

KNOWING YOUR COM FABRIC

Since our first day of business in 1985 TRS employees have cut, sewn and upholstered some of the most elegant and exceptional fabrics from our own line and those provided by our customers. Whether you are selecting a TRS fabric or leather or providing your own COM fabric or leather, your selection requires an understanding of a number of characteristics inherent in various types of fabrics. **While most fabric selections and applications are rather routine**, below is a list of issues and factors you should consider:

Fabric Pattern and Layout:

It is understandable that when selecting a cover that the fabric's design, quality and colorations are your initial and overriding interest. However, despite the fabric's beauty and suitability for your room, the location of the major focal point of the design may present some problems. While the major focal point of the design may be centered on your fabric sample, this focal point may be located near the selvage as opposed to the center of the fabric. Even if the dominant motif is 12 to 16 inches from the selvage, it may not be possible to center the design on wide cushions without excessive seams. It is important and your responsibility to know the layout of your fabric's pattern across the width of the roll. If the motif is poorly located across the width of your fabric, even an infinite amount of additional fabric will not allow us to center the motif without unsightly seams. If you think there is any reason to be concerned about a fabric's pattern layout, please discuss this with our customer service staff prior to purchasing this fabric. We want you to be pleased with the end result and avoid having to make compromises because your fabric is not well suited for the TRS sofa or chair you have ordered.

In addition to understanding the implications of fabric layout, it is also important to understand how the shape and size of a sofa or chair will impact the application of your fabric. For example, curved chairs and sofas (like our 7452 chair and 281-77 sofa) will distort directional fabrics such as stripes and plaids. Also stripes and plaids will not "line up" on curved fronts or on pleated skirts such as our 281-77 sofa. Please call our customer service department to discuss the application of your fabric on unusually shaped sofas and chairs.

Below are some other factors to consider when selecting fabrics:

Chenille: Virtually every chenille fabric needs to be backed. The nature of a chenille yarn results in chenille fabrics being inherently loosely woven. Without backing chenille fabrics can unravel where seamed. With or without backing chenille fabrics often twist or creep on cushions and pillows.

Chintz: Chintzs often have large patterns. The placement (centering) of this pattern on your sofa or chair requires that judgments be made at the time of cutting. We welcome and encourage your input. Providing your input is very easy – call our customer service department. Each fabric is different and we are willing to spend whatever amount of time is needed to give you personal attention. Please remember that the design motif that is in the center of your swatch is not necessarily in the center of the 54" wide roll.

Leather: You need to understand that leather is a natural product. Cows are not raised in sterile science labs; they are raised on ranches. If you expect hides to be perfect, your expectations are unrealistic. In fact the better quality hides tend to reflect more of the natural scaring because they are aniline dyed and not painted. Lower quality leathers are finished in a painting or pigmenting process. While this painting process will hide scars, it also reduces the hand and rich character of fine leather. All leathers are different and vary in thickness. It is obviously easier to upholster softer more pliable leathers.

Mohair: TRS offers a number of mohair fabrics. They are excellent additions to our exceptional fabric line. Do not use mohair fabrics on pieces that require double welt because the size of the double welt is unavoidably large. Also because TRS still cuts welt on a bias, the mohair pile will open showing a line. Consider a contrasting welt. Seams particularly those cut on a bias will be visible. We do not recommend railroading mohair fabrics.

Paisley: Usually most paisleys do not present any unusual problems; however, please indicate the top and bottom of the paisley design. There are no rules to guide us in this decision; so if you have a preference, please let us know.

Silk: The impact of a fine silk fabric in a room is hard to overstate; however, when using silk you must be realistic about its durability. Silks can be surprising stiff which makes application difficult. Silk stripes and plaids are often inconsistent making exact alignment impossible. Where silks are tacked to the frame or along sew lines, small wrinkles are often unavoidable. We will often require backing to give silk fabrics more body and prevent unraveling at seams. Please explain these issues to your customer.

Velvet: Velvets have been used for centuries and are often very durable fabrics. However, the pile is often easily and unavoidably bruised just by handling during the upholstering process. This is particularly true of silk and linen velvets. Steaming will not remove these bruises. Any velvet will bruise with use. Because of the thickness of velvets, box pleat and stack pleat skirts will not lie flat.

Stripes: The layout of a stripe is either symmetrical (balanced) or asymmetrical (unbalanced). If the stripe is asymmetrical then the stripes on the inside back or inside arms will not line up with the stripes on the outside back or outside arms. Also the placement of the stripe on the left arm will not be the same as the right arm. The same would apply to the left and right wings of a wing chair. No amount of additional fabric will overcome this geometric reality. However, there may exist the possibility of turning some of the fabric upside down in order to achieve a match. Remember in order to produce the finest product TRS still cuts all welt on a bias; therefore, striped welts do not match.

Washed Fabrics (Primarily Chenilles): Washed fabric (normally chenilles) can offer a number of concerns. First, due to the actual washing process, dye lot match may be very difficult even when two rolls were woven at the same time. This washing process almost always causes some damage to the selvage; the selvage can be badly wrinkled or even shredded. Because of this damage when needing to cut a full width of fabric, such as for a sofa single seat cushion, it may be impossible to match the seams on the top and bottom of the cushion. Washed fabrics almost always require backing. We have also noticed an increased likelihood that the cushion covers will twist with use and become misaligned on the cushion core. Frequent fluffing can mitigate this problem; however, cushions may need to be restuffed periodically.

Conclusion: Given all the different shapes, styles, and sizes of sofas and chairs and the infinite number of available fabrics, it is impossible for the above list to cover every possible fabric application problem or issue. Therefore, it is imperative that you communicate with our customer service department. It is almost a certainty that your order includes a COM fabric that we have never seen before and may never see again. Without your consultation TRS will use our own best judgment in the application of your fabric. Remember that just as you have conversed with your customer about the application of a fabric, we need you to communicate with us your expectation.