

Fabric

Cloth is a weird word. Right? Cloth. Cloth.

Fabrics



Fabric

Fabric is fiber woven, knit or felted together. The types of fiber, how it's woven and many other elements determine what fabric is made and what its purpose is.

For the most part, any fabric can be used to do anything, though there are certainly better fabrics for different purposes. Burlap underwear, for example, would be horrible.

There's a lot to consider when choosing fabric.

Fabric

Density: How see-through the fabric is, how closely woven it is.

Hand: How malleable this fabric is. How much it stretches and moves.

Thickness: How thin or thick a fabric is

Color and Pattern: Finding the appropriate color or pattern is essential

Sheen: How shiny the fabric is.

Fabric

Heat: How much heat the fabric holds. Will it make the actor into a walking pool of sweat?

Tactile: Things like sequins, beads or raised parts of the fabric. Anything not flat.

Strength: How durable and tough a fabric is.

Grain: Like meat or wood, fabric has grain. Fabrics have two directions of grain along both directions of the woven fibers.

FABRIC TIME

There are basically an infinite amount of fabrics out there. There are, however, a few that we use very often that are pretty common. Each of the following fabrics also have types and variations of them, so keep that in mind.

Common Fabrics

Muslin: Cheap, plain, durable fabric. Comes bleached or unbleached

Velour: A heavy velvety Material. Legs and borders are made of this.

Canvas: Very durable, heavy material. Commonly used for painted drops

Duvetyne: Light, easily ripped fabric.

Common Fabrics

Tulle: Stiff, transparent fabric. Veils and tutus.

Spandex: A very stretchy Fabric. Printed leggings.

Denim, Silk, Velvet, Wool, Cotton, Nylon, Polyester, Jersey:

These are the most common fabrics you all encounter on a fairly regular basis. With each, the color, pattern and thickness can change.

A couple other random things

Trim: Decorative strips of fabric. Also useful for hiding seams.

Cording: Decorative rope

Applique: An iron or sewn on design or pattern.



A couple other random things

Embroidery: A decoration made from thread sewn into the fabric.



So where does one even begin with this?

As mentioned earlier, any fabric can be used for anything. There are no hard fast rules for what to pick for what occasion.

Often, a designer will just wander around shops or the inventory of fabrics, feeling them and deciding from there what they'll use for their costumes.

Get into groups of 3~5

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Pick 3 fabrics. Each person in your group is to design one costume from a show listed below (draw a front view of the costume) that uses those three fabrics (you can use other fabrics as well, but the three your group picks must be featured in your costume). Label the fabrics on your drawing.

Shows:

- The Past, Present and Future meet in a bar to talk.
- The modern tale of a man with a portal to 1776 New York in his closet.
- The Queen of the England thinks that the old ways should be returned to court. Including fashion. Parliament doesn't.