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ACT Voluntary Performance Guidelines and for Coated Fabrics

ACT Voluntary Performance Guidelines for Flammability and four aspects of coated fabric durability—Wet & Dry Crocking, Colorfastness to Light, Physical Properties, and Abrasion—make coated fabric specification easier.

To give architects, designers, and end-users a vast amount of performance information in a succinct visual way, ACT developed icons to indicate that a fabric meets or exceeds guideline requirements. Look for these Registered Certification Marks on ACT Member Company sampling to assure that the fabrics you specify perform up to contract standards and pass all applicable testing.

All ACT Voluntary Performance Guidelines cover woven, coated and knit fabrics for indoor use. “Coated Fabrics” typically consist of one or more layers of a film-forming polymer such as vinyl, silicone or polyurethane supported by a fabric or similar substrate.

Test methods included in the Guidelines measure coated fabric performance under standard laboratory conditions and are intended to represent the most current test version. Note: Individual ACT Member product information may represent a different version of a test method depending on the date the product was introduced to market.

Important: These tests represent minimum requirements, which are subject to change without notice and may not reflect requirements or laws in all locations.

Flammability



The measurement of a coated fabric's performance when it is exposed to specific sources of ignition.

Note: ACT guidelines specify different flammability tests dictated by the intended end use for the fabric.

ACT GUIDELINES

Upholstery

California Technical Bulletin 117-2013 Section 1 – Pass

Direct Glue Wallcoverings and Adhered Panels

ASTM E84 (Adhered Mounting Method) – Class A or Class 1

Wrapped Wall Panels and Upholstered Walls

ASTM E84 (Unadhered Mounting Method) – Class A or Class 1



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Wet & Dry Crocking



Transfer of color from the surface of a solid or printed fabric onto another surface by rubbing.

ACT GUIDELINES

Upholstery

AATCC 8	Dry Crocking, Grade 4 minimum Wet Crocking, Grade 4 minimum
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Direct Glue Wallcoverings

AATCC 8	Dry Crocking, Grade 3 minimum Wet Crocking, Grade 3 minimum
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Wrapped Panels and Upholstered Walls

AATCC 8	Dry Crocking, Grade 3 minimum Wet Crocking, Grade 3 minimum
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Colorfastness to Light



A material's degree of resistance to the fading effect of light.

ACT GUIDELINES

Upholstery – Coated Fabrics

AATCC 16 Option 1 or 3

Grade 4 minimum at 200 hours*

Or

ASTM D4329

No appreciable color change at 150 hours*

Direct Glue Wallcoverings

AATCC 16 Option 1 or 3

Grade 4 minimum at 200 hours*

Or

ASTM D4329

No appreciable color change at 150 hours*

Wrapped Panels and Upholstered Walls

AATCC 16 Option 1 or 3 Grade 4 minimum at 200 hours*

Or

ASTM D4329 No appreciable color change at 150 hours*

**Note: There is no direct correlation between the numbers of testing hours and hours of service in the field.*

Physical Properties



Key factors in assessing overall durability of a coated fabric vary depending on the coated fabrics composition and construction.

ACT GUIDELINES

Upholstery

Adhesion of Coating

ASTM D751 Sections 45-48, 3 lbf/in minimum.

Peel Adhesion is the measurement of the force required to separate the coatings from the substrate.

Tear Strength

ASTM D2261 (Tongue Tear) – Knits & Woven Substrates, 4 x 4 lbs.

Or

ASTM D751 Sections 27-31, 4 x 4 lbs.

ASTM D5733 (Trap Tear) – Nonwoven Substrates & Nonwoven Composites, 15 x 15 lbs.

Or

ASTM D751 Sections 32-35, 15 x 15 lbs.

Tear Strength is the measurement of stress exerted to rip the fabric under tension.

Breaking Strength

ASTM D751 (Grab Test) – 50 x 50 lbs. minimum.

Breaking Strength is the measurement of force exerted to pull a fabric apart under tension.

Seam Strength

ASTM D751 (Tack Tear) – Woven Substrates, 25 x 25 lbs., Knit Substrates, 30 x 25 lbs., Nonwoven Substrates & Nonwoven Composites, 35 x 35 lbs.

Seam Strength is the measurement of a fabric's resistance to tearing at needle punctures in a seam.

Flex Resistance

ASTM D2097 – 25,000 cycles, Visual evaluation for no appreciable surface crazing, cracking, whitening or delamination.

Flex Resistance is the measurement of a fabric's ability to withstand repeated flexing.

Hydrolysis Resistance – Applicable to Polyurethanes Only

ISO 1419 (Tropical Test Method C), 5 weeks* Visual Evaluation for no cracking, peeling or delamination

Hydrolysis Resistance is the evaluation of a polyurethane coated fabric's ability to withstand exposure to extended periods of heat and humidity.

*Note: There is no direct correlation of testing weeks to years of service in the field.

Stretch & Set

ACT has chosen not to establish a minimum requirement for this performance characteristic since the ability of a coated fabric to return to its initial state is strongly impacted by factors that are attributed to furniture construction and fabrication such as the density of foam. The SAE J855 test can be used to evaluate the stretch and set of a coated fabric; however, ACT suggests that you consult with both your fabric supplier and furniture manufacturer to determine if there are any potential issues.

Wrapped Panels and Upholstered Walls

Breaking Strength

ASTM D5034 (Grab Test), 35 lbs. minimum in length and width



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Abrasion



High Traffic /
Public Spaces –
Coated Upholstery Fabrics

The surface wear of a coated fabric caused by friction.

ACT GUIDELINES

High Traffic / Public Spaces – Coated Upholstery Fabrics

ASTM D4157 (ACT approved #10 Cotton Duck or Wire Screen) 50,000 double rubs
Wyzenbeek method

Print Retention – Applicable for Printed Coated Upholstery Fabrics

ASTM D3389 (modified to evaluate visual determination of print loss), Rating of 3 or higher*
H-18 Wheel, 250 grams, 250 cycles Taber Tester method *Using the ACT photographic scale of
approved replicas

Disclaimer:

Abrasion test results are not necessarily a reliable indicator of fabric lifespan. Comparative laboratory testing results on the same textiles frequently differ and testing methods do not necessarily correlate well with the variables encountered in actual use by the end-user. Licensees using the ACT performance certification marks and publishing test results exceeding the ACT high-traffic abrasion guideline are required to provide the following statement on their samples, digital media, marketing materials, social media posts, direct and third-party websites:

Abrasion test results exceeding ACT Performance Guidelines are not an indicator of product lifespan.
Multiple factors affect fabric durability and appearance retention.

Notes:

*ACT studies indicate that results of multiple abrasion tests performed on some fabric structures may vary significantly – as much as 60 percent or more. There is no correlation between Wyzenbeek and Martindale results. For more information please refer to abrasion white papers on the ACT website:
<http://www.contracttextiles.org/index.php?page=research>*



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