

Clothes – Our Protection

Introduction

Early humans covered themselves with animal **hides** and bark of trees. Over time, they learnt to **weave**. Ancient Egyptians produced linen while the Chinese started producing silk. Clothes were not stitched and was simply draped over the body. Later, human beings learnt to weave and stitch clothes. Clothes were dyed and made more fitted, with seams, laces, buttons, etc.



Ancient human

Why Do We Need Clothes?

- Clothes protect us from cold, heat, dust, rain and also from insects.
- People around the world wear different kinds of clothes depending on the climate of their place. Clothes made of wool keep us warm in winter. Cotton clothes are cool and comfortable to wear in summer.
- People also wear clothes to look good. The style of clothes keeps on changing, according to the fashion.



Summer wear

Our clothes should be comfortable, suited to weather conditions, and suited to the type of work we do. They should also make us look good and smart.



Doctor



Police



Lawyer

Materials Used for Making Clothes

Take pieces of different types of cloth. Observe them with a magnifying glass. You will see the thread or **fibre** that makes the cloth. The fibres are twisted together and make patterns in the cloth.

Most clothes are made of fibres. The fibres are woven in a machine to form patterns. When your mother **knits** you a sweater, she makes patterns out of wool fibre. Instead of machines, she uses knitting needles.



Woven fabric



Knitted fabric



Knitting a sweater

Fibres are of different kinds.

- **Natural fibres** are fibres obtained from plants and animals. We get fibres such as cotton, jute and linen from plants.



Cotton from cotton plant



Jute from jute plant



Wool from sheep



Silk from silkworm

- We get wool and silk from animals. Clothes made from natural fibres have air spaces between them. They absorb sweat and are therefore comfortable, especially in hot weather.
- **Synthetic fibres** are made by humans from substances called **chemicals**. They are man-made fibres. Nylon, rayon and polyester are synthetic fibres. Nylon was the first synthetic material to be made. Clothes made from synthetic fibres are stronger. They dry easily. They do not wrinkle

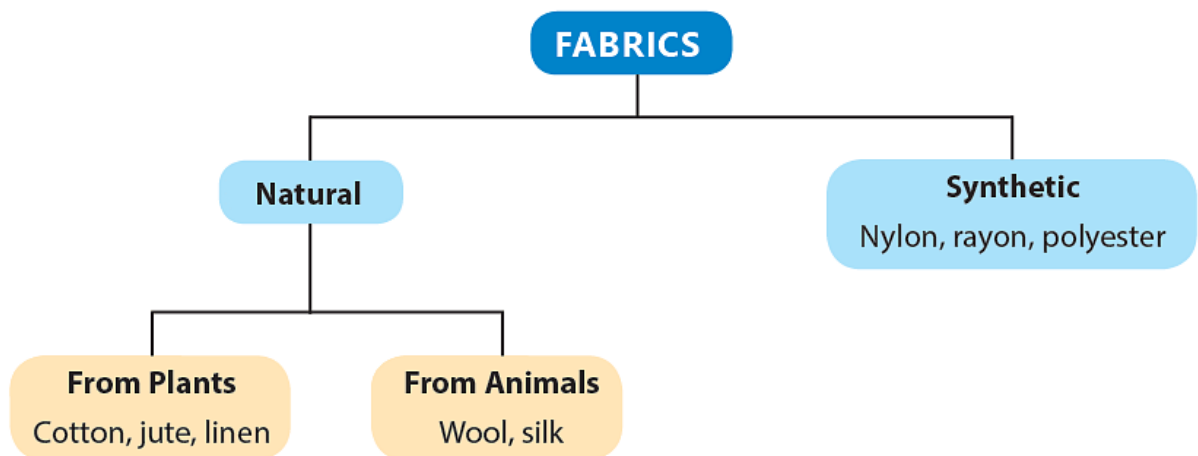
easily. But they have less air spaces in them than natural fibres. They also cannot absorb sweat as they are **non-porous**.



Clothe made of synthetic fibre

Tips:

Synthetic fibres catch fire easily. They melt and shrink away in the flame. One should avoid wearing synthetic materials in the kitchen.



The Clothes We Wear

The type of clothes we wear depends on different factors.

Clothes and weather

In **hot weather**, light cotton clothes are best. They allow body heat to escape, and also absorb sweat. Air can circulate through them more easily. White or light-coloured clothes absorb less heat than dark-coloured clothes, and are more comfortable.

Loose fitting clothes such as kurta-pyjama or lungi are more comfortable and cool than tight fitting clothes.

In **cold weather**, clothes made from wool are better. They keep us warm. Clothes made of leather and fur are also worn, especially in very cold places. Leather and fur clothes are made from skins of animals. They are not made from fibres.

When it rains, we wear a raincoat above our clothes. Raincoats are made of a material that does not absorb water. Such material is called **waterproof**. Polythene is waterproof.



Winter wear



Summer wear



Rain wear

Clothes and Sports

Nowadays sportswear is made from Dri-Fit material. Dri-Fit is a polyester fabric that takes sweat away from the skin to the fabric surface, from where it quickly evaporates. This keeps athletes dry and comfortable. It is especially good in hot weather as it keeps the body dry, cool and comfortable while working out.



Sportswear is made from Dri-Fit material

Dri-Fit polyester is preferred over cotton for making sportswear because cotton becomes damp after soaking up sweat and does not dry as quickly.

Socks and Shoes



Socks



Sandal



Shoes



Boots

Besides clothing our body, we wear socks and shoes to protect our feet. Shoes should be comfortable and well fitting. In summer we wear open shoes, flipflops and sandals. In winter we wear closed shoes to keep our feet warm. Rubber boots are worn in the rainy season.

Special shoes are available for walking and running which give support to the feet. High heeled footwear should be avoided. Socks should ideally be made of cotton. Shoes prevent our feet from getting injured and protect them from heat, cold, dust and germs. Walking barefoot can cause cuts on the feet which could get infected with germs and dirt. You should not wear dirty socks and wet or tight shoes.



Sport shoes

Tips:

Take a cloth bag with you when you go shopping so that you do not have to take a plastic bag from the shopkeeper. You will help the environment in this way.

Care of Clothes

Clothes become dirty because of dust, and sweat from our bodies. Most clothes can be cleaned with soap or detergent, and water. Once they are dried and ironed they look clean and fresh. It is better to clean silk and woollen clothes by using petrol and some other chemicals. This is known as **dry cleaning**. They can also be washed at home with a gentle soap solution.

Torn clothes and loose seams should be immediately repaired. Clothes worn by sick people should be **disinfected** with an **antiseptic** solution. If you keep your clothes clean and take care of them, they will last longer.



Care of clothes

Storing of clothes

During the summer months, people keep their woollen clothes away. If these are not properly stored, they can be spoilt by insects such as **silverfish** and moth. Clothes are usually cleaned and stored in boxes so that they are protected from moisture, dust, **mould** and **mildew**.

Moth balls or dried neem leaves are kept between the folds of clothes to keep the insects away. Boxes containing clothes should be kept in a cool, dry place away from light. Blankets and duvets can be dry cleaned or aired in the sun for a few hours before being packed away.



Silverfish

Tips:

- **Disinfected:** Cleaned, especially with a chemical, to destroy bacteria
- **Antiseptic:** Prevent the growth of disease-causing germs
- **Mould:** A fungus that can grow in a home in moist warm conditions
- **Mildew:** Greenish or whitish fungus that grows in warm and wet conditions