

The Shaatnez Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 2

Adar 5765/March2005

Basic Guidelines

Sweaters and Pullovers

A sweater requires testing if it:

- Contains wool, linen or other fibers, sometimes labeled as 'O.F.'
- Fabric has a linen look i.e. slightly shiny, little balls, multi colored or uneven threads.
- Has ornamentation, trimmings or appliqué.

Why do wool sweaters need to be tested?

- Linen threads are used on occasion to reinforce the seams of sweaters.
- Seemingly identical sweaters from the same rack and size can be different. One may contain linen reinforcements and one may not.

Sweaters that contain both wool and ramie need to be tested.

- Ramie is a fiber grown in China that resembles linen.
- Many manufacturers and the public cannot tell the difference between linen and ramie and the two are often confused.
- NCSTAR has spent many years developing a reliable test to differentiate between linen and ramie. The test, however takes more time than a regular shaatnez test.

● **Reversible wool sweaters cannot be tested for shaatnez.**



- In reversible wool sweaters, the seams are inverted, tucked internally, on the front and back of the sweater. The threads cannot be removed normally as required for shaatnez testing.
- In a number of cases this season, the owners of such sweaters had no choice but to return them to the store.

Shaatnez Alerts from the Shaatnez Lab

Shaatnez Alerts from Lakewood

and Around the World

Winter 2004

SUITS MADE IN ITALY

There has been an increased incidence of shaatnez in the past year with suits made in Italy.

Unfortunately, claims have been made

by manufacturers overseas that their garments are "guaranteed" free of shaatnez.



RECENT FINDS IN THE LAB

MEN'S SUITS

Alta Moda, Italy
Express, Turkey
Faccoanble, France
Feremoni, Italy
Izod, Tunisia
Mani, Mexico
Southwick, USA
Vitali, Italy

Deane & White, Singapore

Nina Leonard, Hong Kong

Gap, Mauritius

Paraphase, Hong Kong

Graffiti, Hong Kong

Philosophe, Portugal

J. Crew, Hong Kong

Rafaella, Hong Kong

Jones New York, Hong Kong

Rosanna, Hong Kong

Kinei, Hong Kong

The Limited, China

Laurél, Germany

Woolrich, Hong Kong

WOMEN'S SKIRT

Old Navy, Turkey: plaid skirt with "Other Fibers" listed
GAP, Taiwan: with "5% Other Fibers" listed

WOMEN'S SWEATERS

Banana Republic, Canada
Lauren Ralph Lauren, H.K.
Carozen, Hong Kong
Liz Claiborne Collection, H.K.
Cousin Johnny, Hong Kong
Masana, Hong Kong
Deane & White, Hong Kong
Mondo Di Marco, Italy

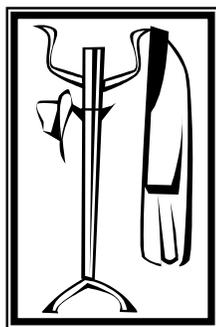
WOMEN'S COATS

Hensel E.Mortensen, Slovakia,
Theory. U.S.A

CHILDREN'S COAT'S

Pui Bello, Italy
Mila Schon, Italy
Petit, Italy

IF ONE WAS FOUND FREE OF SHAATNEZ, ARE THEY ALL SHATNEZ FREE?



DATELINE:

Cleveland, December 2004

The following true story happened to Rabbi Yosef Heinemann.

A young man approached Rabbi Heinemann with his new Nautica coat that had been shipped from New York. Rabbi Heinemann had tested the same style of coat before many times and he had found no shaatnez in them. The salesman at the store said they check one sample from each coat they sell and they had not found shaatnez in this style of coat. However, they did recommend having all coats tested since, 'you never know'...

The young man promptly removed the coat and handed it to him for checking there in the coatroom. While checking inside the coat he found different colored threads. He cut a sample of the threads and put them in his pocket.

That evening, Rabbi Heinemann inspected the threads. They were red, blue, white, and off-white threads and the black wool of the coat. He put them all under the microscope, as he routinely does to check for linen. The blue and red were nylon and cotton; but light colored threads were linen.

Rabbi Heinemann quickly sent an urgent message and when the young man came, he told him to remove the coat immediately. He asked Rabbi Heinemann, "How can that be? You checked so many similar coats and they were fine!"

When he removed his coat, Rabbi Heinemann slit open the belt loop on the left side, and showed him the white and off-white threads.

Rabbi Heinemann noticed that it was a selvage, the edge of a piece of fabric that is woven, sometimes with a thread from a different material, so that it will not fray. Interestingly, the loop on the right side of the coat did not have these threads. He removed the threads totally and Rabbi Heinemann pronounced the garment "shaatnez-free".

Rabbi Heinemann observed that it is amazing to think of the dozens of other coats that he had checked and the hundreds of others that had been checked by other labs around the

country and were found shaatnez free; *but this coat was the exception because fabric from the end of a bolt of cloth had been used in the belt loops.*

Rabbi Heinemann recalls Detroit, Michigan. Before there was a competent shaatnez checker, the community had a sample taker who did not test, but would take samples of garments and send it to New York. Many people did not want to rely on this system. Someone found an old European Jewish tailor and had him start making suits without any shaatnez. His customers paid \$400 a suit forty years ago, which is the equivalent of \$2,000 today. After thirteen years of this arrangement, one rabbi asked the tailor, "What is shaatnez?"

"Shaatnez is wool thread and linen thread together", the tailor replied, and while holding up his spool of linen thread, he said, "When I sew a wool suit, I use pure linen!"

CONCLUSION:

Avoiding wearing shaatnez takes as much vigilance as all other Torah Prohibitions. 



ABOUT THE LAKEWOOD SHAATNEZ LABORATORY

The Lakewood Shaatnez Laboratory is dedicated to promoting the observance of the mitzvah of shaatnez and operates the International Association of Professional Shaatnez Laboratories (NCSTAR) a network of over 100 testers in more than 70 cities worldwide.

HOURS

SUNDAY - THURSDAY

2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

8:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.

FRIDAY

1:30 p.m.-3 p.m.

CALL TO MAKE AN

APPOINTMENT FOR A HOUSE CALL.

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