

TABS

TEXTILE ANALYSIS BULLETIN SERVICE

By Jim Kirby, DLI Textile Analyst

Shirt Collar Points Fraying

What Is The Problem?

Some shirts will develop weak, thin, and frayed fabric at the collar tips. This damage may not become objectionable until after a professional care procedure when the already-degraded shell fabric separates further from the normal agitation of care.

What Does It Look Like?

When the shell fabric is stressed and abraded by the stiff points of the thick interfacing in the collar it can become thin and weak. Eventually the outer fabric layer can become frayed, thin or even worn through and torn at the collar points. The stiff, heavily-sized, white interfacing material now protrudes out and shows.

What Caused It?

The damage originates from normal movement and abrasion during repeated wear as the single layer of shirt fabric becomes progressively weakened from the stress of the stiff sharp points of the interfacing at the front tips of the collar. Eventually, the fabric will separate and pull apart. However, many of today's "wrinkle-free, easy-care, no-iron" shirts contain special chemical finishes that accelerates fabric degradation so in some cases, this damage can occur in a short period of time with minimal use and just a few cleanings. At any rate, such local damage is not due to any improper cleaning process.

Can It Be Prevented?

This is normally a circumstance of types of shirt materials and construction methods, as well as individual circumstances of use and thus usually cannot be prevented. However, heavier, thicker fabrics with tighter weaves will be more durable than thinner fabric or low-twist yarn and/or looser weaves. Also, the type of special chemical finish used on a fabric may decrease its overall life expectancy to some degree. The shirt fabric manufacturer does have options to use finishes that are less damaging to the fabric.



After normal, professional laundering of this shirt the fabric frayed and the interfacing poked through at the collar tips.

Who Is Responsible?

Professional drycleaning, wet cleaning, and commercial shirt laundering processes are total immersion and subject the entire shirt and all components to the same treatment, thus cannot create local thin and weak areas. But, it should be pointed out that the mechanical action of any cleaning process could separate and tear collar point areas that have already been weakened before cleaning. If the shirt is very new and does contain one of the types of wrinkle free textile finishing agents that weakens fabric, then this type of damage would be associated with quality control deficiencies of manufacture. Of course, this type of damage should not happen to shirts until well into or past their life expectancy.

Is There A Remedy?

There is no satisfactory method of repairing this type of shirt damage.