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SOFTLINES

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CHINA REVISES THE TEXTILE CARE LABELLING SYSTEM TO USE UPDATED SYMBOLS – GB/T8685-2008

A revised version of the Chinese Textile – Care Labeling Code Using symbols (GB/T 8685-2008) has been approved by the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China and the Standardization Administration of the People's Republic of China. This revised standard was approved on June 18, 2008 and will take effect on March 1, 2009. This is one of the recommended standards cited by GB 5296.4 Instructions for use of products of consumer interest – Part 4: Textile and apparel, which is itself a compulsory standard in China.

The publication of GB/T 8685-2008 has drawn the attention of the textile and garment industry as well as the consumers in the Chinese market.

The type of fibers, yarns and finishes used in textiles vary and contribute to the selection of care instructions which can be used to successfully avoid permanent damage to textile products. The care label helps to give guidance to the consumer and commercial cleaner on the proper methods to wash, bleach, dry, iron or professional textile care.



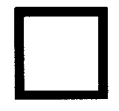
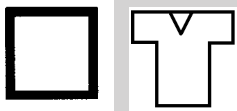


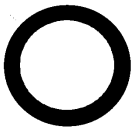
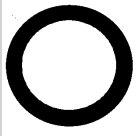

The revisions to this standard have brought it into alignment with the international care label standard ISO 3758. The standard is more practical in its approach and is applicable to all textile products which are available to the end users.

The major changes to the standard are outlined below:

1. The sequence of symbols has been changed to follow the order of washing, bleaching, drying, ironing and professional care.
2. The actual shapes of the symbols have changed to be in alignment with ISO 3758.
3. The symbol representing non-chlorine bleach has been added.
4. Natural drying symbols have been changed and expanded.
5. A "very gentle process" has been added and is represented by a double line under the symbol.
6. The use of 1 to 4 dots to represent temperatures in the ironing and tumble drying symbols has been added.



The changes in symbol shapes are shown in the table below.

GB/T 8685-2008		GB/T 8685-1988	
Name	Care symbol	Name	Care symbol
Washing ¹		Washing ¹	
Drying		Drying after washing	
Ironing		Ironing	
Professional clean		clean Dry clean	
Very gentle process		-	-

Notes:

1. The temperature in connection with the symbol is given as a figure representing degree Celsius without the designation "°C".

General guidelines for designing and placement of care labels:

1. The specified symbols should be used directly on the products or on permanent labels.



2. The care label should be durable and legible for the lifetime of the product and be easily seen by the consumer.
3. The order of the symbols should be in the sequence of care: washing, bleaching, drying, ironing and professional cleaning.
4. The care instructions should apply to the product as a whole.
5. The number of symbols used should be enough to ensure that the product will not be permanently harmed by the care.
6. Words in addition to the symbols may be used if needed to prevent harm to products being cleaned at the same time.
7. Additional words should be kept to a minimum.

Figure 1 shows a comparison of the new symbols (new order of symbols) to the old symbols when used for the same care instructions



GB/T 8685-2008	GB/T 8685-1988
Maximum washing temperature 30°C, mild washing	Maximum washing temperature 30°C, mild washing
Tumble dry, maximum exhaust temperature 60°C	Tumble dry
Do not bleach	Do not bleach
Do not iron	Do not iron
Normal dry clean	Normal dry clean
Wash with like colors	Wash with like colors
	

Fig. 1 The comparison of a care label under the new and old version of GB/T 8685

Note: The language on care label should only be in Chinese for textiles to be sold in the Chinese market. This is only for reminding its meaning in English.

For the full version of symbols in GB/T 8685, please click [here \(symbols in Chinese\)](#) or [here \(translation in English\)](#).



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