

RMRS

Real Men Real Style

[Click here to download Audio version \(226MB\)](#)

RMRS Style Dictionary

Welcome to the most comprehensive listing of men's style terms available anywhere online.

We created this to help you improve your knowledge of style as you improve your own style.

Save this PDF so you're never again confused by a Cavalry Twill or left wondering what a Wingtip is. And yes – we've even included pronunciations!

A B C D E F G H I J K
L M N O P Q R S T U V
W X Y Z

A

Accordion Pleats

A-COR-di-on pleetz

A series of narrow accordion-like folds in fabric. Usually found in the front of tuxedo shirts. They allow the shirt to fit closely and keep its shape when moving.

Acne

ACK-nee

A chronic skin disease characterized by pimples on the trunk, neck and/or face. Acne is caused by inflamed sebaceous glands (the glands that produce the oil on our skin)

Adjustable razor

a-JUST-a-ble RAY-zor

A safety razor with a handle that can be screwed or unscrewed to adjust the height of the cutting head and modify the blade zone which will be in contact with your face.

Aftershave

AH-fter-shayve

A fragranced liquid that is splashed onto the skin after shaving. It may contain alcohol, essential oils and conditioners in order to soothe and fragrance the skin.

Aftershave balm

AH-fter-shayve bahm

A gentler and more moisturizing alternative to aftershave for dry or sensitive skin. A very good call in the winter.

Alpaca

al-PAHC-a or al-PACK-a

A relative of the camel and llama, found in South America. It produces fine, soft and lustrous wool in white, black, and a variety of grays and browns.

Alum stone

AL-um stone

A stone with antiseptic properties, used to treat shaving cuts and abrasions. The stone is wetted with cold water and rubbed on the skin to stop bleeding and kill bacteria.

Analog

AN-a-log

An analog watch shows the time using hands and a dial. The 'opposite' of a digital watch.

Analogous colors

an-A-lo-gus CO-lors

Colors that are next to each other on the color wheel (like blue and green, or orange and yellow.) Analogous colors go well together.

Anorak

AN-o-rak

A waterproof, hooded, pull-over jacket without a front opening, and sometimes drawstrings at the waist and cuffs, Invented by the Caribou Inuit. Not the same as a parka, although you'll hear the words used interchangeably.

Applicator brush (shoe polish brush)

AP-li-ca-tor brush

A brush for applying shoe polish. The applicator brush is the small brush that looks a little like a toothbrush – the large brush that looks like a clothes brush is for buffing the shoes to a shine after the polish has been applied.

Aran

AR-an

Style of densely patterned, vertically paneled, ornately cabled sweaters made of heavy undyed wool yarn. Originated from the Aran Islands of Ireland. Sometimes called a fisherman's sweater, the Aran sweater provides warmth and water resistance for the wearer. Traditional Aran sweaters were knitted using lanolin oil wool (wool that has not been washed) by the wives of the Irish fisherman. The sweater has decorative and symbolic stitch patterns on the front; the most common being two

cable-like patterns running down each breast. Each cable pattern has its own special meaning.

Arch

arch

The bottom curve of a shoe from the heel to the ball of the foot. Good quality shoes have arch support that makes them more comfortable to walk in.

Argyle

AR-gile

A multicolored diamond pattern in knitwear. Derived from tartan from a place called Argyll in Scotland. Became popular with English gentlemen and then became part of preppy/Ivy League style after the First World War.

Armscye

ARM-sigh

The 'arm's eye' – the lower side of the armhole in a jacket or coat. Can be close-fitting (a high armhole) or loose (a low armhole).

Ascot

ASS-cot

The ascot tie is a formal-looking tie that has a narrow neckband and a wide body that is folded over and usually pinned with a tie tack. Most often the ascot is worn with a morning coat and is traditionally made from silk in a gray or black color.

Athleisure

ath-LEI-sure

A fashion trend for casual clothes designed for both athletic and leisure wear.

Attaché Case

a-TASH-ay case

A small, thin box-style case made of leather (occasionally aluminium), scrunched over a hinged frame that opens into two compartments. Used especially for carrying papers and documents. Sometimes called a diplomat case. It was traditionally carried by an attaché, a diplomatic officer attached to an embassy or consulate.

Automatic winding

AW-to-ma-tic WINE-ding

Watch winding that's powered by the wearer's movements (as opposed to manual winding.) An automatic watch that isn't worn for a couple of days will stop and need to be wound again.

Aviators

AY-vi-a-tors

A style of sunglasses with large, often reflective lenses (two or three times the area of the eyeball) and very thin metal frames with a double or triple bridge (so-called ?bullet hole?) and bayonet earpieces or flexible cable temples that hook behind the ears. Aviators were originally worn by pilots, can be dressed up or down, and suit every face shape.

Awning stripes

AW-ning stripes

Equal-sized vertical stripes of white and a color, wider than 1/4 inch. So called because they look like the material used for awnings. These stripes are BIG and bold – best saved for casual looks.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

B

Back (of a razor)

back

The back of the blade, opposite to the sharp side.

Back pleats

BACK pleetz

Two trouser pleats located between the front pleats and the side seams (NOT on your backside) – OR pleats on the back of a dress shirt under the yoke, to give more freedom of movement.

Back vent

BACK vent

A single slit at the back of a jacket to allow freedom of movement.

Originally used for riding. Alternative to side vents. Flattering for larger butts, but looks a little more awkward than side vents when putting your hands in your pockets or when sitting.

Backless waistcoat

BACK-less WAIST-coat

A formal vest without a back, fastened with bands at the waist.

Backstitch

BACK-stitch

A type of stitching in which the tailor goes 'back' over each stitch to create a perfect line of seam.

Badger

BADGE-er

Until recently, the best type of hair for shaving brushes. There are several types: Pure badger brushes made with underbelly hairs, Best badger brushes made with finer hairs, and Silvertip badger brushes made with the rarest and most expensive hair with a natural white tip. You can now get high-quality synthetic brushes that perform just as well and are easier to clean, more durable, and gentler on your skin.

Balance

BAL-ance

A term for the way a garment hangs (see 'balanced jacket').

Balance wheel

BAL-ance wheel

Part of a mechanical watch that swings to divide time into equal parts.

Balanced jacket

BAL-anced JACK-et

In bespoke or made-to-measure tailoring, a balanced jacket is one where the front and back lengths are slightly adjusted to compensate for the client's figure and posture.

Balanced stripe

BAL-anced STRIPE

Alternating stripes of equal width, usually on a shirt. Bengal stripes and awning stripes are examples.

Bald

bawld

Lacking hair (either through losing it or shaving it.)

Ball (of foot)

bawl

The part of the shoe just behind the toes.

Ball powder

BAWL POW-der

Powder used to dry sweat and reduce odor in the crotch and butt area.

Balm

bahm

Like a lotion, but thinner. Applied to the face to soothe razor burn, moisturize skin and nourish hair for healthy beard growth.

Balmoral

bal-MOR-al

A captoe Oxford (one with an additional piece of leather stitched over the toe) with no seams apart from the toe cap seam. The classic business shoe. Named after Balmoral Castle in Scotland, a favorite retreat of the British royal family.

Band Collar

BAND COL-ar

A standing band-shaped collar that encircles the neck without a full turndown or a collar “cape”. It can be any height or “stand”, but is usually under 2” at the front, so as not to push up into the chin.

Bar tack

BAR tack

A stitch in heavy yarn to reinforce the stitching that joins a tie together at the blade end. Sign of a quality tie.

Barathea

bar-a-THEE-a

Fine-textured worsted cloth with a pebblelike surface, mostly made in wool for evening clothes and in silk for neckwear.

Barber

BAR-ber

A gentlemen’s hairdresser; also provides shaves and facial hair styling.

Barbicide

BAR-bi-sighed

A clear blue solution used by barbers to disinfect their tools. Does not kill barbers.

Barbour coat

BAR-ber coat

A casual coat made by the Barbour Company of England, usually in dark

olive green waxed cotton which gives waterproof properties, with a stand-up brown corduroy collar, several large flapped patch pockets, and adjustable cuffs. Barbour coats were originally intended for hunters and to be worn in the field, although today the coats can be seen in cosmopolitan settings.

Barleycorn

BAR-lee-corn

A miniature all-over design of faint triangles, used for tweed and other woolen fabrics. Made with contrasting warp and weft threads.

Barrel cuff

BA-rel cuff

A single cuff attached to a shirtsleeve and fastened with a button and a buttonhole. The opposite of double (French) cuffs.

Basket weave

BAH-skit weev

A fabric woven with two or more threads at once to produce a basket effect, mostly used in shirts and sports jackets. Oxford cloth is a type of basket weave.

Baste

bayst

To sew together loosely or temporarily (often done by tailors so you can try a garment on before it's finished)

Bathroom bag

BATH-room bagg

Bathroom bag – (bathroom kit, sponge bag, toilet bag, toilet kit, toiletry bag, toiletry kit, travel kit, wash bag, washbag, wet pack) is a small piece of luggage (bag/case/kit) which used to hold body hygiene/toiletry products for a trip lasting one night or more. A body hygiene kit specifically for men may be called a dopp kit.

Batiste

ba-TEEST

A very thin, light, and soft fabric, with a plain weave, used for summer shirts.

Batwing

BAT-wing

A style of bow tie whose straight square ends resemble a bat's wing before tying. Also known as the club bow. Narrower than the standard butterfly bow and tied with a larger knot.

BCBG (bon chic bon genre)

bee-see-bee-gee (or if you're French, bay-say-bay-zhay)

French for stylish and classy (literally 'good style good breeding').

Beaded stripe

BEE-did stripe

A stripe used in suits that looks like a solid chalk stripe from a distance, but is actually a line of dots.

Beard

BE-erd

Strictly speaking, your beard is the hair on your jaw, and your moustache is the hair on your upper lip, but 'beard' is often used to describe the whole lot.

Beard grooming kit

BE-erd GROO-ming kit

A kit that usually contains beard oil, beard balm, moustache wax, a beard comb, a beard brush and beard wash.

Beard oil

BE-erd oil

Beard oils are usually made with natural plant oils that are beneficial for the health and growth of facial hair. They condition your beard and mustache and help to give them a neat look.

Bedford cord

BED-ford cord

A sturdy ribbed fabric similar to pique – comes in wool, cotton, or blends.

Beetle back

BEE-tle back

A type of waistcoat (vest) back that's longer than the front of the waistcoat and has rounded corners.

Benchmade

BENCH-maid

(Of a shoe) NOT the same as 'handmade'. A benchmade shoe is machine-made but hand-lasted and with hand-welted soles.

Bengal stripe

BEN-gall stripe

Alternating stripes of equal width, usually white and a color, often found in shirts.

Beret

be-RAY or BE-ray

A soft round hat with a flat crown and no brim, often in felt or wool. First mass-produced in 19th-century France and Spain and still associated with those countries. Part of many military uniforms.

Bermuda Shorts

ber-MU-da shortz

Smart casual shorts that reach to about 1" above the knee, often allowed as business casual wear in hot climates.

Besom pockets

BEZ-om POCK-itz

Pockets with a narrow welted edge above the opening. Double besom pockets have welts on both the top and bottom edges.

Bespoke

bis-POKE

Custom-made to order to fit a specific person (unlike 'made to measure' clothes, which are constructed out of ready-made parts). Bespoke tailoring has more client involvement because the client has control of which fabrics are used, any additional features and the fit of his garment. It is not uncommon to have multiple fittings and readjustments to the garment during the bespoke process. Bespoke tailoring assures highest quality construction and customization. Usually bespoke garments are more expensive due to the hours of careful labor involved.

Bezel

BEZ-el

The ring around a watch face that holds the glass or crystal in place. Usually made of metal.

Bird's-eye

BIRDZ-eye

All-over small geometric dot pattern on fabric, found in stylish bespoke suits.

Black Tie

black TIE

Evening dress code that includes a dinner suit (also known as a tuxedo – a suit with satin facings on the jacket lapels and the outer seams of the trousers), a stiff or pleated white shirt, a waistcoat or cummerbund, black dress shoes, and a bow tie.

Black Watch

black watch

A dark tartan that combines navy and green, popular because it's fairly understated and goes with most colors. The uniform of the Scottish Black Watch regiment.

Blackhead

BLACK-head

Pimple caused when a pore on your skin is blocked by sebum (grease). Washing your face daily with cleanser helps to prevent them.

Blake stitch

BLAYK-stitch

A method of dress shoe construction in which the upper is stitched directly to the sole and insole. Creates a sleeker but less durable shoe than Goodyear welting. Italian shoes tend to be Blake stitched.

Blazer

BLAY-zer

A type of jacket that is usually cut from solid, dark fabrics. A blazer resembles a suit jacket but can be tailored to have less formal features such as patch pockets. The quintessential blazer is a single-breasted navy blue blazer with brass buttons. The blazer jacket has a long history and is closely associated with boating and rowing. Today blazer jackets can be worn with a dress shirt and tie for a formal look or can be worn with a dress shirt with an unbuttoned collar for a casual look. Blazer jackets are classic menswear and should be found in a gentleman's wardrobe.

Blemish

BLEM-ish

An unsightly mark on the skin.

Blind buttonholes

blind BUTT-on-holez

Buttons that are just there for decoration and don't actually button. Also known as 'non-working buttons'. Often found on the cuffs of off-the-rack jackets, and on parts of jacket fronts or coat fronts that aren't meant to be buttoned.

Blind Stitch

BLIND stitch

A concealed stitch (so called because you can't see it from the outside of the garment.)

Blouson

BLOU-zon

Another term for a bomber jacket.

Blucher

BLOO-ker, BLEU-kher

A lace-up dress shoe with a low front over the inset and an open lacing system, similar to a Derby.

Boar bristle brush

BORE BRIS-le BRUSH

A type of hairbrush which is particularly good at reducing frizz and distributing natural oils evenly through the hair. Natural wood bristles also work well.

Boat neck

BOTE nek

A horizontal opening at the top of a knitted pullover (as opposed to a v or crew neck). Exposes more of the neck/chest than a crew neck.

Boat Shoes

BOTE shooz

Sometimes called docksides, dock shoes, topsiders and erroneously called loafers, boat shoes are made from leather or canvas with rubber

soles. Traditionally used by sailors because of the gripping ability and waterproof design. A pattern is cut into the soles to provide grip on a wet deck. Boat shoes are traditionally worn without socks (you can wear no-show socks). Boat shoes are casual pieces of footwear, look great with khaki trousers or khaki shorts and are best worn in late spring and the summer.

Bolivian Grecas Sweater

BOLL-iv-ee-an gress-ass swett-er

Indigenous people in South America have raised alpaca for its fleece for thousands of years before Europeans learned about the animal and exported alpaca fiber to Spain in the 16th and 17th centuries. Today this domesticated animal is bred throughout the world, but its native habitat is the Andean altiplano: Ecuador, southern Peru, northern Bolivia, and northern Chile. Descended from the wild vicuña, alpaca resemble a cross between a llama and a sheep. Its fleece is similar to sheep's wool, but is usually softer, less prickly, and has minimal lanolin content, making it virtually hypoallergenic. Its extreme warmth, relatively light weight, and natural resistance to water make alpaca wool an ideal fabric for the frigid winters of the Andean altiplano. These qualities have also led to a rise in the use of alpaca fiber in outdoor gear and active wear, although it is also easily spun into a fine enough yarn for use in suits and other dress wear. Most alpaca products can be treated as you would an object made of sheep's wool—hand wash using a mild soap and lukewarm water, or dry clean—but check the tag or manufacturer's instructions for specific instructions.

Bolivian Tiwanaku Sweater

BOLL-iv-ee-an tee-wan-aku swett-er

For 500 years, the Pre-Inca Tiwanaku civilization flourished in the Bolivian highlands. Some of the artifacts that have been uncovered at the capital near Lake Titicaca are ceramics, stone carvings, and remarkably well-preserved textiles. The soft alpaca sweater is inspired by the striped, geometric patterns found in textiles and carvings throughout this ancient

site.

Bolo tie

BOH-loh TIE

A cowboy-style tie made of braided or leather cords with metal tips and a slide fastening.

Bomber jacket

BOM-uh JAK-it

A type of heavy, insulated, waist-length jacket usually made from leather or sheepskin with a high fur or sheepskin collar and elastic cuffs and waist. Bomber jackets (also called “flight jackets”) were made for pilots during WWII to provide warmth during high altitude flights. After the war, the jackets quickly caught on as fashionable in the civilian world. Today they are casual jackets meant to be worn with jeans or khakis.

Bonded leather

BON-did LETH-er

A low-grade type of leather that has been constructed using scrap and leftover pieces of leather. Bonded leather is made from a gluing process and as a result has low durability, but is inexpensive. Belts are the most common clothing application for bonded leather.

Boot Cut

BOOT kut

(Of jeans or pants) With a slightly flared lower leg to fit over boots. Good for balancing wide hips. The difference between boot-cut jeans and bell-bottoms is that boot-cut jeans are looser fitting from crotch to hem whereas bell-bottoms are tight-fitting to the knee only.

Bottle green

BOT-le green

A dark green, like green glass.

Boutonniere

BOO-ton-EAR or boo-ton-e-AIR

A fresh-cut flower or simple floral arrangement worn on the lapel of a jacket or overcoat (called 'boutonniere' because it goes in the lapel buttonhole if you have one.) Today, wearing a boutonniere is usually reserved for formal events such as a wedding, proms and funerals where formal wear is required. The most popular flower used for a boutonniere is the carnation followed by the rose.

Boutonniere loop

BOO-ton-EAR or boo-ton-e-AIR loop

A specially stitched loop on the reverse side of the left lapel of a suit jacket. The purpose of the boutonniere loop is to hold the stem of the boutonniere behind the lapel. The loop is generally not found on off-the-rack or made-to-measure jackets, but can be added by any competent tailor. Having a boutonniere loop is a subtle sign of style and shows people that the wearer thinks about the smallest aspects of his clothing and his image.

Bow tie

BO-tie

A formal necktie that is tied into the shape of a bow, hence its name. An early form of the bow tie (also sometimes "bowtie") stems from the cravat of the 17th Century. A single ribbon of material is tied around the collar to produce symmetrical, wing-like loops on either side of the knot. A bow tie is commonly reserved for formalwear although it can be worn as an attention-getting substitute to the regular necktie. Wider dress shirt collars should be worn with the bow tie.

Typically associated with intellectuals and older men but is recently making a comeback with younger men.

Bowler

BO-ler

See Derby.

Box pleat

BOX pleet

A pleat with folded edges facing in opposite directions, used on pockets of shirts and jackets, or on the back yoke of a shirt for fullness and ease of movement.

Boxer briefs

BOX-er breefz

A hybrid type of men's underwear which are long in the leg like boxer shorts, but tighter-fitting like briefs.

Boxer shorts

BOX-er shortz

Men's loose underpants similar in shape to the shorts worn by boxers.

Braces

BRAY-siz

British term for suspenders.

Break

BRAKE

The amount of creasing in a trouser bottom where it hits the shoe. 'No break' means the pants just touch the shoe and is good for short men and those who want to look very sharp. A 'medium break' is a slight crease and the standard safe option. A 'full break' is a pronounced crease that goes all the way around the leg and looks best on very tall men and loose casual pants.

Briefcase

BREEF-case

A flat, rectangular case, typically made of leather, for carrying books and papers. Classic business accessory.

Briefs

breefz

Close-fitting legless underpants that go up to the waist.

Bristle

BRIS-le

Bristles can refer to the hairs in a man's stubble or to the hairs of an animal used to make grooming tools.

Broadcloth

BROAD-cloth

Shirting fabric in a plain weave that is not a balanced weave, so that it has a very slight horizontal rib.

Brocade

bro-KAYD

Heavy silk with raised designs, often floral, woven into it. Used to make vests (waistcoats) for weddings and other festive occasions.

Brogue

brohg

A dress shoe with decorative perforations on the toe and seams (originally used to let water out). These perforations are called broguing. A brogue shoe can be in oxford or derby style. Traditionally a brogue shoe was considered to be a casual shoe but today it can be worn with formal wear. The more broguing on a shoe, the more casual it is.

Broken stripe

BRO-ken stripe

A pattern used for suiting, which looks like a solid chalk-like stripe from a slight distance, but is actually made up of dotted lines.

Brush stand

BRUSH stand

A brush stand holds your shaving brush with the bristles pointing down so that it dries correctly.

Brushing

BRUSH-ing

Also called napping. A finishing process for knitted or woven fabrics, which involves brushing the surface up into a fuzzy nap.

Bucks

bux

A casual dress shoe traditionally made from white or light brown suede or buckskin with a brick red rubber sole.

Buckskin

BUK-skin

Soft napped deer or elk leather used for fine gloves or shoes.

Buffalo plaid/check

BUF-a-lo plad

A plaid design with very large squares of alternating color – usually red and black, but other color combinations exist. Frequently used for hunting jackets, over shirts, flannel shirts, and hats.

Buffing cloth

BUFF-ing cloth

A cloth for buffing shoes to a shine after applying polish.

Burberry

BUR-be-ree

An English fashion manufacturer that achieved success from inventing gabardine fabric and subsequently trench coats made from the waterproof fabric. Burberry also describes a check pattern of fabric that is trademarked under the company name.

Burgundy

BUR-gun-dee

A dark wine red.

Business casual

BIZ-ness CA-zyu-al

A type of informal dress code within the professional world.

Business casual for men is marked by a dress shirt with the top button unfastened, no necktie, trousers, and less-formal dress shoes such as bluchers. You can add a casual but smart belt to this look too.

Business collar

BIZ-ness CO-lar

A type of dress shirt collar that is cut wide enough to accommodate a Windsor knot but not as wide as a spread collar. It is called a business collar because the spread is neither too narrow nor too wide and is an acceptable collar for all business wear.

Business wear

BIZ-ness WARE

A type of dress code for both males and females that requires, for men, a suit, a dress shirt, necktie and dress shoes. Typically one would abide by this dress code when interviewing for a job, when meeting clients, when representing an organization or company, or when working for a company with strict dress codes. Business wear usually adheres to conservative suit colors such as navy blue and gray, basic shirt colors-white or blue-and a plain style necktie.

Butterfly (bow tie)

BUT-er-fly

The classic shape for a bow tie, with flared ends, as opposed to the straighter batwing/club tie.

Butterfly style razor

BUT-er-fly STY-le RAY-zor

Adjustable razor with a head which can be opened in two hinges. You can screw the cutting head open or closed to change the blade.

Button stance

BUT-on stans

The height, distance, and spacing of a coat's front buttons relative to its front edge and waist.

Button-down

BUT-on down

A shirt whose collar points are fastened down with small non-decorative buttons on the front of the shirt. This is a casual to smart-casual style and rarely worn with a suit.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

C

Cable Stitch

CAY-bul stitch

An overlapping knitting stitch that looks like a twisted rope, used in sweaters and socks.

Cable-knit

CAY-bul nit

Knitted with cable stitch.

Cabretta

ca-BRET-a

Soft leather made from Brazilian sheep; typical applications are gloves and belts.

Calfskin

CAHF-skin

Leather made from the skin of a young calf, only a few days or weeks old. This skin is very soft and supple and is used in high-quality shoes and other leather goods.

Cambridge gray

CAME-brij gray

A light gray (as opposed to Oxford gray, a dark gray.) So called because the traditional color of Cambridge University is light blue and Oxford University is dark blue.

Camel

CAM-el

A light yellowish tan color. A 'camel coat' usually means the color – it's not necessarily made from camel hair.

Camel hair

CAM-el hair

A warm and lightweight tan or brown wool from camels. Less delicate than cashmere. Used by itself or with wool for coats, suits, and sweaters.

Camino Inca Alpaca Sweater

KAM-EE-NO ink-a al-pach-a swett-er

The South American aboriginal people have raised Alpaca for its fleece for thousands of years before Europeans learned about the animal and exported alpaca fiber to Spain in the 16th and 17th centuries. This domestic animal is bred throughout the world, but its native habitat is the Andean Plateau: Ecuador, southern Peru, northern Bolivia, and northern Chile. The alpacas, descended from the wild vicugna, resemble a cross between a llama and a sheep. The fleece is similar to sheep's wool, but is usually softer, less prickly, and has minimal lanolin content, making it virtually hypoallergenic. The Camino Inca Alpaca Sweater is extremely warm, relatively light weight, and natural resistance to water make alpaca wool an ideal fabric for the freezing winters of the Andean Plateau. These qualities have also led to an increase in the use of alpaca fiber in outdoor

apparel and active wear, although it is also easily spun into a fine yarn for use in suits and other dress wear.

Canvas

CAN-vas

A strong, heavy, coarsely woven fabric, usually made from cotton. 'Duck' is another name for canvas, but usually refers to lighter-weight canvas.

Cap

cap

A rounded soft fabric hat with a visor.

Cap toe

CAP toe

A shoe with a separate toe piece attached with a seam. Although more seams on a shoe generally make it less formal, a cap toe Oxford is actually smarter than a plain toe for business wear. Plain toes are smarter for evening wear. Generally the cap is dyed the same color as the rest of the shoe, however sometimes the cap is dyed a contrasting color (for example black whereas the shoe is white).

Car coat

CAR coat

A waist-length or mid-thigh coat, originally to keep people warm in early open-topped cars. Less bulky than a full-length coat and thus easier to wear when seated in a car. The design is often simple: slanted pockets, covered zipper or 4 to 5 large buttons. Fastens all the way up to the collar, which can be popped if it gets windy. Early versions were in warm fabrics like sheepskin, modern car coats are more likely to be weatherproof cotton or nylon.

Cardigan

CAR-di-gan

A type of knit sweater that is buttoned or zippered down the front and has

long sleeves.

A cardigan sweater can be worn casually by itself or under a sports jacket or blazer. Best worn during the autumn or winter. Named after James Thomas Brudenel, 7th Earl of Cardigan (1797–1868), leader of the Charge of the Light Brigade, whose troops were the first to wear them.

Cardigan Sweater

CARD-e-gan swett-er

The accepted story of the cardigan sweater begins in the mid 1800's during the Crimean War. James Thomas Brudenell was the 7th Earl of Cardigan – and the sweater was named after him. This British military commander served in this war and thus began the wearing of the cardigan sweater in popular culture. But the cardigan sweater became very popular in the 17th century with the French and in the British Isles with the fisherman of the times. These sweaters proved to be invaluable on the cold seas.

Case (watch)

cayss

The container that protects the watch movement. Check the case width of a watch before buying it to make sure it suits the size of your wrist.

Smaller case widths (the smallest on a man's watch is generally 38mm) look best on smaller wrists, and larger cases on bigger wrists. Also make sure the case is not too thick if you want it to fit under a suit cuff.

Caseback

CAYSS-bak

The underside of a watch that lies against the skin. Some are transparent so you can see the watch movement.

Cashmere

CASH-meer

Fine wool from the undercoat of the Kashmir goat, used to make soft luxury fabrics. Cashmere is light-weight and exhibits excellent insulating

properties.

Cashmere wool is more expensive than regular sheep wool but is of higher quality. Worsted cashmere – made from combed yarns that can only be spun with perfect fiber – is finer and more expensive than woolen cashmere. Worsted cashmere is very light and resistant to pilling, and only used for suits and jackets. Woolen cashmere is fluffier and used for jackets, sweaters, and scarves.

Cavalry twill

CAV-al-ree twill

A sturdy twill weave with a diagonal cord pattern, used for trousers.

Chalk stripe

CHAWK stripe

A wider stripe than pinstripes, with a rope-like effect, often found in suits. Named for looking like lines of tailor's chalk.

Challis

CHAL-is

Soft lightweight worsted wool used for odd vests, trousers, and jackets.

Chambray

SHAM-bray or SHOM-bray

A fine soft fabric with a plain weave, made from a white cotton warp and colored weft and mostly found in shirts. Light indigo blue is a traditional color for chambray.

Chamois

SHA-mwah

A pale yellow suede color, named for the color of chamois goat skin.

Check

chek

A fabric pattern in which two (or more) stripes intersect each other at right

angles forming closed and continuous boxes. The simplest design requires two colors: one for the base and the other color for the stripes. More colors can be added to the design, for example a white dress shirt with blue horizontal and red vertical lines. The check pattern is commonly found in dress shirts and the lines can vary in thickness and crispness.

Cheeks lines

CHEEKZ linez

Your cheeks lines define the upper end of your beard. Normally these lines are shaved with a straight razor or an electric shaver and should be perpendicular to the tips of your mustache and follow the lines of your cheeks.

Chelsea boots

CHEL-see bootz

Elastic-sided ankle boots suitable for formal or casual wear. Invented in England, named after a fashionable part of London and worn by Queen Victoria and the Beatles.

Chesterfield coat

CHES-ter-feeld coat

A plain-back, slightly shaped overcoat in either single-breasted fly-front or double-breasted style. In dark gray, blue, or black, it may have a matching velvet collar.

Chestie

CHES-tee

A popular style of Instagram photo that shows the model's chest in a jacket and tie (but not his head or legs.)

Chino cloth

CHEE-no cloth

A cotton twill fabric with an origin in military clothing. Chino cloth is synonymous with khaki; though khaki can be used to describe the color of

the same name.

Chinos

CHEE-noes

Smart casual pants made from a durable cotton fabric called chino. Good for wearing in the heat.

Chronograph

KRO-no-graf

A type of watch with a stopwatch function that can be used to time an event. Usually has extra dials within the main dial and 3 pushers on the side. Not to be confused with 'chronometer', which describes the accuracy of a watch, not the type.

Chronometer

kro-NO-me-ter

An instrument for measuring time very accurately. For a Swiss watch to be called a chronometer, it must meet very high standards set by the C.O.S.C. (Controle Officiel Suisse des Chronometres) – to stay accurate for 15 days and nights at five different positions and temperature changes.

Chucks

chux

Short for Chuck Taylor All-Stars – iconic high-top canvas sneakers.

Chukka boots

CHUK-a bootz

An ankle-length leather or suede boot with open lacing with two or three pairs of eyelets. The name chukka possibly comes from the game of polo, which is typically played in six periods or "chukkas."

Churchill dot

CHURCH-ill dot

Another term for pindot, a versatile tiny dot pattern often found on ties. Winston Churchill wore a Churchill dot bow tie.

Classic shaving

CLASS-ic SHAY-ving

Wet shaving in the old-fashioned way with a straight razor, shave soap, and a brush. Produces a closer shave with little or no razor burn, works out cheaper than a cartridge razor, and makes you feel great.

Cleanser

CLEN-zer

A gel, cream or foam product that can be worked into a lather with water to wash dirt, oil and dead cells off the skin.

Clip-on necktie

KLIP-on NEK-tie

A pre-tied necktie with a clip on the back of the knot, allowing the wearer to skip the tying process and clip it to the front of the dress shirt collar. The knot is permanent. A clip-on necktie is not suggested to be worn except for boys as it is the most common accompaniment for child-sized dress shirts.

Closed lacing

KLOZD LAY-sing

A style of dress shoe lacing in which the vamp (the front part) is sewn on top of the quarters (the part with the eyelets). More formal than open lacing, which has the quarters on top of the vamp. Oxford shoes use closed lacing.

Clothes steamer

CLOTHES stee-mer

A machine for getting creases out of clothes without ironing. Useful for suits and jackets.

Club Collar

CLUB co-lar

A collar with rounded points. A rare type mostly seen on bespoke shirts and often worn with a collar pin. Suits thin faces, but makes round faces look rounder.

Club Tie

CLUB tie

A tie made with the colors or emblem of a club or group and used to show membership.

Collar pin

CO-lar PIN

An accessory piece of men's jewelry that attaches to the tabs of the collar and is worn under the necktie. The purpose of the collar pin is to bring the collar tabs closer together and to raise the knot of necktie. There are three kinds of collar pins: a safety-pin style, a barbell style, and a clip style. Only the barbell style collar pin requires a pinned collar dress shirt.

Collar stays

CO-lar stayz

Sometimes called collar stiffeners, collar stays are dress shirt accessories usually made from stiff plastic or metals such as stainless steel, silver, brass or gold. Collar stays are inserted into specially-sewn pockets on the underside of a dress shirt. The added weight ensures that the collar stays in place and looks crisp rather than curled.

Cologne

co-LOAN

A fragrance for men. (Strictly speaking, 'eau de cologne' means a fragrance with a low concentration of perfume oils – the only one lower is 'eau fraiche', which lasts about an hour. But 'cologne' is commonly used to mean any men's perfume.)

Color wheel

KU-ler weel

A wheel showing all the colors of the rainbow in order, used to determine which colors go well together.

Complementary

COM-pli-MEN-ta-ree

Colors that are opposite one another on the color wheel and so work well together – red and pink go with green, orange and brown go with blue, yellow goes with purple.

Compound lever clippers

COM-pownd LEE-ver CLIP-erz

The most common and least effective type of nail clippers – a lever that you squeeze together to bite down on your nail. Actually about as bad for your nails as biting them. Plier clippers are better, nail scissors better still.

Continental style (suit)

CON-ti-NEN-tal stile

An Italian-inspired suit style with a short, shapely, side-vented jacket and tapered, cuffless trousers.

Contrast collar

CON-trahst CO-lar

A type of dress shirt collar which is made from a contrasting fabric to the rest of the dress shirt. The most common contrast collar color is white to a blue dress shirt (though any color combination is possible). Usually the contrast collar is paired with cuffs of the same color. The width of the collar is almost always similar to business collars.

Converse

CON-verse

A classic brand of sneakers.

Convertible cuffs

con-VER-ti-ble cuffs

Cuffs that can take buttons or cufflinks.

Cordovan

COR-duh-vuhn

Cordovan' has two meanings. One is a durable but non-porous leather made from the 'shell' (backside) of a horse, used for high-quality shoes. The other is a color of leather – dark red, also called 'oxblood'.

Corduroy

COR-duh-roy

A hard-wearing cotton velvet fabric made from twisted fibers which are woven parallel to each other forming tufts and channels. The cloth's distinguishable pattern is call a "cord"; typically there are between 10 to 12 ridges per inch of cord.Corduroy is commonly used for trousers and jackets.

Corrected Leather

co-REC-tid LE-ther

A type of leather that would have otherwise not passed quality standards for use in typical top-grain applications. Due to the imperfections within the hide, corrected leather is spot sanded and then corrected with an artificial grain and dye. Typical uses for corrected leather are belts.

Cotton

COT-on

Soft fluffy white fibers from the seedpods of the cotton plant. The longer the fiber ('long staples'), the better the cotton quality. Sea Island, Egyptian, and Pima cotton are the finest types – all varieties of Gossypium barbadense, also known as extra-long-staple/ELS cotton.

Count system

COWNT sis-tem

A thickness scale for wool, with grades ranging from 80s or higher for merino wool to lower for tweeds, etc. The thicker the yarn, the lower the grade number; the higher the grade number, the finer the yarn.

Counter

COWNT-er

A piece of stiffening material or leather inserted around the back part of a shoe to support the outer leather.

Cravat

cra-VAT

A short, wide strip of fabric worn round the neck and tucked inside an open-necked shirt. The ancestor of the necktie and bow tie, named after the Croats, whose military wear inspired the style. The cravat was worn throughout the late 17th century until the late 19th century. An ascot is a type of cravat.

Cream shoe polish

kreem SHOO POL-ish

The best form of polish for moisturizing and recoloring shoes, but not as good for shine as wax polish. Use cream polish as a base coat for wax polish.

Crepe

crayp

A light and flexible woolen cloth with a crinkly matte surface that can be coarse to the touch.

Crew neck

CROO nek

A type of collarless sweater or shirt with a round rib-knit neckline which lies flat against the base of the neck. The crew-neck is the most common cut for T-shirts and undershirts.

Crown

crown

A button, often fluted, on the outside of the watch case used to wind the mainspring in mechanical watches. It is also used to set the time, when pulled out, and for setting a watch calendar. A screw-down crown is used to make the watch more water resistant and to help keep out dust.

Crystal

KRIS-tal

A transparent cover that protects a watch dial. Crystals are made of glass, plastic or synthetic sapphire. Non-reflective coatings on some crystals prevent glare.

Cuban heel

KYU-ban heel

A broad low or medium-high heel with a straight front and a curved back line.

Cuff links

KUF linx

Fastenings for French cuffs. Unlike buttons, cufflinks are separate from the shirt and are often made with precious stones and metals. The style, material and shape of the cufflinks vary greatly but the mechanics are the same: fasten the two sides of the dress shirt cuff. The typical cufflink has a large rounded head and a shaft with a small pivoting piece of metal which is put through the buttonhole and pivoted parallel to the head to fasten the cufflink.

Cummerbund

KUM-er-bund

A wide waistband or pleated sash that is an alternative to a waistcoat for black tie events, especially in hot weather. A cummerbund is almost always worn with a single-breasted dinner jacket. The cummerbund is fastened in the back with hooked clips.

Custom made

KUS-tom mayd

Another term for bespoke – made to order to an individual's exact measurements.

Cutaway collar

KUT-a-way KOL-ar

A collar with very wide spread points.

The tips of the collar almost point backward thus leaving a large enough space for the biggest of necktie knots. The cutaway collar is not to be confused with the winged collar. Suits oblong, diamond, and oval face shapes. Avoid this one if you have a round face – it'll make it look rounder.

Cyclops

SIGH-clops

A small lens on the crystal of a watch to magnify the date, introduced by Rolex.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

D

D ring

DEE ring

A belt buckle made from two pieces of thick, stiff metal wire in the shape of the letter "D". The straight edge of the D ring is attached to the fabric via a sturdy leather or stiff synthetic clamp. Casual belts or trench coat belts are the most common to use the D Ring.

Dandy

DAN-dee

A man who shows extreme perfectionism in his dress. Not the same as a fop, who shows extreme flamboyance. Beau Brummell, the ultimate

dandy, was actually reacting against fops. He changed men's fashion from a riot of color, decoration, and excess to simple styles and neutral colors worn with precise correctness.

Dart

dart

A short seam used to shape part of a garment. For instance, darts might be used to pinch in the waist on a shirt.

Day-date

DAY-dayt

A watch that indicates the day of the week as well as the date.

DE or SE safety razor

dee-ee or ess-ee

Safety razor with a single-edged (SE) or double-edged (DE) interchangeable blade.

Deerstalker

DEE-er-staw-kuh

A tweed 'Sherlock Holmes' hat with ear flaps.

Denim

DEN-im

The cloth from which jeans are made – a sturdy twill weave, traditionally with a colored (usually indigo) warp and white weft. The word 'denim' comes from 'toile de Nimes', meaning cloth from Nimes in France, where it was first made about 200 years ago.

Derby (hat)

DER-bee

A type of men's hat that has a domed crown and a narrow, up-turned brim and is made from hard felt. The derby originated as a protective hat for gamekeepers on horseback in England in the middle of the 19th

century. Nowadays the derby is associated with horse racing and sometimes the stereotypical banker. Derby hats are almost always brown or black in color.

Derby (shoe)

DER-bee

A dress shoe with open lacing – i.e. the quarters (the part with the eyelets) are sewn on top of the vamp (the front part). More casual than an oxford, which has closed lacing – the vamp on top of the quarters.

Dermatologist

DER-muh-TOL-uh-jist

A dermatologist is a health professional who specializes in the skin, hair, scalp and nails. If you have skin problems, you should see a dermatologist before applying any product to your face.

Desert boots

DEZ-ert boots

A type of chukka boot made with a suede upper and a crepe leather sole. Can be dressed up or down, worn day or night, and as the name suggests, they're also good in hot and sandy conditions. Became fashionable after WWII, when Nathan Clark of the Clarks shoe company spotted South African soldiers wearing them in Burma.

Diagonal weave

di-AG-uh-nal weev

A steep twill weave with noticeable lines that appears in many fabrics such as woolen tweed and worsted suits.

Dial

DI-uhl

Also called the face – a plate with a metal base that carries the hour and minute (and sometimes second) markers on a watch.

Dinner jacket

DIN-ner JACK-it

See Tuxedo.

Dobby

DOB-ee

A woven fabric with small geometric patterns and extra texture in the cloth. Polo shirts are usually made with dobby. Piqué fabrics are a type of dobby construction.

Doeskin

DOH-skin

The suede (fuzzy) side of the skin of a doe, lamb, or sheep, with a white finish due to the tanning process. Used for gloves or other leather goods. Also, a closely woven fabric with a slightly fuzzy surface, used for slacks or sportswear.

Donegal Tweed

DON-uh-GALL tweed

A hand-scoured, homespun tweed fabric with colorful nubs. Originally handwoven by crofters in County Donegal, Ireland; now woven by machine.

Dopp bag

DOP bag

A Dopp bag (dopp kit or dopp kit bag) is a small toilet bag, made of cloth, leather, or vinyl, or cloth that is used for storing and carrying men's grooming tools for travel. The name comes from early 20th century leather craftsman Charles Doppelt, a German immigrant to the United States, who invented his toiletry case in 1919. Common items kept in a Dopp kit bag could be a deodorant, a razor, shaving cream, comb, shampoo, nail clippers, scissors, toothbrush, toothpaste, and cologne. In the British Isles the item is known as a "sponge bag".

Dopp kit

DOP kit

A travel bag for a man's grooming essentials, often leather, Can be an heirloom.

Double Barrel Cuff

DUB-uhl BAR-uhl KUF

British English for French cuff.

Double Four-In-Hand

DUB-uhl FOR-in-HAND

A type of necktie knot where you loop the tie twice around before pulling through the knot. Emblematic of Italian style.

Double Monk Strap

DUB-uhl MUNK strap

A style of shoe with no lacing, closed by two buckles and straps. Sits just above loafers on the formality scale and can be worn sockless.

Double Vent

DUB-uhl VENT

Double-vent is a choice of vent a man has for his suit jackets, sports jackets and blazers. The double-vent has two (hence "double") vertical slits on the sides of the posterior of the jacket. Its origins can be found in the hacking jacket and it is a European style. The double vent allows for easier access to the rear trouser pockets and falls cleaner over the edge of the chair when a man is seated with his jacket on.

Double-breasted jacket

DUB-uhl BRES-tid JACK-it

A jacket with overlapping front flaps and two columns of buttons. The right column of buttons serve to close the jacket whereas the left column of buttons are cosmetic. Six-on-one buttoning is the most popular (six total buttons, one button on the bottom to fasten the flaps); six-on-two

buttoning is also common (six total buttons, two buttons to fasten the flaps). Almost always the double-breasted jacket has peaked lapels and a double vent or ventless (single vent does not fit the jacket's style). A double-breasted jacket must always be buttoned due to the wide front flaps. The double-breasted jacket was most popular between the 1930's and 1950's; though it is still regarded as a classic design.

Down jacket

down JACK-it

A type of performance jacket that is insulated with the down feathers of ducks or geese. The jacket is identifiable by pillow-like compartments on the outside of the jacket; these stitched compartments contain the down feathers. Down jackets have very good insulating properties and are worn by those exposed to cold weather. Down jackets are rarely made formal enough to be worn with business attire.

Drape

dreyp

The way a garment hangs from the shoulder or waist; a 'drapey' garment is the opposite of a stiff one.

Dress boots

DRESS bootz

Lace-up leather boots suitable for smart casual (and often business casual) wear.

Dress code

DRESS kode

A set of rules for dressing at the correct level of formality for different occasions. Black tie, white tie, smart casual, business casual, and business formal are all examples of dress codes.

Dress shirt

DRESS shurt

A shirt for formal wear, generally made with a stiff collar and finely woven fabric in plain colors or conservative patterns.

Dress shoes

DRESS shoos

A shoe designed to be worn at formal or smart casual events (although many men wear them every day.) Anything from a boat shoe up to an oxford can be considered a dress shoe.

Drill

dril

A durable coarse material with a twill weave. Lightweight drill is used in shirts, safari jackets, pants, and sports clothing; heavier weights are used in work clothing and uniforms. The most common form of drill is khaki.

Driving cap

DRI-ving KAP

Sometimes called Newspaper cap, Golf cap (among others) is a men's flat cap made of tweed, cotton or sometimes leather. The driving cap has a short and stiff brim in the front only. The cap sits well above the ears and is meant to be worn in the summer months when driving in an open-aired automobile.

Driving moccasins

DRI-ving MO-ka-sinz

Also known as driving mocs. Moccasins with nubby rubber soles to provide extra grip on the pedals while driving.

Drop

drop

The difference in inches between the measurement of a suit jacket's chest and the suit trousers' waist. Most American men's suits are designed to accommodate a six-inch drop – a waist six inches smaller than the chest. Athletic cuts have a bigger drop (7+), portly cuts have a

smaller one.

Drop crotch

DROP krotch

An exaggerated trouser or jean silhouette where the inseam ends at a lower point of the leg to create an excess of material around the crotch.

Not recommended.

Dry-cleaning

DRY klee-ning

The process of cleaning delicate garments using chemicals rather than water. Invented in the 1800s by a man named Jolly Belin, who spilled some kerosene on a dirty tablecloth and noticed that it cleaned it. Early dry-cleaners suffered a lot of explosions before switching to a less flammable chemical called perchloroethylene, or perc.

Duck

duk

The most durable fabric construction, which sheds water like a duck. Originally a plain, closely woven fabric resembling the lightweight canvas used for sails. Used for slacks, sportswear, bags, and work clothes.

Duffel bag

DUF-uhl bag

A duffel bag (also known as duffle bag, kit bag, gym bag) is a spacy cylindrical piece of luggage made of cloth, nylon (or other fabric) with a drawstring closure at the top. Original name comes from a Belgian town

Duffel known as

a place where the thick cloth used to make the bag originated.

Nowadays, a duffel bag typically refers to the specific style of bag, though the definition may also be used to refer to any large generic holdall or a bag made of thick fabric. Duffel bags are often used to carry luggage or sports equipment by people who travel in the outdoors. Duffel bags are also often used by military personnel. When used by sailors or Marines

they are sometimes called seabags or “ditty” bags.

Duffle coat

DUF-uhl cote

A three-quarters length coat made from a coarse wool-like material called duffle. The coat was popular among the British navy during World War I and still is casually fashionable in Britain. The duffle coat usually has a hood with a buttoned strap to cover the neck, three or four large wooden or animal horn toggle-fasteners, and two large flapped pockets. Perhaps the most famous wearer of a duffle coat is Paddington Bear.

Dupioni

DOO-pee-OH-nee

A luxurious summer silk fabric woven with fine thread in the warp and uneven thread made from two or more entangled cocoons in the weft.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

E

Egyptian cotton

e-JIP-shun COT-on

A luxurious cotton fabric made from extra long cotton fibers from the *Gossypium barbadense* species of cotton plant. To be called Egyptian cotton, it must be grown and produced in Egypt. This premium cotton is very expensive but is soft, strong, silk-like, and pill-resistant, and dyes easily.

Emulsion

e-MUL-shun

A mixture of two or more liquids that generally don't mix well, like oil and water. Many shaving creams require an emulsion with water, for example, to be well foamed.

End-on-end

end-on-END

End-on-end shirt fabrics are woven with alternating white and colored warp yarns to form a tiny check effect. Used in chambray, broadcloth, and Oxford fabrics.

English spread collar

ING-lish spred COL-ar

A wider spread collar with longer points – the most traditional English collar. Suits men with long and/or thin faces. Can be worn with a medium to large tie or tieless.

Epaulet

EP-a-LET

A strap or ornament on the shoulder of a garment, borrowed from military uniforms. Useful to create the illusion of broader shoulders and accentuate the masculine 'V' silhouette.

Epidermis

EP-i-DER-miss

The surface layer of the skin, covering the dermis and hypodermis (deepest tissues of your skin).

Erect (posture)

e-RECT

An upright stance – when getting clothes custom made, this requires a shorter back and longer front to the jacket.

Espadrille

ESP-a-drill

A sandal with a canvas upper and a rope sole for beach wear. Originally worn by dock workers.

Eucalyptus

YOO-ca-LIP-tus

An Australian tree or flowering shrub whose leaves are often used to create natural insecticides, antiseptics, and deodorants.

European straight collar

YOU-ro-PEE-an STRAYT COL-ar

An edge stitched straight collar for a slightly more modern look. The alternative is a traditional straight collar, stitched a quarter inch from the edge.

Exfoliation

EX-fo-lee-AY-shun

Getting rid of dead skin cells from the surface of the skin. This makes your skin look clearer and healthier.

Eyelet Collar

I-let COL-ar

A dressy collar style. The collar has a small hole in each side and the two points are fastened together with a gold or silver collar bar.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

F

Fair Isle

FAIR ile

A Scottish type of knitting with patterned bands of multiple colors. Traditional Fair Isle patterns have a limited palette of five or so colors, use only two colors per row, are worked in the round, and limit the length of a run of any particular color.

Fedora

fe-DOR-uh

A men's hat made from felt with an identifiable crease down the crown of the hat and is pinched on both sides of the front. Though fedoras are also made without the crease ("open crown"). The fedora's brim circumvents

the crown and is pliable. Almost always the fedora has a grosgrain ribbon around the base of the crown. Fedora popularity soared in the early 20th century and it is synonymous with Indiana Jones, Dick Tracy, and Humphrey Bogart's character in Casablanca. This is a formal hat, meant to be worn with a suit. Black, blue, gray, and brown are the most common colors.

Field jacket

FEELD JACK-et

A lightweight boxy jacket of military origin with large lower pockets and two breast pockets. The first field jacket was created in 1938 (the M-1938) but most modern versions are based on the M-1965 field jacket from the Vietnam War era.

Flannel

FLAN-el

A woven fabric made from wool, cotton, synthetic fibers or blends that is identifiable by a raised nap due to brushing during its production. Flannel is either woven in a plain weave or twill weave pattern. The fabric is noted for trapping heat and thus is usually used in items for colder weather.

Flap

flap

A covering for the mouth of a pocket. The flap gives moderate pocket protection and streamlines the garment by hiding the pocket opening. Flapped pockets are more casual than jetted (flapless) pockets but more formal than patch pockets. A flap pocket is most commonly found on business suit jackets.

Foam

fohm

A substance formed through a meeting between a liquid or solid and a gas pocket. Foam can be created with shaving soap.

Follicle

FOL-i-cle

Your hair follicles are small pockets in your skin that contain a hair or bristle.

Foulard

FOO-lard

A 'foulard tie' is one with a small regular repeating pattern, also called a set pattern, a tailored pattern, or a wallpaper tie. Foulard fabric is a twill cloth for neckwear or scarves, usually a light silk with a small multicolored pattern.

Four-in-hand

FOR-in-HAND

A common tie knot (also called a slip knot or sailor's knot). Easy to tie, slightly asymmetrical, and small, making it a good choice for thicker ties, narrower collars, or smaller guys.

French cuff

frensh CUF

A dress shirt cuff that fastens with cufflinks rather than buttons. French cuffs are double length and turned back. French cuffs are to be worn with evening wear and never with casual jackets such as sports jackets or blazers. French cuffs are worn more and more with business attire especially in Europe.

Front (of beard)

frunt

The part of your beard on the front of your chin below your lower lip.

Front pleats

frunt PLEETZ

The pleats in the waist area of pants that run in line with the front creases.

Full grain

FULL grain

The highest quality grade of leather, using the top layer of the animal's skin and showing the grain – the natural patterns on the surface of the hide. Full grain leather is soft, durable, easily absorbs dyes and will develop a patina. Full grain leather will contain natural imperfections as it does not undergo any correcting process. Footwear is the most common clothing use for full grain leather.

Fusing

FYOO-zing

Bonding the inner and outer layers of a garment by welding the two layers together. The interlining is coated with a bonding agent and 'fused' to the underside of the surface fabric, giving the cloth more shape and stability. Fusing is the most common method of tailoring coat fronts – more expensive ones are sewn together by hand.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

G

Gabardine

GAB-ar-DEEN

A twill weave with diagonal twill lines in single- or two-ply combed yarn, tightly woven enough to be almost waterproof. Comes in wool, cotton, or wool blends, usually in solid colors, and is used for suits, pants, and coats.

Garment Bag

GAR-ment Bag

Garment bag is a long zippered piece of luggage usually made of pliable, durable material with a handle and a zipper closure, designed to hang straight or fold double. Garment bags are used to conveniently carry and protect suits, dresses, and coats when traveling without crushing or

wrinkling.

Gauge

gayj

The spacing of the needles on a knitting machine, which determines the thickness of the fabric – a higher gauge means thinner fabric.

Gel

jel

A liquid that behaves like a solid, with a 'jelly' texture that helps it adhere to skin and hair. Hair gel provides a strong, long-lasting hold but can leave hair hard, crusty and flaky. However, gels are easy to wash out because water-based.

Use a light gel for thin hair and a heavier gel for curly, wavy or thick hair.

Genuine leather

JEN-you-ine LETH-er

The lowest quality grade of leather allowed to be sold as 'leather', formed of layers of poor-quality leather taken from the bottom layers of the hide and bonded together. Also known as bonded leather. Tends to peel apart.

Gingham

GING-um

A summery checked cotton or cotton blend fabric made with equally-spaced, criss-crossing stripes of white and a bold color.

Glen plaid

glen plad

A woolen plaid usually made with two dark and two light stripes alternating with four dark and four light stripes, which creates a crossing pattern of irregular checks.

Glenurquhart plaid

glen-UR-cut plad

A plaid similar to Glen plaid but with an 'overcheck' – colorful lines crisscrossing in both directions. It was a favorite of Edward VIII when he was the Prince of Wales.

Goatskin

GOTE-skin

Leather made from the skin of a goat. Goatskin is a durable kind of leather commonly used in making of boots and gloves and has a long history of use where goats are prevalent.

Goodyear welt

GOOD-year welt

The most durable and waterproof (and expensive) method of dress shoe construction in which both the upper and the sole are stitched to a strip of leather called a 'welt'. This can be replaced as often as necessary, so the shoe can be resoled over and over, which saves money in the long run. American and British dress shoes tend to be Goodyear welted.

Gore-Tex

GORtex

A famous brand of breathable and waterproof fabric that is commonly used for performance clothing such as winter parkas and winter boots. The synthetic membrane consists of billions of pores per square inch, each measuring about 1/20,000th smaller than a rain drop, thus making the fabric impervious to rain. Perspiration molecules are small enough to escape through the pores, giving the fabric its breathable qualities.

Gorge

gorj

Seam that joins a jacket's collar to its lapel. The length of the gorge dictates how deep the 'v' is in the front of the jacket. A higher gorge makes a man look taller, a lower gorge shorter.

Grain

grain

The markings left on the finished surface of leather after the removal of hair; leather with a patterned surface produced by printing or embossing.

Greatcoat

GRATE-coat

A long military-style overcoat (usually below knee length) typically made out of wool, designed for protection in bad weather. Also known as a watchcoat. Its collar and cuffs can be turned out to protect the face and hands from cold and rain, and it has a short cape around the shoulders for extra warmth (normally just above or below elbow-length) and deep pockets for keeping letters and food dry. The most traditional color for a greatcoat is gray.

Grenadine

GREN-a-deen

An open-textured gauzelike fabric used for solid-colored ties, made on a jacquard loom with threads crossing from side to side. A navy grenadine tie is a wardrobe staple and can be worn all year round.

Grosgrain

GRO-grain

A type of thick, tightly-woven ribbon made from silk or nylon. Vertical ribbing is the major characteristic of grosgrain because of the heavier weft and lighter warp (hence 'gros' (big) grain). The fabric is very strong and has a duller finish than satin. Typical uses of grosgrain include hatbands and the facings of lapels on tuxedos.

Gusset

GUS-et

An extra piece of fabric inserted at the seam of a garment for reinforcement and ease of movement. A gusset at the bottom of the side seams is a sign of a quality shirt. Gussets can be sewn into the underarm seams to loosen the fabric tension around the shoulders of a tight-fitting

shirt. 'Gusset' can also mean the center section of a necktie that goes around the back of your neck.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

H

Haberdasher

HAB-er-DASH-er

A British-English word for a person who sells buttons, zippers, ribbons and other small items for sewing.

Haberdashery

HAB-er-DASH-er-ee

A place where a haberdasher sells notions for sewing.

Hacking Jacket

HACK-ing JACK-et

A jacket originally designed for riding and usually made from tweed, with a slightly longer length and higher waist to allow for more flare at the hips when sitting astride a horse, a deep center vent to open over the horse, and a three- or four-button front with short lapels. The pockets of the hacking jacket are usually patch pockets or slanted for easy access when riding. This look greatly influenced English tailoring. What we call a hacking jacket today is really a well-fitted sports jacket tailored with characteristics of a traditional hacking jacket.

Hacking Pocket

HACK-ing POCK-et

A hip-level flap pocket at the side of a sport jacket that is slanted or cut on an angle. The slant makes you look slimmer and taller.

Half canvas construction

hahf CAN-vas con-STRUC-shun

The inner canvas layer of the suit that gives it shape, structure, and

strength. It not only shapes the suit from the start, but also has a memory for your shape, giving you a better fit.

Half lining

hahf LIE-ning

A half lined jacket is lined on the top half and sleeve, but the bottom half is not lined and the seams are taped for a clean finish. Usually done to create a lighter and cooler jacket for summer.

Half windsor

hahf WIN-dzor

A tie knot larger than the four-in-hand but smaller than the full Windsor; a good medium-sized knot for formal situations. Also called a single Windsor knot. The knot produced after tying is triangular, symmetrical and appropriate for all occasions. The knot is best tied with a necktie made from a medium-weight fabric and worn with any dress shirt collar except a narrow collar.

Hand-rolled hem

HAND-rolld HEM

The edge of a handkerchief or tie rolled under and stitched by hand (a sign of quality.)

Handkerchief

HAN-ker-chiff

A thin, square piece of cotton, linen, silk, blends, or synthetic material that is hemmed along the edges. The purpose of the handkerchief is hygienic such as blowing one's nose and wiping one's face or hands, and it is washable. Generally the handkerchief is worn hidden in the back trouser pocket. A handkerchief is not decorative and not to be confused with a pocket square.

Handlebar mustache

HAND-I-bar MUS-tash

A mustache style with long points bent upwards which go beyond the corners of your mouth. It requires mustache wax to shape it. The hairs of a handlebar mustache grow from the center to the ends.

Hard water

hard WAW-tuh

Water with a high mineral content, which can leave you with dry skin and hair.

Harris tweed

HAR-is TWEED

The world's only commercially produced handwoven tweed – made from wool spun, dyed, and woven by hand on the islands of Harris, Lewis, Barra and Ulist in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. Usually containing soft rust orange, deep red or purple specks of color due to the vegetable and lichen dyes and the dying process. Harris tweed is commonly used in sports jackets and trousers. Only genuine Harris tweed is allowed to carry the traditional Orb symbol on the label. This symbol is also pressed onto every bolt of the cloth.

Hawaiian shirt

ha-WHY-uhn SHIRT

Casual, usually short-sleeved buttoned shirt with a bright floral or Polynesian-style print, exported from Hawaii. In Hawaii itself these are called 'aloha shirts' and worn in more muted colors and patterns as formal and smart-casual wear.

Hem

hem

The finish produced by turning back the raw edge of a material and sewing it by hand or machine. A hemmed edge is more presentable and looks finished compared to un-hemmed edges. Often suit trousers come un-hemmed, therefore a tailor must measure the trouser break and finish the hem to the wearer's measurement.

Hemostatic pencil

HEE-mo-STAT-ic PEN-sil

A pencil that can be used to disinfect shaving cuts and stop bleeding.

Herringbone

HEH-ring-bone

A ribbed twill weave in which an equal number of threads slant right and left to form a V-shape pattern like the bones of a herring. It is one of the most popular weave patterns. Suits and outerwear are often made from herringbone fabric.

Hidden button-down collar

HID-en BUT-on-down COL-ar

Collar with points held in place by hidden buttons underneath the points; more formal than a classic button-down. The collar tabs are secured by button loops which are sewn underneath the collar tabs. The width of the collar varies but standard business collar width is the most common. The purpose of the hidden button-down collar is to retain a streamline and clean collar without the interruption of protruding collar buttons.

High twist

hi TWIST

A cool fabric made using high twist yarn (which has more twists in it, making it thinner and harder); good drape, excellent elasticity and wrinkle resistance.

Homburg

HOM-burg

A type of men's felt hat characterized by a stiff, fixed up-turned brim and a single crease running lengthwise on the crown. Homburg hats receive their namesake from the German town of Bad Homburg after King Edward VII of England had visited and brought back the fashion to England. A homburg hat is considered to be more formal than a fedora

but less formal than a top hat. Typical colors are black, gray and brown; a feather accent and grosgrain band are common additions. A black or dark blue homburg can be worn with a dinner jacket; other colors can be worn with a business suit as well.

Hopsack

HOP-sak

A coarse, loosely-woven fabric made with two weft threads and two warp threads together, using rough-textured yarn and forming a pattern like a basket or sack. Used for suits and especially sports jackets.

Horology

ho-RO-lo-jee

The study of watches and the measurement of time.

Horse hair brush

HORSE-hair BRUSH

The best type of brush for shining shoes.

Houndstooth

HOUNDS-tooth

Also called “hound’s tooth” and “houndstooth check”. A medium-sized check pattern with jagged edges like those of a dog’s teeth, not perfectly square, made from weaving two threads over and two threads under the warp. Traditionally a duotone weave (a dark and a light thread), houndstooth can be found with other shades as well.

Alabama football coach Paul “Bear” Bryant is synonymous with houndstooth because of the houndstooth cap he wore throughout his coaching career.

Hunter green

HUN-ter green

A deep shade of green with a hint of yellow, originally used by hunters as camouflage.

Hydration

hi-DRAY-shun

Moisturizing, putting enough water in the body – the opposite of dehydration.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

I

Imperial 100s

im-PEER-i-al wun HUN-dredz

A premium shirting fabric made with two-ply threads (two individual threads are twisted together) which make it durable, soft, and lustrous.

Ingrown hairs

IN-grown HAIRZ

Hairs that get stuck inside the hair follicle and cause redness and irritation. Can be removed by shaving against their grain direction.

Inseam

IN-seem

The distance in inches from the crotch to the bottom of the pant leg.

Insole

IN-soul

The foundation of a shoe; a piece of leather between one-tenth and one-seventh of an inch thick, cut to conform exactly to the size and shape of the bottom of the last of the shoe. Also, the part of the shoe between the welt and the insole.

Instep

IN-step

The bridge over the top of the foot.

Interlock

IN-ter-lok

A closely knitted fabric made on a circular knitting machine with long and short needles.

iPad Sleeve

i-padd sleeve

iPad sleeve is a special small bag used to store and safely carry your iPad gadget. The shape of the bag replicates the shape of the gadget itself. Inner surface is made of soft cloth not to damage device screen.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

J

Jacquard

JA-card

A fabric with the design woven in, instead of being printed or dyed on.

Jean Jacket

JEEN JA-kit

A waist-length casual jacket made from denim or other twill cotton, with panel stitching and chest-height patch pockets. Wearing a jean jacket with jeans is generally seen as a faux pas when they're both blue (the 'Canadian tuxedo') but perfectly acceptable when you mix the colors.

Jeans

jeenz

Hard-wearing informal pants made from denim. Named after an indigo-dyed fabric called 'jean' because it came from Genoa, a city-state in Italy that equipped its navy with jeans. Jean fabric was similar to denim but cheaper. The style of pants we know as jeans was created by Jacob W. Davis in partnership with Levi Strauss & Co. in 1871 and used as workwear until teens adopted it as a fashion statement in the 1950s.

Jersey

JER-zee

Jersey was first made off the English coast and used for fisherman's clothing. Today, it is commonly found in t-shirts and is very resilient with fine draping qualities and crease-resistance. Jersey wears and washes well.

Jetting

JET-ing

Decorative (often piped) edging on pockets. A pocket with both the top and bottom jetted is called 'double-besom' or 'double-jetted', A jetted pocket with no flap is the most formal type of pocket.

Jimps

jimps

Narrow grooves on either side of the tang of a straight razor (the tang is the part that you hold when you shave) to make it more comfortable to hold and easier to use.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

K

Keds

keds

A classic brand of canvas sneakers.

Keratin

KE-ra-tin

The protein hair and nails are made from.

Keyhole buttonhole

KEE-hole BU-ton-hole

A round hole at the end of the slit on a sportcoat or jacket to accommodate all types of buttons without distorting the fabric. It gives the

hole an old-fashioned keyhole shape.

Khakis

KAA-kee

A type of twill cotton cloth originating in the Indian subcontinent. Khaki today is an all-encompassing term to describe the material, the color, and other garments of similar design (such as chinos). Khaki is worn as summer military dress for some countries and civilian use of khaki has permeated through all but the most formal of dress attire. Trousers are the most common use of khaki.

Khakis

KAA-keez

Pants of a mud-brown or olive color, usually cotton, for summer and smart casual wear. Derived from the Hindi-Urdu for 'earth-colored' and the British Army practice of wearing uniforms dyed with mud for camouflage.

Kidskin

KID-skin

Soft and pliable leather made from the skin of young goats. Typical uses are gloves, wallets, and very high-end footwear.

Kiltie

KIL-tee

A shawl tongue of fringed leather that is draped over the instep of a shoe, covering the laces and eyelets.

Knit tie

nit tie

A type of men's necktie that has been knitted with lightweight yarn, thus giving more texture and a "schoolboy look". Knit ties are traditionally solid or striped due to the difficulty of construction. The material used is a fine wool or a cashmere blend.

Knurled

nurld

Metalworking term for any texture or design pressed into a metal for a decorative or practical purpose (for better grip on a razor, for example).

[Click here to go back to top](#)

L

Lace Up

LAY-sup

(Of a shoe or boot) Fastened with laces.

Lambswool

LAMZ-wul

A soft fabric made from the wool of lambs up to seven months old.

Lapel

la-PEL

Lapels are flaps of cloth usually made by folding over the front edges of a jacket or coat and sewing them to the collar. They accentuate the masculine 'v' shape. There are three types: notched lapels (most common, usually seen on business suits), peaked lapels (seen on more formal single-breasted jackets and nearly all double-breasted jackets) and shawl lapels (usually seen on dinner jackets and mess jackets.)

Lapel pin

la-PEL PIN

A small piece of decorative jewelry to be worn on the jacket lapel. The face of the lapel pin is of some design (e.g. a country's flag or a company's logo) with a permanently attached pin-like tack. The lapel pin is secured by clasp on the underside of the lapel. Lapel pins are always meant to be worn on the left lapel near the lapel button loop.

Last

lahst

A form of wood or metal shaped like a foot, over which a shoe is fashioned. In bespoke shoemaking, a pair of lasts is hand-carved from beech, maple, or beam wood into the exact shape of the customer's feet.

Lawn

lawn

A lightweight cotton or linen fabric used for shirts and handkerchiefs, usually made of combed cotton yarn and given a polished surface.

Layering

LAY-er-ing

Creating outfits with multiple layers of clothing that all work well together. A good way to keep warm in winter without bulky coats and to flatter larger figures.

Leather

LETH-er

A material created through the tanning of the skin or hide of an animal. There are many different finishes which can be used, including sueding, glazing, and embossing. Most leather is made from cattle hides, but other leathers include cordovan (horse), sheepskin and lambskin, and exotic leathers like ostrich, crocodile and lizard.

Leather conditioner

LETH-er con-DISH-un-er

A product used to moisturize leather to prevent drying out and cracking.

Linen

LIN-en

A strong, lustrous yarn or fabric made from smooth-surfaced flax that wrinkles easily. Linen is very cool and breathable and is used for casual summer suits, jackets, shirts, and pants. Some men see the wrinkles as

part of its charm, others prefer cotton-linen blends, which are much less prone to wrinkle.

Lining

LIE-ning

The inside layer of clothing and shoes, which provides reinforcement, shape, and a smoother fit. Good shoes are lined with leather, which also helps to absorb sweat.

Lint roller

LINT RO-ler

A roller for removing fluff and lint from clothes.

Lisle

LIE-el

Fine quality cotton yarn that is passed near a flame to remove the fuzz and give it a smooth surface. Used in fine knit shirts. First made in Lisle (now Lille), France.

Loafers

LO-ferz

Moccasin-style slip-on dress shoes suitable for wearing with no socks or no-show socks in summer. Types of loafers include horsebit or Gucci loafers (the most formal), penny loafers (the classic Ivy League style with a slot where young men used to keep a penny for the payphone), Belgian loafers (a moccasin style), and tassel loafers (the most casual).

Loden

LO-den

An olive-green woolen cloth from the Austrian Tyrol, which often has some camel hair in it and is naturally waterproof.

Long staple cotton

LONG stay-ple COT-on

The highest quality cotton, which has the longest fibers and therefore makes the best fabric. Long-staple cottons fray less, pill less, wrinkle less, and even fade less.

Lounge suit

LOWNJ soot

A traditional name for today's standard men's suit. The lounge suit was considered to be the least formal of any suit jacket and trouser combination and was only worn inside the house or to any casual / informal events.

Lovat

LOVE-uht

A muted green colour used especially in tweed and woollen garments. Named after Lord Lovat of Scotland who preferred blends of hazy blue, soft green, and tan and gray, suggesting the heathered tones found in the landscape of the Highlands.

Lug width

LUG width

The distance between the lugs of a watch. If you're buying a new strap for your watch, the lug width is the width you want the strap to be.

Lugs

lugz

Sometimes referred to as horns, lugs are projections on a watch case. There is a spring bar between the the lugs that is used to fix the strap or bracelet to the case.

Luminescence

loo-min-ESS-ence

A luminous paint applied to watch numbers and hands so the wearer can read the time in the dark. Known as 'lumes' for short.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

M

Mac/Mackintosh

MACK-in-tosh

British term for a waterproof raincoat, called a 'mac' for short.

Mackinaw

MACK-in-aw

A thick, heavy hip-length coat usually made from wool. A mackinaw coat is usually double-breasted, with adjustable cuff straps, a belt of the same material, large flapped pockets and usually with a collar of darker color. The most common color is olive but tans, navy blues, and even buffalo plaid are also available. Originally a "Mackinaw Coat" was a name given to a coat made from blankets.

Made to measure

maid too MEZH-er

Clothing pieces that have been precut to a standard form but not yet assembled until the client is measured. The tailor will then select the pieces that best fit the client's measurements. Afterwards the tailor will assemble the garment using these selected pieces. Made-to-Measure assures a better fitting garment than ready-to-wear, but is not as labor intensive as bespoke. The most common clothing made-to-measure is men's suits.

Madras

muh-DRASS

A lightweight plain weave cotton or blended material with a colorful plaid design, used for summer shirts and sports jackets. Authentic madras is hand-dyed and hand-woven in villages in the Chennai (formerly Madras) area of India, from a fragile, short-staple cotton fiber that can't be combed, only carded, resulting in bumps known as slubs in the yarn that

give madras its unique texture.

Mainspring

MANE-spring

A spiral spring used as a power source in mechanical watches. Winding the watch stores energy in the spring by twisting the spiral tighter. The force of the mainspring then turns the watch's gears as it unwinds.

Mandarin collar

MAN-da-rin COL-ar

Stand-up collar about an inch high with a front closed with buttons or frogs; inspired by Chinese Mandarin costume.

Marcella

mar-SELL-a

A double-twill cotton material, usually with a textured diamond pattern, for formal waistcoats and formal shirt fronts. The term 'marcella' can also refer to an evening shirt with a front, collar, and cuffs made from this material.

Marl

marl

A blend of two or more colors in a yarn, used primarily in knitted items like socks and sweaters, but also in woven fabrics like tweeds.

Matched pattern

MATCHED PATern

When dress shirt fabric patterns align perfectly at all seams. A matched pattern shirt is a signal of high quality construction and often only found in bespoke service due to the greater demand during the tailoring process.

Mechanical

me-CAN-i-cal

A mechanical watch movement is powered by a mainspring and works

with the balance wheel.

Medallion

me-DAL-i-on

The perforated pattern punched in the center of shoe tips.

Melton

MEL-ton

A compact, heavily felted woolen fabric, usually with a plain weave and slightly fuzzy (napped) surface, usually used for overcoats. Melton cloth is named after the town of Melton Mowbray, a hunting area of England where it was first worn.

Mercerized cotton

MER-ser-ized COT-on

A smooth knitted fabric made by treating cotton yarn or fabric with caustic soda. This strengthens the yarn and improves its luster and ability to absorb dye. Named after John Mercer, an English calico printer who perfected the process in 1844.

Merino

me-REE-no

Wool from the merino sheep, which produces the whitest wool, almost as soft as cashmere. Merino shirts and undershirts can be worn for days or even weeks without smelling bad. Merino sheep were first bred in Spain by the Romans and Arabs and are the ancestors of all the leading wool-producing sheep breeds.

Mess jacket

MESS JA-kit

A semiformal, waist-length dress-white military jacket adapted for civilian wear that was the ancestor of the white summer dinner jacket.

Messenger bag

MES-en-jeer bag

A cloth shoulder bag (also called a courier bag) originally used for messengers on bicycles. Similar to a satchel – the difference is that satchels are leather, and messenger bags are usually canvas. These are casual bags, not to be worn with professional clothing like a suit or overcoat.

Metrosexual

me-tro-SEX-u-al

An urban (metropolitan) heterosexual man who takes a lot of pride in his appearance.

Moccasin

MOK-a-sin

A type of slip-on shoe inspired by Native American traditions. A true moccasin has a single unseamed piece of leather that extends all the way under the bottom of the foot and upward to form the back, sides, and toe section, The front of the foot is covered by a piece of leather called a 'plug'. Nowadays it is a casual shoe and should be worn as such.

Mocha

MOK-a

A dark grayish-brown.

Mock neck

MOK-nek

(Also called mock turtle) A type of knit collar with a separate neckband stitched down to simulate a low turtleneck collar.

Modal

MOE-dal

Fiber made by spinning reconstituted cellulose from beech trees. Textiles made from Modal have soft, smooth surfaces are water-absorbent and resistant to shrinkage and fading.

Mohair

MOE-hair

A luxurious wool fabric or yarn that is sheared from the long silky hair of the Angora goat. Like cashmere, mohair has soft, silk-like properties and is more expensive than normal wool. Coats, hats, scarves, sweaters and suits can be made from mohair. Its crisp dry feel makes it ideal for summer formal wear and suits. Sometimes blended with fine worsted wool to make a cloth with less sheen but more softness and drape. From the Arabic for goat hair, mukhayyar.

Moire

mwah-RAY

An all-over 'watered' appearance of silk, velvet, and other fabrics, which looks like ripples on water.

Moleskin

MOLE-skin

A rugged cotton fabric with a thick, soft nap to simulate mole fur. Usually a drab olive or brown shade. Moleskin is renowned for its ability of abrasion resistance and its ability to damper wind, however moleskin lacks water resistance. Trousers and shirt jackets such as military battle dress uniforms are the traditional uses of moleskin. Also used to describe a grayish-brown color, like the skin of a mole.

Money clip

MU-nee KLIP

An alternative to a wallet. A money clip is typically made from a single piece of firm metal which is folded onto itself. Cash and credit cards are meant to be secured inside a metal clip.

Monk strap

MUNK-strap

A dress shoe fastened with a strap and buckle. Double monk straps have

two straps and buckles on each shoe and have been very fashionable in recent years. A monk strap shoe gets its name from being associated with monks who would wear a shoe with a buckle as a shoe offered more protection than a sandal and were easier to remove than a boot. The monk strap shoe can be treated as a loafer (and worn sockless). If of simple design, a monk strap shoe could be worn at casual business events but never at formal events.

Monocle

MON-uh-kul

A single, circular corrective lens to be worn in one eye. The lens is framed with wire and is almost always attached to a lanyard which is connected to the clothing. The popularity of the monocle was between the 19th and first half of the 20th century.

Monogram

MON-o-gram

Embroidered initials commonly found on the backside of dress shirt collars, on the dress shirt breast pocket, on one of the cuffs of a dress shirt, or if the dress shirt lacks a breast pocket, on the left breast.

Monograms can also be etched or set in cufflinks.

Moroccan leather

Mo-RO-kan LE-ther

Goatskin leather that has been tanned in Morocco. Moroccan leather is valuable as it has been processed and tanned in a time-honored manner and almost always by hand. Moroccan leather comes in various colors but red is most traditional. Moroccan leather can be used in clothing, furniture and even book bindings.

Motorcycle jacket

MO-tor-sigh-cle JA-kit

A tight-fitted leather jacket with a collar that hugs the neck and doesn't turn down. The front zips up all the way and the waist is usually elastic.

Since it's made to be streamlined, there are usually no extra details like buckles or pocket flaps. Also called a 'moto'.

Movement

MOOV-ment

The inner mechanism of a watch that keeps time and powers the watch's functions.

Multi-blade

MUL-tee BLADE

A type of disposable razor blade containing 3-5 blades, also called a cartridge. Works out considerably more expensive than using a safety razor in the long run.

Mustache

MUS-tash

All the facial hairs between your upper lip and your nose. Generally, a well-styled mustache requires daily application of mustache wax.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

N

Nail brush

NAY-il brush

A brush for cleaning out dirt from under the nails (dirt and grit under nails can blunt clippers.)

Nail file

NAY-il file

A small file for smoothing the edges of nails. Czech crystal glass files are the best. Always file in one direction – never back and forth, as this roughs up the nail.

Nail nippers

NAY-il NIP-erz

Nail clippers that resemble pliers. The strongest tool for cutting nails. Less damaging than the popular compound lever clippers, and easier to handle for painful or weakened hands.

Nail scissors

NAY-il SIZ-erz

Small curved scissors for cutting nails. The best and least damaging tool for cutting nails.

Nailhead

NAY-il-hed

Small dotted design that looks like nail heads, used for worsted suiting cloths in a sharkskin weave. Also found as micro-nailhead.

Nap

nap

The fuzzy surface on fabrics like flannel and doeskin. Made by raising surface fibers with revolving cylinders covered with metal points or teased burrs.

Navy

NAY-vee

A very dark blue, almost black. Named after the color of the uniforms of the British Navy.

Neckline

NEK-line

In shaving, your neckline defines the lower end of your beard and should be shaved to follow the line of your jaw. Can also refer to the shape of the neck on a piece of clothing or to the way your haircut is shaped at the back of your neck.

Necktie

NEK-tie

The standard type of tie that hangs down to the belt. Strictly speaking, a 'tie' can mean either a necktie or a bow tie, so 'necktie' can be used to clarify that you're not talking about a bow tie.

Nehru jacket

NAIR-roo JA-kit

A single-breasted jacket with a high standing collar. After India won its independence from the British Empire, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru stopped wearing British suits and switched to a knee-length Indian jacket called the achkan or sherwani. This inspired the Nehru jacket, which is hip-length and can be worn as part of a suit. It became popular in America and Europe in the 60s and 70s.

Nested suit

NES-tid SOOT

A suit in which jacket and trousers are sold together (the opposite of Suit Separates.) The nested suit also sometimes includes a vest.

Neutral

NYU-tral

A color that contains none of the primary colors. Black, white, gray, and brown are neutrals. Navy and denim are usually counted as neutrals too.

Nizzers

NIZ-erz

A cross between nail nippers and scissors.

Non-iron

non-I-ron

Garments which are 'non-iron' have seams which are taped to prevent puckering. The completed garment is then treated with an ammonia process, pressed and baked to make it wrinkle-free. Non-iron fabric can sometimes be a little stiff and shiny by comparison with normal fabric.

Normcore

NORM-core

A nostalgic trend for plain, simple and old-fashioned casual clothes like 'dad jeans' and beige cardigans. A portmanteau of the words 'normal' and 'hardcore'. Can be seen as a reaction against ever faster-changing fashion trends.

Notch lapel

NOTCH la-PEL

A lapel style for single-breasted coats with a notch at the point where the collar meets the lapel. The most normal style for suit jackets and sports jackets.

Notions

NO shons

Items used for sewing such as hooks, buttons, zippers, etc.

Nubuck

NYU-buk

A velvet-like leather characterized by a short nap and a soft, wear-resistant finish. Nubuck is similar to suede, but is made from the outer side of the cowhide whereas suede is made from the underside. The short nap is created by a sanding process and the final product is labor and dye intensive, so nubuck is generally more expensive than suede. Typical uses include footwear and belts.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

O

Off the rack

OFF the RAK

A term describing any clothing garment that is purchased ready-to-wear for the person. Unlike bespoke or made-to-measure clothing, off the rack

is made to generalized measurements. This process is the cheapest method of clothing manufacturing as it is the least labor intensive and highly automated. Those who consider purchasing off-the-rack clothing should realize that the fit of the garment will not be as flattering as made-to-measure or bespoke.

Oil restorer

OI-I ri-STOR-er

A product for restoring the oils in dried-out leather to prevent cracking.

Oilskin

OI-I-skin

A raincoat made of a cotton fabric coated with oil.

Ombre plaid

OM-bray plad

Plaid fabric dyed or woven in a gradation of shades (ombre means shaded in French,)

Open lacing

OH-pen LAY-sing

A style of dress shoe lacing in which the quarters (the part with the eyelets) are sewn on top of the vamp (the front part). More casual than closed lacing, which has the vamp on top of the quarters. Derby shoes feature open lacing.

Ottoman

OT-o-man

A textured, closely woven fabric of raised crosswise ribs used for neckwear and formalwear facings. Originally from Turkey.

Outseam

OWT-seem

The trouser-length measurement taken from the top of the waistband to

the trouser bottom.

Overcoat

OH-ver-coat

Warm outer garment in single- or double-breasted style, that dates back to the 17th century. Heavier and longer than a topcoat. Overcoats are made from heavy cloth or fur and usually longer than knee-length, topcoats are made from lighter weight fabrics like gabardine and end above the knee.

Overnight Bag

OVER-nite bag

Overnight bag – also being called overnight case is a small piece of luggage used to carry different items like clothing and personal articles needed for an overnight stay.

Oxblood

OX-blud

A dark red color of leather that goes with navy, charcoal, light gray, and brown suits – but NOT black suits.

Oxford Cloth

OX-ford

A cotton cloth with a tiny pattern, made by weaving a two-ply white warp and a single bulky white or colored weft together to simulate a basket weave. Traditionally used in button-down shirts.

Oxford cotton button-down/OCBD

OX-ford COT-on BUT-on DOWN/ OH-see-bee-DEE

An Oxford cloth shirt with a button-down collar, popularized by Brooks Brothers. A classic part of 'Ivy League' style. Generally seen as too casual to be worn with a suit.

Oxford gray

OX-ford GRAY

A dark gray made by blending white and black wool (as opposed to Cambridge gray, a light gray.) Inspired by the fact that the Oxford University colors are dark blue and Cambridge is light blue.

Oxford Shoe

OX-ford

A type of men's dress shoe that is distinguishable by the shoelace eyelet tabs sewn under the vamp. Oxfords are also called Balmorals. The details such as the color and brogueing vary from every producer, yet the simplicity and clean lines are what make this type of dress shoe the most formal as compared with blucher design.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

P

Paisley

PAYZ-lee

A pear-shape design in fabric of far Eastern origin. Paisley is characterized by an ornate tear or pear shape motif with floral and sometimes geometric designs inside and outside of the paisley. Paisley is a popular design used in neckties and jacket linings. Any color combination is possible but traditionally earth tones are the most popular.

Panama

PAN-a-mah

A type of unlined and unshaped summer hat, 'Panama straw hats' are neither from Panama nor made from straw. They're woven in Ecuador from the fronds of the jipijapa plant, and were called Panama after Roosevelt spotted them on the workers on the Panama Canal and bought one.

Pant Cuff

Pant Kuff

The turned up and stitched section of the bottom of the trouser leg. Most trousers come unhemmed (unfinished) near the ankle, the tailor will take a measurement for the break while the wearer is in shoes. Pant cuffs are a must for trousers with double pleats and optional for single pleat trousers. The purpose of having pant cuffs is to protect the trouser bottoms from fraying and dirtying.

Parka

PAR-kuh

A type of waist-long heavy winter jacket. Also called an “Anorak”, the parka has its origins in the Arctic region. Traditionally made from seal or caribou, parkas now are made from mostly synthetic material. Almost always a parka has a hood which is lined with natural or faux fur. A parka will have a zippered front and sometimes drawstrings at the waist and cuffs. Parkas are casual jackets and are meant to be worn as such.

Parquet

par-KAY

A diagonal twill, dobby woven in a pattern of squares resembling a parquet floor.

Pastel

pas-TEL

A pale color produced by mixing a hue with white. Pastels are most often worn in spring and summer.

Patch Pocket

PATCH POK-it

A pocket made by stitching a piece of material on the outside of a garment. Gives a sporty and casual look – more so than flapped pockets.

Patchwork

PATCH-wurk

A fabric created by sewing together patches of different fabrics. The most

common place to find patchwork in menswear is on casual vests.

Patent Leather

Pay-Tent Lether

A lacquer-coated, high gloss leather usually solid black. Due to its production techniques, patent leather is waterproof and highly reflective. The most common application of patent leather is formal footwear.

Peacoat

PEE-coat

A classic heavy woolen jacket, usually waist-length (and no longer than hip length) and originally worn by sailors. Pea coats are almost always dark navy or black in color and double breasted with wide lapels.

Typically the buttons are black but sometimes brass-colored. Pea coats receive their name from the Dutch word “pij” that describes the type of twilled fabric used in its construction. Pea coats are known for their warmth and water resistance; the United States Navy has been issuing pea coats to its sailors for decades. Civilian usage of the pea coat is generally with casual clothes.

Peaked lapel

peek'd luh-PEL

A lapel cut on an upward slant, coming to a point and leaving only a narrow space between the collar and lapel. More formal than a notch lapel. Almost all double-breasted and some single-breasted coats and jackets have peaked lapels.

Pencil stripe

PEN-cil str?p

Very fine stripes, two or three warp threads wide (so about the width of a pencil line).

Penny loafers

pen-ee lohferz

Loafers decorated with a leather band with a diamond-shaped cutout. Young men supposedly used to keep pennies in these in case they needed to use a payphone. An icon of Ivy League style, made popular by Bass Weejuns in 1938. The name 'Weejuns' comes from 'Norwegians', whose moccasins inspired the shoe.

Permanent press

PER-man-ent PRESS

"Permanent press" clothes are resistant to wrinkling – another term for 'non-iron'.

Persol

PUR-sol

A classic Italian brand of glasses and sunglasses made famous by Steve McQueen among others.

Pick stitching

píck STÍCH-íng

A large stitch that simulates a hand stitch. The pick stitch is done around the lapel and pockets of a jacket. Indicates that the jacket is good quality and most likely made to measure or bespoke.

Pick-and-pick

PIK-and-pik

A neat-patterned weave with single warp threads in different colors, often used for summer suits.

Pilling

PILing

Bobbles of fuzz that appear on the surface of fabric, especially knitwear; can be shaved off with a razor.

Pima cotton

PEE-ma COT-on

A long-staple cotton that makes some of the best quality shirts. A cross between American and Egyptian varieties.

Pin check

PIN chek

A check about the size of a pinhead, used for suits, sport jackets, and shirts.

Pin wale

PIN wale

Corduroy with a very narrow wale or rib.

Pindot

PIN-dot

A small dot pattern about the size of a pinhead, usually found in worsted suits. Pindot ties are very versatile – they go with almost any shirt pattern and can be worn in more formal situations than regular polka dots.

Pinned Collar

PINNED co-lar

A type of mensdress shirtcollar that incorporates the use of a collar pin. Also called “pin collar”, a genuine pin collar will have two small holes on each collar tabs so that a barbell-style collar pin can be used. The pinned collar is subtly more flashy than a regular business collar due to the use of the collar pin-a piece of mens jewelry.

Pinpoint oxford

PIN-point OX-ford

A lightweight oxford cloth made with finer threads. Pinpoint oxford shirts can be worn in more formal situations than regular oxfords, and also in warmer weather.

Pinstripe

PIN-stripe

The most common stripe found in suits – fine stripes the width of a pin scratch made by a single white or differently colored warp thread.

Piping

PIE-ping

A narrow cord, braid, or fold used to finish or decorate the edges or pockets of a garment. The best-known use of piping is probably on the outseams of tuxedo pants, which should be the same material as the lapel facing. Recently piping has also been showing up on tuxedo jacket and vest edges.

Piqué

pee-KAY

A fabric with ribs running crosswise from selvage to selvage, sometimes woven to give a honeycomb or waffle effect. Used for formal vests and shirt fronts.

Placket

PLACK-it

A separate strip of fabric sewn onto a shirt front or sleeve gauntlet to secure the buttonholes and provide structure and finish.

Plaid

plad

A boxlike design formed by stripes of various widths running vertically and horizontally on a fabric. Originally the plaid was a long rectangular tartan cloth worn in Scotland (from the Gaelic 'plaide') – men wore it over the left shoulder by day and slept under it at night.

Plain weave

PLANE weev

The simplest, most important, and most common of all weaves in textile making, in which the weft yarns pass over one warp yarn and under the next.

Pleat

pleet

A type of fabric fold that is either sewn or ironed into place. Trousers with pleats have them secured under the waistband. The opening of the fold can either be towards the pocket or towards the zipper. Pleats use more fabric in the same circumference as in flat-front trousers. The achieved look is both cosmetic and allows more room within the garment. Large men should avoid wearing pleated pants as it may cast an illusion of being larger.

Plier clippers

PLI-er CLI-perz

Nail clippers that literally look like tiny pliers – more effective and easier on the nail than compound lever clippers.

Ply

pl-i

The act of twisting together two or more single threads of yarn each in the opposite direction. Two-ply yarn has two threads twisted together; three-ply has three and so on.

Pocket square

POCK-it skware

A type of handkerchief worn in the breast pocket of a jacket for display rather than use.

Pocket watch

POCK-it wotch

A small, round timepiece and the predecessor of the wristwatch. A pocket watch is meant to be carried inside the pocket of a suit coat, waist coat or, rarely, a pocket watch pocket near the waistline of trousers. The watch is attached by means of a small chain to either a button or loop inside the coat. Pocket watches have a long history and as a result are made in

various ways and different degrees of artistry. Pocket watches were considered to be more masculine than the effeminate wristwatch hence why only men carried pocket watches.

Pointed Collar

POINTED Kollar

A type of men's dress shirt collar that has more prominent collar tabs either longer or sharper-looking than a standard business collar. A pointed collar places emphasis along vertical lines, therefore any men with long or narrow faces should avoid wearing a pointed collar. Any narrow or small necktie knot is appropriate for the pointed collar.

Polka dot

POL-kuh dot

A regular pattern of repeating dots, often found on ties and pocket squares (and socks). Useful for pattern mixing because it doesn't clash with stripes or checks.

Polo coat

POH-loh kote

A double- or single-breasted overcoat of camel's hair or soft fleece with set-in or raglan sleeves, patch pockets with flaps, sleeve cuffs, and a half or all-around belt. An American classic, originally worn by British gentlemen to keep warm in between playing polo.

Polo shirt

POH-loh shirt

a casual, short-sleeved cotton shirt with a collar and several buttons at the neck.

Poplin

POP-lin

A plain, tightly woven fabric with pronounced ribs produced by using heavier and coarser warp yarns than weft. Usually mercerized for higher

luster. Poplin has a heavier texture than broadcloth.

Pores

porz

The holes in your skin that release oil to keep your skin healthy and moisturized. They can become blocked and cause spots if they produce too much oil or if you aren't cleaning your skin regularly.

Pork pie

pork PIE

A felt sport hat with a flat-topped crown, shaped like a pork pie.

Pratt/Pratt-Shelby

prat SHEL-bee

A symmetrical tie knot, between the four-in-hand and half-Windsor in size, created by Jerry Pratt and popularized when he tied it on TV reporter Don Shelby. It uses less length than the half-Windsor or Windsor knots, and so is useful for shorter ties or taller men.

Pre-shave oil

pree-SHAYV-oi-il/PREE-shayv-oi-il

Oil applied to prepare your beard before shaving. Reduces razor burn and creates a closer shave.

Prince of Wales check

PRINS of WAY-lz chek

This term is often used interchangeably with Glen check/Glenurquhart check, but the true Prince of Wales check is almost twice the size of a Glen check, in reddish-brown on a white background with a slate gray overcheck. It was popularized by the famous style icon Edward, Duke of Windsor, but designed by his grandfather, Edward VII.

Pullover Sweater

PULL-over swetter

A type of sweater (knit or woven) that lacks a zipper or buttons like those of cardigan sweaters. Pullovers receive their namesake from the wearer having to pull the sweater over the head in order to be worn.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

Q

Quarters

KWOR-terz

The back and upper part of a shoe that connects with the vamp (front part).

Quartz

kwortz

A watch movement that is powered by a quartz crystal. The crystal oscillates to power the timepiece. Generally cheaper and more accurate but less classically stylish than mechanical watches.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

R

Raglan sleeves

RAG-lan sleevz

Sleeves extending at an angle from each armhole to the collar in front and back. The raglan sleeve has no shoulder seam and is most often found in 3/4 sleeve baseball shirts, although it can be found in other garments as well.

Raincoat

RAIN-kote

A long coat, typically with a belt, made from waterproofed or water-resistant fabric.

Raw Denim

raw DEN-im

Also known as dry or unwashed denim; denim that has not undergone any of the usual washing and distressing processes. This means the knees, thighs, ankles and crotch will develop unique patterns of wear and fading over time. To assist the process many wearers avoid washing their jeans for more than six months:

Raw edge

raw EDJ

An edge that has not been hemmed and shows the cut ends of threads (e.g. on cutoff jeans).

Rawhide

rawHIDE

Any animal hide that has not undergone the tanning process. Rawhide does, however, go through a process in which the fur (or hair), muscle tissue and fat are removed, and then it is stretched and dried. Rawhide is workable after it is soaked with water, but will eventually become hard as it dries out.

Razor

RAY-zor

A tool with a blade used to shave the unwanted hairs on your head, on your face or elsewhere on your body.

Razor blade

RAY-zor blayd

A tapered sheet of metal sharpened to an extremely sharp point. Old style razor blades are lethally sharp blades inserted into a separate handle, whilst modern blades are far smaller and already affixed into a plastic safety casing complete with a lubricating strip.

Razor bumps and razor burn

RAY-zor bumps, RAY-zor burn

A rash of swollen hair follicles that develop as red bumps after shaving.
Razor burn can be minimized with correct shaving and skincare products.

Ready to Wear

RED-ee too WARE

See 'off the rack'.

Reefer jacket

REE-fer JAK-it

Principally the same as a pea coat, but instead of black or navy blue buttons, a reefer jacket uses brass buttons. Naval officers wore reefer jackets whereas enlisted sailors would wear pea coats with dark buttons.

Repp Tie

REPP-tie

A type of necktie with diagonal ribs (stripes) due to the weaving pattern. There is a plethora of different color combinations, however in some countries certain color combinations are associated with clubs, schools, and organizations.

Revers

re-VE-ers

Another name for lapels – actually the facing of the lapels, which folds back to show the 'reverse' side of the collar and lapels. Revers can be made with a different fabric for decoration – dinner jackets often have satin revers.

Rise

rize

On pants, the distance from crotch to waistband or the difference between outseam and inseam – 'low rise' pants sit low on the hips and are more casual, 'high rise' pants sit closer to the natural waist and flatter bigger guys, and 'mid rise' hits about at the belly button and is the best bet if you want to tuck a shirt into your pants.

Round collar

rownd KOL-ar

Another name for a club collar.

Royal Oxford

ROY-al OX-ford

A lustrous dress-shirting fabric with a high thread count and a basket weave design made from fine two-ply yarns. More formal than pinpoint Oxford, which is itself more formal than regular Oxford.

Rule of Seven

ROOL ov SEV-en

A style rule that says no-one should have more than seven points of interest on their body, otherwise it gets too overwhelming for the eyes. Possible points for men include: bold patterns, non-conservative color, pocket squares, cufflinks, watches, brightly-colored neckties, waistcoats, boutonnieres, braces, brass buttons (on blazer jackets), trendy eyeglasses, belt buckles, and even facial hair.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

S

Sack suit

SAK soot

A softly tailored coat (rather than a suit) with straight-hanging lines, lightly-padded natural shoulders, and undarted fronts (which means the coat has little shaping at the waist.) Became popular with the Ivy League in the 1920s and became the basis of Brooks Brothers 'natural' American style for the next 60 years.

Saddle shoe

SAD-dl shoo

A laced oxford shoe with a strip of leather over the instep, either in the

same color as the rest of the shoe or in a contrast color such as black or brown on white.

Saddle soap

SA-dl-sope

A soap used to clean leather. Can strip the tanning agents from the leather and leave it vulnerable to cracking, so be sure to follow up with a leather conditioner after use.

Sandal

SAN-dal

A shoe consisting of a sole with a strapped upper in front and a buckled strap extending from the back over the instep. Sometimes there are crossover or toe straps in front. Sandals are meant to be worn with bare feet – not socks.

Sandwashed silk

SAND-woshd-silk

A process by which the silk is treated to give it an even softer surface, almost suede-like in feel. This fabric is incredibly soft, has a matte surface and drapes beautifully.

Sanforized

SAN-for-ized

Pre-shrunk by a patented process that guarantees the fabric will never shrink more than 1% afterwards. Most often done with jeans and dress shirts.

Sapphire crystal

SA-fi-er CRIS-tal

Sapphire watch crystals are 2-3 times harder than mineral glass and virtually scratch-proof. They are more brittle so are more likely to crack or shatter than mineral. Replacement cost is substantially higher than for mineral crystals.

Satchel

SAT-shel

A soft shoulder bag traditionally made from leather. Satchel bags may also have external pockets and carrying handles, and are usually shut with external belt-like straps.

A satchel bag

is different from a briefcase because a briefcase lacks straps and is always hard.

Satin

SA-tin

A closely-woven shiny fabric with a weave that lets as many of the warp threads as possible float on the front side, making the front glossy and the back dull. Made from silk or synthetics, used for neckwear and as trimming for formalwear as an alternative to grosgrain.

Satin weave

SA-tin weev

A basic weave with long floats of yarn on the surface, interlaced with no visible pattern to create a smooth and somewhat shiny effect.

Savile Row

SA-vil RO

A street in Mayfair, central London, which has been famous for its custom tailors since Beau Brummell created a fashion for bespoke wool tailoring in the 18th century. The word 'bespoke' is said to have been coined there, and Henry Poole, the inventor of the tuxedo, opened an entrance to his store there. Gieves & Hawkes of 1 Savile Row have dressed generations of the British royal family.

Scale (razor)

SKAY-el

The protective finish that covers the handle on each side of a straight

razor. Used to conceal and protect the blade.

Scotch tweed

skotch tweed

Tweed made in a two-up and two-down twill weave with white warp and dyed weft threads. Looks shaggy and irregular.

Screw back

SKROO bak

A type of watch case. The back of the case has a thread so that it can be screwed into the case.

Screw-down crown

SKROO-down KROWN

A watch crown that screws down into the case to make the watch more water-resistant and to help keep out dust.

Sea-island cotton

SEE I-land COT-ton

The very finest long-staple cotton, lustrous and strong. Made from the the *Gossypium barbadense* cotton species just like Pima cotton and Egyptian cotton; however, Sea Island cotton is grown on the islands off the coast of the southern United States (South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Texas) and in the West Indies.

Seersucker

SEE-er-SU-ker

A washable fabric of cotton or other blends, with crinkled stripes made by altering the tension of the warp threads. Usually the crinkled stripes are white and the flat stripes in between are blue or another color.

Popular for summer suits and jackets, especially in the American South.

Seersucker is a wise choice for those who wear business suits in hot and humid climates as the fabric hangs loosely on the body allowing for maximum air circulation.

Derived from Hindi 'sirsakar' – 'milk and sugar'.

Self pattern

SELF-pa-tern

A woven design in the same shade as the background of the fabric.

Selvedge

SEL-vej

From 'self-edge' – the edge of a fabric, woven with special heavier yarns and often in bright colors, for reinforcement or to prevent unraveling.

Selvedge Denim

SEI-vej DEN-im

High-quality denim made the traditional way on shuttle looms, producing tightly woven fabric with a selvedge – a natural, self-finishing edge which will not unravel itself. Selvedge denim jeans are very popular and often worn turned up to show off the selvedge. Selvedge denim is generally more expensive but is long-lasting.

Semiformal

SE-mi-FOR-mal

A dress code that changes based on time of day. In the evening, men are required to wear a Black Tie (tuxedo) ensemble. This includes a black tail-less tuxedo jacket, black trousers, classic white dress shirt, waistcoat, and cummerbund. Semiformal evening dress is synonymous with that of a black tie event. For daytime, the "Stroller" (a relaxed alternative to morning dress) is appropriate.

This ensemble comprises a single- or double-breasted coat (grey or black), grey striped or checked formal trousers, a necktie (grey or silver), and a waistcoat (dove grey, funeral black, or buff).

Serge

surj

A mill-weave worsted fabric with a smooth surface and a diagonal weave

on both sides of the fabric. Also a word for wool mixed with silk. From the 1890s to the Second World War, if a man only owned one suit it was usually the “trusty blue serge”.

Serging

SUR-jing

A stitch that casts the thread over a material to prevent its seams from unraveling. Serging can also mean joining two pieces of fabric together for neatness to make for a flat surface, e.g. serging a cuff to a sleeve.

Shacket

SHACK-it

Jacket designed in the style of a shirt with a button-front closure, shirt collar and often a two-button adjustable cuff.

Sharkskin

SHARK-skin

A clear-faced, dressy worsted fabric in two tones of yarn of twill weave that looks like the skin of a shark

Sharpening

SHAR-pen-ing

Giving a metal blade a sharp edge using sharpening stones, a strop or other abrasive tools. This process maximizes the life of a blade and should be performed regularly. An incorrectly sharpened blade does not usually cut and often causes cuts and scrapes. Scissors, knives, nail clippers and razors all need sharpening on a regular basis.

Shaving

SHAY-ving

Removing unwanted hairs with a razor.

Shaving brush

SHAY-ving brush

A brush used to lather up shaving soap for old-fashioned wet shaving.

Shaving cream

SHAY-ving kreem

A lubricant used to reduce friction between the blade and your skin to prevent razor burn and give you a close shave.

Shaving kit

SHAY-ving kit

A set of tools and products essential for shaving. Generally, a complete shaving kit has a razor, a hairs brush, a shaving brush stand and some grooming products such as a pre-shaving cream, a shaving cream, and an aftershave cream.

Shaving soap

SHAY-ving sope

Classic shaving aid, worked into foam with water and a shaving brush to lubricate the skin.

Shawl lapel

SHAWL la-PEL

A lapel cut in one piece, or with a seam in the center back, that follows the front opening of a jacket and rolls back without notches or peaks. The only alternative to peak lapels for the classic dinner jacket.

Shea Butter

SHAY but-er

A natural moisturizer extracted from the nuts of the shea tree in West Africa.

Shearling

SHEER-ling

Sheepskin pelts that have the wool still attached to the hair side and a suede finish on the underside. Shearling does not receive lengthy

shearing so as to make uniform the wool. Shearling is worn wool-side in and suede-side out. Like all wool products, shearling contains antimicrobial properties and is very efficient at trapping body heat. The most common use of shearling is in a shearling coat, a very warm coat that has the wool visible on the lapels.

Shelby

SHEL-bee

See Pratt-Shelby.

Shell Cordovan

SHEL COR-do-van

A type of tight grain, long-lasting leather made from the rump of a horse. Shell cordovan is very durable, naturally water repellent but very expensive due to the small yield per horse (18?: enough to make about to two pairs of shoes). Unlike cow leather, shell cordovan with proper care will improve with age and will develop a patina. Shoes made from shell cordovan could easily last a lifetime.

Shirt jacket

SHURT JACK-it

See jacket.

Shoe Bag

SHOO bag

Shoe bag – a bag that protects shoes against damage when they are not being worn. Also pouches or drawstring bags designed to hold shoes in luggage to protect them from being damaged and damaging other packed items.

Shoe shine kit

SHOO SHINE kit

A kit containing polish, brushes, a cloth, and sometimes other shoe care essentials. These kits can be heirlooms and make shining your shoes an

enjoyable ritual.

Shoe tree

SHOO tree

A foot-shaped device made from unfinished cedar wood meant to be placed inside dress shoes during storage. The purpose of a shoe tree is to help maintain the shoe's shape by pushing out any creases and to absorb foot odor. A shoe tree extends the life of a pair of shoes and is a wise purchase for any man. The shoe tree most often has a solid or two piece wood toe construction that is attached to a heel piece of cedar with a spring-loaded metal rod.

Side adjusters

SI-da-just-erz

Adjustable buckle or button tabs in the sides of the waistband of trousers, used as an alternative to a belt or suspenders. Buckles are smarter than buttons. A tailor can adjust trousers to take side adjusters if they have enough fabric in the waistband.

Sideburns

SIDE-burnz

The hairs that grow along each side of your face (from the middle of your ears to the beginning of your jaw).

Sides (of beard)

sidez

The facial hairs on your cheeks that connect your mustache to your sideburns.

Silk

silk

A strong and smooth natural fiber from the cocoons of the mulberry silkworm mainly from China and Southern Asia. Silk is a lightweight material that has many applications such as shirts, neckties, robes,

pajamas, bedding and rugs. The fibers allow for efficient airflow and superior comfort in warm climates. Genuine silk is quite expensive in relation to other fibers yet silk has been popular for centuries.

Silk knot

silk not

Cufflinks made from silk rather than metal. Silk knots come in a wide range of colors and tones and usually cost less than metal cufflinks.

Silk tweed

silk tweed

A woven fabric made from raw silk in the style of tweed.

Silver tip shaving brush

SIL-ver tip SHAY-ving brush

The best quality badger hair shaving brush, made with silver or gray badger hairs, which absorb water more easily.

Single cuff

SIN-gle CUF

A type of men's dress shirt cuff that requires cufflinks. The single cuff is a French cuff but the word "single" usually implies that only one cufflink is required for each cuff.

Single vent

SIN-gle VENT

A single and centered slit (vent) on the posterior of any mens jacket. The single vent is more American in design than the double vent (which is more European), nevertheless the single vent is still a classic look and an option for any man's suit or blazer jacket.

Single-breasted

SIN-gle BRES-tid

The term for a jacket, vest, or coat with a single set of buttons close to

one front edge and buttonholes on the other side. Opposite of double-breasted.

Single-breasted jackets are generally less formal than double-breasted. Two buttons are the most common amount, but three buttons are also popular.

Regardless if the single breasted jacket is two buttons or three, the bottom button is always left unbuttoned. Almost always the single breasted jacket has notched lapels.

Skin Type

SKIN tipe

Skin can be normal, dry, oily, or sensitive. Know your skin type before buying skincare products.

Skinny fit

SKI-nee fit

A jean or trouser that is fitted around the thigh and skinny on the ankle. Generally not worn by lovers of classic style.

Slanted pocket

SLAN-tid PO-kit

A type of pocket that is set on an angle on the outside of any garment. Slanted pockets are commonly found on hacking jackets as they offer easier access when the wearer is seated. Slanted pockets are less common than straight pockets and usually are less formal as well.

Slip-On

SLIP-on

A non-laced shoe, either loafer-style or elasticized like a Chelsea boot.

Slipper

SLI-per

Any slip-on footwear with no fastening (except rubber boots.)

Smoking Jacket

SMO-king JA-kit

See Tuxedo.

Sneakers

SNEE-kerz

Laced or slip-on shoes with a flexible rubber sole. Originally just for sports and casual wear. You can now get leather dress sneakers made with the same materials as high-end dress shoes and smart enough to be worn with a suit.

Soft coat construction

SOFT kote kon-STRUK-shon

Softer findings used inside a jacket for construction that drapes rather than traditional firm construction which hugs the body. Counterintuitively, a less constructed sportcoat actually takes longer to tailor. Exposed seams require precision inside and out.

Spats

spats

An ankle covering worn over the shoes as part of morning dress, fastened with buttons or buckles. Originally to guard against mud splashes (the word 'spats' is short for 'spatterdashes'.)

Spectator shoes

spek-TAY-tor shoos

Two-tone wingtip semi-brogue or full-brogue oxfords, often in black and white or brown and white, originally for wearing to watch sports events. They normally have the toe and heel cap and sometimes the lace panels in a darker color than the rest of the shoe. This style of shoe dates from the 19th century but was most popular in the 1920s and 30s.

SPF

ESS-pee-EFF

Sun Protection Factor. The higher the SPF in a skincare product, the more it will protect your skin from the sun.

Split leather

split LE-ther

When the layers of the cowhide have been separated, split leather contains all the layers except for the top half of the hide. Split leather is generally used to make suede.

Split toe shoe

split toh SHOO

A type of dress shoe that has a distinguishable seam either fully or partially from the tip to the throat. The shoe looks “split” because the vamp is made from two pieces of material and is sewn together. If the shoe has a partial split, then the seam will start at the tip and run until the toe cap. Split toe shoes are less formal than balmorals, but are accepted as a part of the normal daily business outfit.

Split yoke

split yohk

Two pieces of dress shirt fabric that are sewn together and then sewn on the top of the back of a dress shirt with the seam in the center. The purpose of the split yoke is to allow greater freedom of movement of the wearer and a relaxed fabric feel.

Sport jacket

SPORT JAK-it

A type of tailored, casual mens jacket made without matching trousers. Sports jackets (also called Sports coats) are less formal than business suit jackets and blazers. Often the sports jacket is made from heavier fabric than what suit jackets are made from. Tweed is the most common material used. Traditionally the sport coat is single-breasted, double vent, and notched lapels. Patch pockets are at the most casual end of sports jacket design, but are acceptable as a part of a jacket worn in country-like

situations.

Sport shirt

SPORT shurt

A buttoned shirt for casual wear, often with made with a softer collar, more rugged fabric, and bolder colors and patterns than dress shirts.

Spread collar

SPRED KO-lar

A collar whose points are more spread than a straight-point collar but less open than a cutaway collar. Suits thin faces, but makes round faces look rounder. The most popular collar type, and a good choice for wearing with a jacket but no tie. Spread collars can come wide or medium. A full knot like the Windsor knot must be used to compliment the width of the collar spread.

Staple

STAY-pul

A single fiber of cotton or wool; often paired with a modifier describing the fiber length or fineness (e.g. "extra long staple").

Stooping

STOO-ping

A leaning forward posture. When making a jacket, the tailor will make it with a longer back and shorter front if the client has a stooping posture.

Straight collar

STRAYT KO-lar

A standard dress shirt collar with a narrow opening between its points; looks best with round or oval faces. Should be worn with a tie as it looks messy without. Generally, a straight point collar spread is around 1? in width in proportion to the length of the collar points. A straight point collar can be worn in almost any situation as long as the wearer uses an appropriate knot for his necktie.

Straight pocket

STRAYT PO-kit

A horizontal pocket on the outside of any garment. Straight suit pockets unlike slanted (“hacking”) pockets are more formal-looking. Straight pockets are also found on the rear of trousers. Straight pockets can have flaps.

Straight razor

STRAYT RAY-zor

An old-fashioned razor with a single fixed blade, used for wet shaving.

Straight Razor support

STRAYT RAY-zor su-PORT

A straight razor stand is designed to keep your straight razor in a suitable position to let water and foam drain away and prevent dirt and bacteria accumulation.

Strop

strop

A long piece of leather or linen used to sharpen a straight razor blade. The blade should be passed on a strop before each use to lengthen its life.

Strop paste

STROP payst

An abrasive applied to the strop before use.

Stubble

STU-ble

A relatively short beard of about 2-10 days’ growth. The easiest beard to maintain and the smartest, adding definition to the face. Needs fairly thick and even facial hair to look good. Start by growing stubble at least ¼” longer than you want, then trim with an electric razor, starting with the

longest guard length. Fade the neckline using progressively shorter guards.

Sub-dial

SUB-di-al

A small dial placed inside the main dial on a watch's dial. Watches can have as many as four sub-dials (auxiliary dials). They give information not provided by the main watch dial such as chronographs, alarm, dual time zone, and calendar.

Suede

swayd

Leather that has been buffed to a fine nap or velvet finish on the flesh, or inner side of the skin.

Suede brush

SWAYD brush

A brush for cleaning suede without damaging it.

Suede eraser

SWAYD e-RAY-zer

A special eraser for rubbing off marks on suede (since washing with water can stain it.)

Suit brush

SOOT brush

A brush for removing dust, dirt and hair from suits, jackets and pants. Extends the life of the garments and the amount of time you can go without dry cleaning.

Super wools

SOO-per woolz

Pure new wool. The number following the word 'Super' (for example "Super 180's") specifies the fineness of the wool. A higher number means

a finer (thinner and lighter) wool.

Suspenders

su-SPEN-derz

Also known as braces – strips of elasticated material that attach to the waistband to hold up pants as an alternative to a belt. Will make you look taller and slimmer. Never wear WITH a belt – wear one or the other.

Typically around 1" in width, suspenders form an X or Y shape on the back of a man and are anchored by buttons sewn on the outside of the trouser waist or clipped onto the trouser waist. Suspenders are meant to be worn with trousers without belt loops.

Sweater

SWE-ter

A knit pullover or cardigan.

Sweeping second hand

SWEE-ping SE-kund HAND

A second hand that is mounted in the center of the dial on a watch, instead of a sub-dial, and “sweeps” the entire dial of the watch.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

T

T-shirt

TEE-shurt

A T-shaped casual shirt made from a light stretchy knit fabric, typically with a round neckline, short sleeves, and no buttons. Evolved from undershirts and was popularized by actors like Marlon Brando and James Dean.

Tab collar

TAB KO-lar

Collar with points held in place by tabs that fasten under the tie knot,

pushing the collar and tie up higher on the neck. Good for shortening long necks and lengthening round or square faces.

Tailcoat

TAI-il-kote

Formal jacket with a short front and long 'tails' at the back. Originally cut this way to make it easier for the wearer to ride a horse.

What most people mean when they say 'tailcoat' is the type worn with white tie – a dark evening coat with a squarely cut away front. The morning coat or cutaway, which is cut away at the front in a gradual taper, is also a type of tailcoat.

Tailoring

TAY-lo-ring

The style or cut of a garment; the art of making, repairing and altering clothing, especially menswear.

Tang

tang

The part of a straight razor that you hold when you shave.

Tartan

TAR-tan

A plaid with vertical and horizontal stripes of varying thicknesses, clarity and color. Scottish kilts are the most famous applications of tartan; clans, families, governing bodies, and so on can be identified by their distinct tartan design. In fact there are more than 5,000 tartan designs that have been registered in the Scottish Tartan Registry database. Aside from kilts, tartan can be used for jacket linings, scarves, golf trousers, and shirts. Outside Scotland the word 'tartan' is often used for any plaid. It actually comes from the Spanish tiritana; the Spanish gave this name to plaid cloths as far back as the thirteenth century.

Tassel

TASS-el

A decorative feature found on loafers. Tassels are made by binding a clump of threads on a cord from which the loose threads are hung. Loafer tassels are almost always made from the same colored leather as the loafer.

Tassel Loafer

TASS-el LO-fer

Any type of loafer shoe with a tassel finishing feature on the vamp.

Tassel loafers, like loafer shoes in general, are regarded as a casual shoe and should be worn as such.

Tattersall

TA-ter-sawl

A checked pattern formed by vertical and horizontal lines usually in two colors on a light background. Named after the pattern on the horse blankets at Tattersall's horse market, London, a popular gamblers' hangout. This pattern found its way onto riding waistcoats and then onto almost every type of clothing. The stripes usually share the same color hue but are different in shade (e.g. cobalt blue and baby blue) but any combination is possible; the background is always lighter than the stripes, white being the most common.

Tennis sweater

TEN-iss SWE-ter

A type of white or off-white knit wool sweater with a generous v-neck neckline often woven with a darker tipping (border) of 1? or more. The same dark yarn is used for a horizontal stripe that goes around the entire sweater near the bottom. Often the tennis sweater (sometimes called a "cricket sweater") has distinguished vertical cable-like knit patterns. The sweater was originally worn on the tennis court and is associated with country clubs.

Textured solid

TEX-churd SOL-id

A solid, one-color fabric with a textured weave, creating a pattern.

Herringbone, for example, is a textured solid.

Three-piece suit

THREE-pees SOOT

Any type of men's suit with the addition of a waistcoat. The three piece suit (also called a "vested suit") in its entirety is more traditional than the common two piece suit as the three piece suit was the standard before the 1960's. The vested suit greatly increases the wear-ability of the suit because a man can wear the jacket and trousers without the vest, or all three pieces together, or the trousers and vest for when he is at his work desk for example.

Ticket pocket

TI-kit PO-kit

A small pocket (jetted or flapped) on the outside of a suit jacket traditionally located above the right main pocket. A ticket pocket is usually half as wide as the main pockets and were used to conveniently pocket a train ticket. A ticket pocket was common when train travel was the main method of transportation; today a ticket pocket is more cosmetic. Also called a cash pocket. Usually a sign of a bespoke garment.

Tie bar/tie clip

TIE bar/TIE klip

A spring-loaded fastener used to clip both ends of a necktie to the shirt. A functional item of jewelry that can be made in decorative shapes and with precious stones and metals. Match the metal of your tie bar to your watch.

Tie pin

TIE pin

A decorative pin used to fasten the necktie to the shirt. Can leave holes in the tie.

Tipping

TIP-ing

A strip of usually contrasting material at the edge of a garment (cuff, neckline, hem, etc.). Most of the time tipping is woven into the garment although sometimes tipping is sewn onto the garment. Tennis sweaters commonly use tipping along the neckline and base.

Toe box

TOE box

A stiff, shell-shaped piece of leather placed between a shoe's lining and tip to maintain its contour and permanent shape.

Tongue (shoe)

tung

A leather flap attached to the inside or outside of a shoe's upper to protect the lacing area.

Top grain

TOP grain

This is NOT the top quality grade of leather, and it doesn't use the top layer of the animal's skin – it's the second best grade, which uses the layer just underneath.

Topcoat

TOP-kote

A coat similar to an overcoat but made from a more lightweight fabric like gabardine.

Trench coat

TRENCH kote

A double-breasted coat in waterproof cotton gabardine, leather, or poplin, with a belt, wide lapels, and a high storm collar that buttons tight across the front. Traditionally it also has buttoned pockets and buttoned epaulets.

Originally a military coat worn in the trenches of WWI. The trench coat is synonymous with characters like Dick Tracy, Rick Blaine from Casablanca, and Inspector Clouseau from The Pink Panther.

Triad

TRY-ad

Three colors that go well together because they are equidistant from each other on the color wheel – for example, blue, pink and yellow.

Trilby

TRIL-by

A slouchy short-brimmed men's hat with an up-turned brim in the back and a pinched crown in the front so as to form a tear drop shape on the crown. Originally worn in England by the heroine of the play 'Trilby' by George du Maurier.

A trilby can be made from felt, straw, wool or tweed, although felt is the most common. A trilby hat has a smaller brim and taller crown than a fedora.

Tropical wool

TRO-pi-cal WOOL

A sturdy but air-circulating worsted material weighing usually 6 to 9.5 ounces per yard, used to make suits, jackets and slacks cool enough to wear in hot climates.

Turtleneck

TUR-tl-nek

A knitted pullover with a long end that is slipped over the head and then rolled to fit closely around the neck.

Tuxedo

TUK-see-doe

The jacket (or the whole suit) worn with black tie. Also known as a dinner jacket. Associated with James Bond. Named after Tuxedo Park, a private

club in upstate New York, where a man named James Brown Potter impressed the members by wearing a short jacket instead of a tailcoat – an idea he got from Edward, Prince of Wales. A tuxedo is a traditionally black formal suit with grosgrain or satin on the jacket lapels on down the outseam of the trousers. A tuxedo is usually has one or two buttons in a single-breasted construction with no vents, however double-breasted tuxedos do exist with peaked lapels. A starched white dress shirt with a winged collar, bow-tie and black patent leather oxfords complete the outfit for a basic black tie event.

Tweed

tweed

A rough woolen material with a homespun surface effect in plain or twill weave and many different patterns usually twill woven with different subdued colored yarns. Tweed is most often associated with informality, nature, fishing and hunting. Sport jackets are commonly made using tweed fabric.

Tweed was originally handmade by crofters near the Tweed river in Scotland. London gentry visiting Scotland on shooting and fishing trips started wearing it and turned it into a fashionable fabric. Legend has it that it's not named after the river, but a misspelling of 'tweel' (Scottish for twill).

Twill

twil

One of the three basic weaves, characterized by diagonal lines on the surface of the fabric. The weft is threaded over two or more warp threads and then woven under two or more warp threads. The simple "over-under" weave is offset between rows in order to create a diagonal rib. Twill is commonly found in tweed and denim.

Two-tone shoes

TOO-tone SHOOZ

Shoes made with two different colors of leather (sometimes two different

finishes too, e.g. brown leather and blue suede.) Spectator shoes are a type of two-tone shoes.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

U

Ulster coat

UL-ster KOTE

Double-breasted long overcoat in heavy tweed or melton with a big convertible collar, wide lapels, and a half- or all-around belt.

Unconstructed

UN-kon-struk-tid

(Of a jacket) Half-lined or unlined, for wearing in hotter weather. Often more expensive than a fully lined jacket, because with no lining to cover up its insides, it needs to be made to a higher standard.

Undershirt

UN-der-shurt

A shirt made to be worn under clothing (not visible) to protect the outer clothing from sweat and/or to keep the wearer warm. Also stops nipples and chest hair showing through thin shirts.

Underwear

UN-der-wair

Clothing worn under other clothes, typically next to the skin, such as underpants, socks, and undershirts.

Unlined

UN-lined

See Unconstructed

Upper

UH-per

The top part of a shoe; the part that isn't the sole.

Utility Bag

UTIL-itee bag

Utility bag is comfortable to carry both in the hand or on the shoulder, perfect for everyday use yet functional enough for overnight trips. Great to carry your vest, rope, gloves, bathing suit, electronic gadgets etc. Canvas utility bag has over-the-shoulder carrying strap being popular among young people.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

V

V neck

VEE nek

A V-shaped neckline on a sweater or T-shirt, OR a sweater or T-shirt with a v-shaped neckline.

Valet stand

va-LAY stand

A functional piece of free-standing furniture that measures about 3.5 feet in height. A valet stand features a coat hanger permanently attached on its bottom by a dowel that runs to the base. In front of the coat hanger are evenly spaced, horizontal dowel rods and at the foremost is a small tray. Further additions include a shoe rack on the bottom and sometimes a small, circular mirror attached to the top of the coat hanger. The purpose of the valet stand is for a man to prepare his clothing the night before he wears his outfit. The suit jacket and dress shirt hang on the coat hanger; the trousers, belt and necktie are hung on the dowel rods; his shoes are placed on the shoe rack; any jewelry pieces such as a wrist watch, cufflinks, or any tools such as a money clip and pen are placed on the tray. The valet stand is almost always made from wood and can come in many stains and finishes.

Vamp

vamp

The part of a shoe upper or boot upper covering the front of the foot and sometimes also extending forward over the toe (if there's no toe cap) or backward to the back seam of the upper (if there are no quarters).

Van Dyke

van DIKE

A beard style that combines a mustache and goatee with clean-shaven cheeks. Named after 17th-century Flemish painter Anthony van Dyck.

Velvet

VEL-vet

A luxurious fabric made traditionally from silk but also cotton and synthetic blends that has been woven on a special loom dedicated to making velvet. Velvet requires two pieces of cloth through which the warp thread is woven. After this weaving process, the cloth is cut apart along the warp thus creating a short and soft pile.

Vent

vent

A vertical slit in a garment, usually from the hem upward, to allow the wearer to move and sit down more easily without crinkling the garment. Jackets usually come with a center vent (the standard American look – slimming for larger behinds), side vents (usually found on more structured English jackets – allow the wearer to put hands in pockets without looking awkward), or no vent (the Italian look – sleekest but most awkward to move in.)

Ventless jacket

VENT-less JA-kit

A suit jacket, blazer or sport coat with no posterior bottom “slits” (vents).

A ventless jacket follows the shape of the hips and is aesthetically simple.

Dinner jackets, for example, are almost always ventless.

Vest

vest

A sleeveless waist-length garment usually worn under a jacket or coat. Also known as a waistcoat. Introduced by King Charles II of England in 1666 as a snub to French fashions during a war with France. The vest is the third piece to a three piece suit and usually is single-breasted although double-breasted vests do exist. The height of popularity was during the early 20th century. Recently the vest and three piece business suit is regaining popularity.

Virgin wool

VIR-jin wool

Wool straight from the sheep that has never been made into yarn or fabric before.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

W

Waistband

WAIST-band

The strip of material running around the top of pants.

Waistcoat

WAIST-kote

See Vest.

Wale

WAY-el

The ridges on corduroy. The thickness of the wales is commonly measured by the number of wales per inch – a lower number means a thicker fabric, e.g. 6 wales per inch is thicker than 12.

Wallet

WOL-et

A holder for money and cards, usually leather.

Warp

worp

The yarn that generally runs vertically in a woven garment, as opposed to the weft, which runs horizontally. On a loom, the warp is actually strung up and down the loom and the weft is woven across it.

Wax shoe polish

wax SHOO pol-ish

The best form of polish for shine, but can dry out leather. Use as a second coat after cream polish. Don't apply too much wax to areas of the shoe that bend, or the wax will crack.

Waxed cotton

waxt KOT-on

Cotton fabric waterproofed with wax – the oldest form of waterproof cloth. Used for coats, jackets and messenger bags.

Wayfarer

WAY-fair-er

The classic style of sunglasses with acetate frames, created by Ray-Ban in the 1950s, that looks good on every face shape.

Weave

weev

The intercrossing of two sets of yarns, the warp (vertical) and the weft (horizontal). Different from knitting, which only uses one yarn. There are three basic weaves, of which two dominate in clothes: plain and twill weave.

Weejuns

WEE-juns

The original penny loafer created by Bass in the 1930s.

Weekender Bag

WEEK-en-der bag

Weekender bag – also called weekend case, is a suitcase of a size to carry clothing and personal articles needed for a weekend trip.

Weft

weft

The horizontal thread in a woven cloth. Sometimes called 'woof'.

Welt

welt

In 'Goodyear welted' dress shoes (the most expensive and most waterproof method of dress shoe making) the welt is a narrow strip of leather stitched to both the upper and the insole to hold them together.

'Welt' can also mean a protective or decorative edging on clothes, e.g. on pockets.

Wet shaving

wet SHAY-ving

Shaving by hand rather than with a power shaver. So called because you use hot water mixed with shaving soap or cream to lather your face with a shaving brush. A traditional wet shave uses a single bladed razor and can either be done with a straight razor or with a safety razor. It gives a closer shave, reduces razor burn, and works out cheaper than cartridges in the long run.

White tie

wite TIE

The most formal evening dress code, also called full evening dress or a dress suit. Consists of a black tailcoat worn over a white starched shirt, a marcella waistcoat, a white bow tie worn around a detachable collar, high-

waisted black trousers, and patent leather shoes. A top hat and white scarf are optional. White tie events include evening weddings, formal presidential and state dinners and balls.

Whitehead

WITE-hed

A pimple filled with white pus caused by a blocked pore. Daily cleansing can help you avoid these. If you squeeze a whitehead it's best to put some antiseptic on it afterwards to prevent infection.

Windbreaker

WIND-bray-ker

A thin waterproof jacket for casual wear.

Windowpane

WIN-doh-pain

A type of fabric pattern characterized by intersecting vertical and horizontal pinstripes. The resulting squares are usually 1"x1", 1.5"x1.5" or sometimes larger on fabrics for scarves, caps, et. al. Windowpane patterns can also be used for mens suits.

Windsor

WIND-zor

Also called a full-Windsor knot. The Windsor knot is a large, wide and symmetrical necktie knot tied with extra loops, falsely attributed to the Duke of Windsor. Usually best worn by men with square and masculine faces. The full-Windsor knot is easily tied with thicker necktie fabric and worn with wider collar spreads. The Windsor knot is not suggested to be worn to formal events like interviews as it draws attention away from the wearer.

Wingtip

WING-tip

Shoe with a toe cap shaped like the spread wings of a bird. Traditionally

comes with broguing (decorative perforations) to make a wingtip brogue, but there are exceptions.

Wool

wool

Fibers from the covering coat of sheep and other animals; also woven, knitted, or felted fabric produced from the fiber.

Working Buttonholes

WER-king BU-ton-holez

Jacket sleeve buttonholes that actually unbutton (cheaper jackets often just have buttons sewn on the cuff for decoration)

Worsted

WER-sted

Smooth woolen fabric in which the structure and color are clearly defined. Often used for suits.

Worsted wool

WER-sted WOOL

Long spun wool fibers. Worsted wool undergoes a combing process to remove any short fibers before being spun into yarn. The result is a wool fiber that is more wrinkle-resistant and durable. Trousers and suits are typical applications for worsted wool.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

Y

Yoke

yoke

A panel of fabric on the upper back of a shirt, joined to the lower part of the garment by a visible seam across the chest or back. A feature of cowboy style. The yoke can be made from a single piece of fabric or can be a split yoke.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

Z

Zoot Suit

ZOOT soot

Outrageous suit with a long jacket, padded shoulders, and baggy trousers, worn by young rebels in the 1930s-50s.

[Click here to go back to top](#)

[Click to download Audio version \(226MB\)](#)

[CLICK HERE TO ATTEND FREE STYLE MASTERCLASS](#)