised on one side; used to dress wounds

Linen cotton mix

The blend of linen and cotton fibres to make a fabric which has all the look and feel of linen with less of its propensity to wrinkle.

Lisle

A fabric woven with lisle thread (a type of cotton).

Liquid cotton

A luxurious cotton jersey designed with an ultra-smooth and slinky finish.

Madras cotton

Lightweight, breathable cotton with a typical patterned texture, often in brightly coloured plaid patterns, used primarily for warm-weather clothing.

Moire

A corded fabric (usually silk, but may be cotton, wool or rayon) having a wavy, watermarked pattern on the surface

Moleskin

A heavy cotton fustian cloth with a great number of picks raised before dyeing, resulting in a brushed surface. Feels almost like felt. Used for workmen's clothing where very hard wear is required. It is used to make sportswear.

Mull

A plain soft fine sheer fabric of cotton, silk, or rayon. The cloth is bleached and soft finished.

Muslin

A medium-weight, woven fabric of cotton or cotton/polyester blends of plain weave. Used in a wide variety of sheers and sheeting. It is bleached and undyed. It is very economical and comes in a good range of weights and fineness.

Nankeen

A kind of pale yellowish cotton cloth

Organdie

A fine thin, light, and transparent cotton fabric with a stiff, crisp finish. It is the sheerest finest cotton cloth

Organic cotton

Cotton grown on fields where the soil is free of all artificial pesticides or insecticides.

Oxford cloth

A soft, thick and durable, cotton or synthetic blend with a plain or basket weave that boasts a silk like, lustrous finish. It is usually used to make shirts; It is characterized with narrow stripes and can be woven in plain or basket weave.

Percalé

A closely woven plain-weave fabric that's smooth, firm, medium weight and fine. Usually made of cotton from a minimum of 180 threads per square inch

Pima cotton

One of the best grades of cotton in the world with long, luxurious fibres. This luxurious high-quality long-staple cotton resists pilling.

Pinpoint

A type of weave with two-over, one-under stitching. More durable than most weaves but less soft than sateen. This soft and lustrous oxford cotton has an ultra-fine basket weave.

Pointelle

A lightweight, cotton knit fabric with openwork patterns in it. The geometric openwork patterns makes it a favourite for making kids wear

Polished cotton

Either satin weave cotton or plain weave cotton that is finished chemically to appear shiny.

Polycotton

A blend of polyester and cotton. The blending of fabric fibres makes this fabric wrinkle resistant and colourfast. This fabric is used to make a variety of garments including no crease shirts.

Poplin

A tightly woven plain-weave fabric (usually a light weight cotton) characterized by a corded surface. (fine horizontal ribs) A durable fabric, poplin is usually made of cotton but can also be silk, wool or synthetic blends. It does not wrinkle much and is popular for making shirts, dresses. Check out the post "[what is poplin ?](#)" for more details on this fabric

Quilting cotton

This refers to medium weight 100% cotton. It is also known as craft cotton. Mostly they are printed. They can be used to sew dresses, tops and skirts other than quilts.

Ringspun fabric

A soft durable fibre (usually cotton) spun prior to knitting, so it's finer, softer and more durable than ordinary cotton. The twisting prior to weaving makes the short hairs of cotton stand out, resulting in a stronger yarn with a significantly softer hand.

Seersucker

A woven, light- to medium-weight fabric with a puckered appearance made of cotton or rayon. It is commonly striped or chequered

Shirting cotton

Lightweight crisp cotton fabric with woven in stripes or checks. This is mostly used to make men's shirts

Silk cotton blend

This blend minimizes many faults of cotton. This is used to make blouses and dresses.

Silesie

A sturdy twill-weave smooth finished cotton fabric; used for pockets and linings

Supima

An abbreviation for “superior pima.” Made of 100% American pima cotton or extra-long staple cotton.

Terrycloth

An absorbent knit fabric usually in cotton that has a plush pile of loops on one side. This fabric is used to make towels, bathing robes etc.

Ticking

This is a very heavy cotton fabric used in covering bedding; Usually used in making upholstery and other home decor

Towelling

Various fabrics (linen or cotton) used to make towels.

Velour

A medium-weight, plush knit fabric, usually made of cotton, with qualities similar to velvet. It’s soft and plush with a close, dense pile having sheen. It is used in clothing (sportswear, eveningwear) and upholstery.

Velveteen

A woven, cotton fabric with a velvet-like pile.

Velveteen plush

Cotton velveteen, but the weft has longer floats, which when cut give a longer pile. The pile is also firmly bound

Voile

A soft, fine, sheer fabric with a slightly crisp feel. Usually made from plain woven cotton, but can also be made from acetate, silk or rayon. It is lightweight see through and has a good drape. It is used to make summer clothes and curtains

Whipcord

This is a rugged cotton fabric with a diagonally ribbed surface. This medium to heavy weight fabric is used to make coats, suits and sportswear