**Glossary of Textile Terms**

**Bias** – Diagonal direction on a woven fabric (45° to warp and weft). Fabrics will elongate/stretch the most when pulled in this direction and will also exhibit their best draping qualities when cut on the bias. However, a garment cut on the bias can stretch and change length/shape very easily.

**Count** – An expression of size of thread based on the relation between length and weight.

**Denier** – Unit of measurement expressing the density of a continuous filament thread based on weight in relation to a fixed length.

**Draft** – Diagram for setting up the weave pattern on a loom.

**EPI (ends per inch)** – Number of warp threads per inch of woven fabric.

**Fabric** – General term for any manufactured cloth-like material made for use in clothing, hangings, and coverings. It applies equally to woven and non-woven materials.

**Face** – Right side of a textile or weave.

**Fiber** – Any substance composed of thread-like tissue whether animal, vegetable, or mineral, especially when it is capable of being spun or woven.

**Fragment** – A textile that may have one selvage and many have one or more pattern repeats, but is not the complete width with both selvages present.

**Ground** – The field or background of the pattern.

**Length** – A textile of indeterminate length that has both selvages and includes at least one complete pattern repeat.

**Pile** – Supplementary threads projecting from a ground fabric.

**Pilling** – The formation of small balls of fibers called pills on the surface of a fabric.

**Ply** – The twist that makes a plied yarn / to make a thicker yarn by twisting together two or more ends.

**PPI (picks per inch)** – Number of weft threads per inch of woven fabric.

**Repeat** – The pattern unit, or weave unit, or both, used to produce a repeating pattern. The term applies to all patterning procedures: weaving, knitting, printing, etc.

**Reverse** – The back or wrong side of a textile.

**Selvedge/selvage** – The longitudinal edge of a textile closed by weft loops, often distinguished from the rest of the fabric by warp ends differing from those in the body of the textile and sometimes by a change in the binding.

**Textile** – Specifically, a textile is a *woven* fabric. In modern usage, the term has a wider application.
Thread – A continuous strand, single or compound, made from any fiber or filament by reeling, spinning, twisting, or throwing. In a general sense, any thread-like filament or fiber. A thread formed of a single strand is called a **single** or an **end**. A thread formed of two or more singles twisted together is a **plied thread**.

**Thread count** – The number of warp ends or picks per unit of measure.

Twist – The twist of a thread around its axis resulting from spinning, twisting, throwing, or plying. The direction of the twist is indicated by the letter “S” or “Z”.

Warp – The longitudinal threads of a textile; those that are arranged on the loom. A single thread of warp is called an end.

Weft – The transverse threads of a textile; those that are passed through the openings in the warp.

Weighting – The addition of metallic salts to silk to increase its weight and make it stiffer.

Width – A textile with both selvages, which may or may not have one complete pattern repeat.

Yarn – A term used to designate thread prepared for weaving or knitting.

**Some more comprehensive cataloging and terminology resources:**

*Art & Architecture Thesaurus Online* (Costume and Textile Hierarchies) by The Getty Research Institute


*Encyclopedia of Textiles* by Judith Jerde


*Fairchild’s Dictionary of Fashion* (Second Edition, Revised) by Charlotte Mankey Calasibetta, Ph.D

*Fairchild’s Dictionary of Textiles* (7th Edition) by Phyllis G. Tortora and Robert S. Merkel

*Fashion Terms and Styles for Women’s Garments* by Ardis W. Koester and Nancy O. Bryant of Oregon State University

[https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1957/24654/ECNO1382.pdf?sequence=1](https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1957/24654/ECNO1382.pdf?sequence=1)

*Vocabulary of Basic Terms for Cataloguing Costume* by the ICOM International Committee for the Museums and Collections of Costume

[http://www.collectionslink.org.uk/assets/thesaurus_icomnts/vbt00e.htm?phpMyAdmin=OYNyINPdn3sQmoXugKH1gcCLSW0](http://www.collectionslink.org.uk/assets/thesaurus_icomnts/vbt00e.htm?phpMyAdmin=OYNyINPdn3sQmoXugKH1gcCLSW0)

*Warp and Weft: A Dictionary of Textile Terms* by Dorothy K. Burnham