6.1 What fabric is it?

One garment may feature several different fabrics. Please list each one.

1. Colour
2. Fibre, eg cotton, silk
3. Weave, eg damask, brocade
4. Location for all parts included in this record

Fibres are woven, knitted, crocheted or bonded together in different ways to produce fabric. Fibres are hair like strands and are the smallest visible component of any textile product. Wool, silk, cotton and linen are common natural fibres. Man-made fibres are produced using chemical substances.

Fibres are spun together to create yarn. Yarn is longer, thicker and stronger than fibres. Yarns are knitted or woven together to make particular weaves. Blended weaves are made from yarn which contains more than one type of fibre, for example, cotswool is made from both cotton and wool fibres.

Yarns can be interlaced in many different ways to create different weaves. The way a yarn is interlaced determines what type of weave is produced. In this way, one fibre can be turned into many different types of weave.

Common weaves include:

**Twill weave**: twill weave fabric has a diagonal line effect along the fabric. These fabrics are stronger than plain weave fabrics.

**Plain weave**: this is the simplest method of weaving. The warp and weft threads alternate with each other. One warp thread goes under a weft thread and over the next.


**Satin weave**: in satin weave the diagonal line of the twill weave is not visible. There are long warp yarns between the wefts, making the warp yarns more visible on the surface of the fabric. These yarns reflect light giving the fabric a shine. The yarn used to make satin weave has less of a twist.

Bodice (detail), pale green silk, 1880. Powerhouse Museum collection, purchased 1959. H6041

An example of twill weave.