

GINETEX  
FIFTY YEARS OF CARE LABELLING  
SYMBOLS **SINCE 1963**

ΟΕΠΟΑ®



# GINETEX FIFTY YEARS OF SUCCESS



FROM  
**N° 211 246\***  
TO THE  
WORLDWIDE  
CARE  
LABELLING  
SYSTEM.



Under the N° 211246\* the three symbol row was first registered with WIPO in 1969 together with the four symbol under the no 211 247.

Until the mid-fifties, textiles consisted almost entirely of natural fibres. The new washing machines were generally used to wash white and coloured cotton and linen textiles. Two washing programs were therefore sufficient: 95° C for boiling and 60° C for non-colourfast dyed materials.

In the early sixties, chemical fibres were developed on a wide scale. At the same time, modern finishing techniques (easy care etc.) were introduced for natural fibres. New manufacturing techniques for the production of garments such as front fixing, bonding and welding of seams etc. also made their appearance. Fashion developed at a remarkable rate. New sophisticated washing machines were launched on the market. Textile care, once

easy and straightforward, became increasingly complex. Neither the consumers concerned nor the best trained textile cleaning professionals were able to gain an overview of the situation, so as to care for textiles efficiently and avoid damage at all times.

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In parallel with the on-going technological developments, trade relations became far more international. Verbal care information was no longer sufficient:

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# SYMBOLS BECAME VITAL TO AVOID DIFFERENT LANGUAGES.

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On March 26th, 1963, the international Association for textile care labelling **GINETEX** (Groupement International d'Etiquetage pour l'Entretien des Textiles) with head office in Paris, was founded after several International Symposiums for Textile Care Labelling held in Europe at the end of the 1950's. The founding members were the Benelux countries, the Federal Republic of Germany, France and Switzerland.

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**GINETEX** has devised an internationally applicable care labelling system for textiles based on symbols. The care labelling system gives consumers and textile companies the correct information on the care treatment of textile products. The processes indicated by the symbols will avoid any irreversible damage to the product.

**GINETEX** defines and promotes the system of care labelling symbols and coordinates its technical background on an international level.

The essential technical elements for its implementation are contained in technical regulations. The care labelling system is maintained to ensure that any new technical and ecological developments together with changes in consumer practices are taken into account.

The pictograms used are registered trademarks and property of **GINETEX**. The row of three, four and five symbols marks have been registered at WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organisation). Extension of these marks was asked by all the countries signatories of the Madrid Agreement of which France was part of.

# THE CARE LABELLING SYMBOLS RECOGNIZED ALL OVER THE WORLD.

The GINETEX Symbols are understood in all countries irrespective of languages. They shall not be used separately and shall refer to all care treatments in the order of washing, bleaching, drying, ironing and professional textile care.

The symbols reflect the maximum care treatment possible for washing, bleaching, drying, ironing and professional textile care, and inform accordingly consumers and dry cleaners.



# HISTORY OF GINETEX.

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The following National Committees\* joined the International Organisation:

1963	NETHERLANDS, BELGIUM, SWITZERLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY
1966	AUSTRIA
1971	ITALY
1973	ISRAEL
1975	GREAT BRITAIN
1981	SPAIN, PORTUGAL, NEW ZEALAND
1983	FINLAND
1990	NEW ZEALAND LEFT (due to their sole interest was to exporting only to Australia!)
1991	ISRAEL LEFT (due to financial problems)
1994	GREECE
1996	CZECH REPUBLIC
1999	SLOVENIA
2000	TUNISIA
2007	BRAZIL
2011	DENMARK, TURKEY
2012	SLOVAKIA
2013	LITHUANIA


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All of these committees are particularly concerned with the promotion of the care labelling system using symbols, among professionals and towards the consumers


# EVOLUTION OF SYMBOLS, NEW ADDITIONAL SYMBOLS, NEW GRAFICS.

Since the early 1960's, the technical content of each care symbol has changed a lot, but the challenge is to keep these symbols simple enough to be understood all over the world, to keep their technical recommendation as precise as possible and to reflect the new technologies, devices or detergents and solvents.

The latest symbols were evolved to respond to the environment and to help consumers adopting a more concerned approach while caring for their textiles.

The oxygen bleach symbol  is symbolising the variety of bleaching agents different from chlorine used in detergents or available on the market as "oxy-products".

The natural drying symbols show also here the different possibilities of drying textiles in open air such as line drying, drip line drying, flat drying, drip flat drying.

The symbols for professional wet cleaning  symbolise a mild professional cleaning process using water, and a special technology for cleaning, rinsing and spinning milder than any process in a household washing machine.

In the context of designing new symbols, the general layout of all GINETEX symbols has been analyzed. It was found that the symbols did no longer meet all graphical requirements. Therefore, GINETEX decided to bring the pictograms in one single proportion to follow graphical rules and in a clearly defined appearance without changing the general outlook of the symbols. GINETEX recommends to adopt the new proportion as soon as companies need new label or the stock is consumed.

# THE CARE LABELLING SYMBOLS – SUBJECT OF A EUROPEAN PROGRAM: THE LEONARDO DA VINCI PROGRAM.

The Lifelong Learning Program is a European program within the scope of Leonardo da Vinci set up to create and harmonize educational tools to support technical knowledge and consumer comprehension. In 2009 a care labelling project was started among Member States and ran for 2 years. The goal was to develop specific educational tools on care labelling. Retailers and sales personnel, producers, dry cleaners, laboratories, teachers and institutions are the target group for disseminating this information.

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These electronic learning materials, consisting of a leaflet, a brochure and a poster are available in a range of languages at the GINETEX secretariat. Contact: [info@ginetex.net](mailto:info@ginetex.net).

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# THE CARE LABELLING SYMBOLS – BASIS OF AN ISO STANDARD.

In the early seventies, GINETEX started to cooperate with ISO, as a need for a global informative standard was growing. GINETEX would agree that ISO used its care labelling system with symbols, if ISO was stating the property rights of GINETEX in the standard. An agreement between the two organisations was reached in 1987. This led to the publication of the first ISO standard in 1991, “Textiles – Care labelling code using symbols”. In this first edition, as in the most recent one (ISO 3758:2012), the GINETEX ISO agreement is clearly mentioned.

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For more than 20 years now, the ISO 3758 standard “Textiles Care labelling code using symbols”, has been informing textile and apparel manufacturers, suppliers and retailers all over the world about the care labelling symbols and the test as already they should perform on materials and on clothing, to ensure avoiding irreversible damage during washing, drying, professional care.

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GINETEX DEFINES  
TEXTILE CARE  
SYMBOLS FOR  
MORE THAN FIFTY  
YEARS AND IS  
STILL YOUNG  
ENOUGH TO  
OFFER SOLUTIONS  
FOR NEW  
TECHNOLOGIES.

# “CARE SYMBOLS”, THE NEW APP FOR SMARTPHONES.

GINETEX has launched an application to give care information on Smartphone's. "Care Symbols", the new Application, available for Android (Iphones mid 2013) is guiding through all the meanings of textile care symbols found on textile labels.

Using the phone's camera, the end customer can take a photo of this code. Afterwards, the app is able to decrypt the information and shows the contained label information.

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It is also possible to "code" all labelling information displayed on the care label with this QR Code generator. Fibre content, Size, Care symbols, Made In, can be also added and will be integrated in the QR code soon. For more information: [ginetex@ginetex.net](mailto:ginetex@ginetex.net)

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# CARE CLEVER WITH GINETEX.

To take into consideration how the care can best reflect the increasing demand for environmentally friendly textile care, GINETEX has reacted with a new trademark: On this subject also, GINETEX is bringing together elements to help retailers and consumers:

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information is detailed on [www.clevercare.info](http://www.clevercare.info) on how the best practices for a sustainable textile care, together with detailed information on the technical content of each care symbol.

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**GINETEX  
CARES NOT  
ONLY FOR  
TEXTILES  
BUT FOR  
THE PLANET  
ALSO.**





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**GINETEX**  
**THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION**  
**OF CARE LABELLING.**

