



252 State Street
Los Altos, CA 94022
Phone: (650) 948-8611
(800) 722-7455
FAX: (650) 948-3426
Email: silks@thaisilks.com
Web Address: www.thaisilks.com

The following newspaper article has some suggestions concerning ready-made silk clothing.

YOU CAN WASH SILKS AT HOME

Labels reading “dry clean only” are a put-off to many consumers who view them as surcharges on their original investment. A silk blouse that is going to cost you \$25 in cleaning fees over the next year is no longer a \$100 blouse, but a \$125 blouse.

And since silk, cotton and other natural fibers have been around a lot longer than the dry cleaner, why the label?

Self-protection. Care instructions are required by law, and it is much easier for stores and manufacturers to advise dry cleaning than it is to rely on the customer to take the time and patience required to clean and maintain fine fabrics.

Yet, the care and feeding of fine fabrics is no more difficult, or time consuming, than regular hair care, according to a spokesman for a silk company.

Silk is a protein fiber, like hair, he says. You should not do anything to silk you would not do to your hair. You should not use hot water, use lukewarm or cool water. You should use only the purest of soaps with no detergents. Dry it with sense. You would not take your hair and mangle it up, dry it gently and air-dry it.

Two keys to determining if a garment will wash well at home are color and construction. Brightly colored, brilliantly colored, dark colors and patterned silks are better left to the dry cleaner, “It is almost impossible to have color-fast colors in silk”, he says. “With a brilliant fuchsia blouse you will lose the color less quickly with dry cleaning.”

Garments with complicated construction, lining and trim are also candidates for the dry cleaners. Fortunately, with the natural look as popular as natural material, most silk blouses and dresses are simply constructed these days.

If your garment passes these two tests, what is the next step?

Try dry cleaning the garment the first two times. The steaming part of the process may help set the dye and if there is any shrinkage left, it will shrink at the dry cleaner.

The procedure for hand washing at home is really simple:

1. Fill the sink with lukewarm water, (70-90 degrees is fine). Use a natural soap in a liquid form such as a gentle shampoo, Ivory Liquid, or a Castile soap.
2. Place the unfolded garment in the water and let it soak for a few minutes. Then gently agitate it by plunging the garment up and down.
3. Drain the water out and rinse the garment several times, again with lukewarm or cool water. If you are unsure about any soap residue, smell the garment, it should not smell soapy or scented.

4. After careful rinsing, remove the garment and hang to dry on a plastic hanger or a wooden hanger padded with wash clothes. Do not wring the water out. Over the bathtub is the ideal place to hang the garment since it will drip.
5. Silks dry very quickly so it is recommended to check back in an hour or so and gently separate the sides of the garment so it will dry smoothly and need less pressing.

For pressing there are two routes. The first is to press the garment while still damp, on the wrong side with a dry iron set at about 250 degrees.

The second route is to use a steam iron. Here the temperature adjustment is crucial since if it is too high it will scorch the silk and if it is too low it may drip water and spot the silk. If you do get a water drop, it is not permanent. Just immerse in water, dry and press again.

A quick test for color-fastness is to take a part of the garment that will not show, such as the facing, and dampen it with a washcloth. Then place two white paper towels on either side of the fabric and bear down as hard as possible. If any color shows up on the towels, you will know that the silk is not colorfast.

The biggest enemy of silks is the stain caused by perspiration, especially combined with deodorant. To lessen the damage from perspiration you can use a natural form of deodorant such as baking soda, talcum powder or even cologne. If all else fails, you can make dress shields out of lightweight material. It's not the perspiration that is so bad, you need to try to keep the sticky deodorant off the fabric.

(Above ideas taken from local newspaper)

The following are our suggestions:

SEWING WITH SILKS - HELPFUL HINTS ON THE CARE OF SILK FABRIC.

Characteristics – It is only natural for silks to have some irregularities, this is the nature of 100% silk fabric - surface variations in silk are to be expected and are desirable. Silk, after all, is a natural fiber, and variations in the weave of silk fabrics are characteristic of the fabric and are in no way to be considered defective. We concur with the hand washing recommendations, but suggest the following for dry cleaning.

Dry Cleaning – We recommend bulk dry cleaning at a laundromat, when this facility is available in your city. (We have heard from a few of our customers that they cannot find a bulk dry cleaner.) This method is one in which you can dry clean up to 5 pounds of garments for an inexpensive fee. Your garments will come out beautiful and require very little touch-up pressing (with a steam iron set on “low wool” and on the wrong side, using a press cloth as may be needed). There is no need to use the expensive silk garment method if you have a dependable bulk facility. You may preshrink your silk fabric by the bulk dry cleaning method before cutting and sewing - include the linings, interfacing, etc.

**SILKS TREATED PROPERLY WILL REPAY YOU TIME AND AGAIN WITH THEIR
HARDWEARING AND LONGLASTING BEAUTY AND LUXURY**