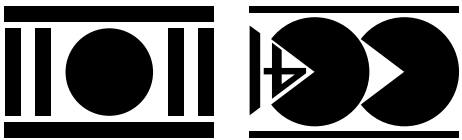


Three digit numbers: Phased out by November 1948 (replaced with four digits)
 /1 or /2 etc. suffix: Part of a multi-piece set.
 X prefix: Super Utility (better quality) > January 1948.
 CC41 mark usually includes a code (e.g. X209/2) indicating cloth type.
 CC41 mark then very faded or partially/fully cut out.
 Double Elevens July 1946 - March 1952
 CC41 Sept 1941 - March 1952



Utility mark

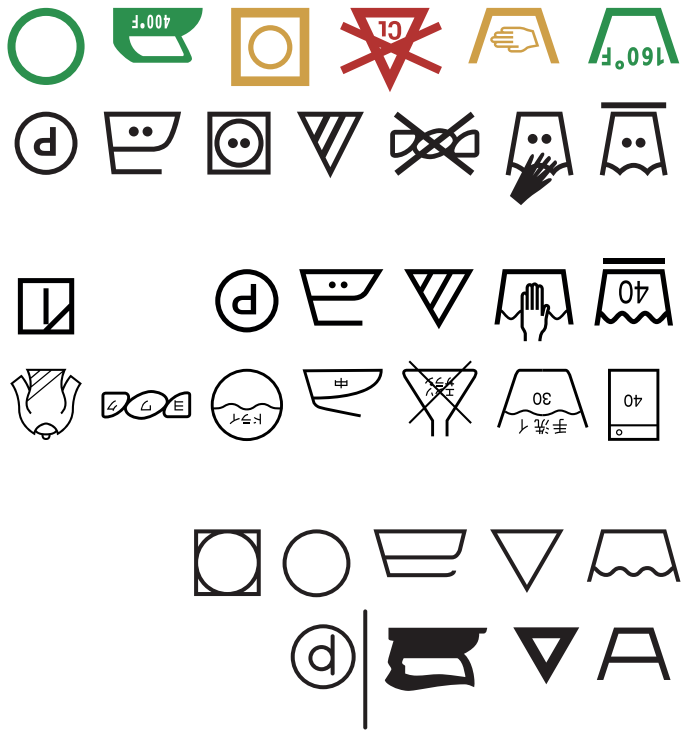
Remember, it's an opt-in scheme so its absence is not proof it was made before then!



Most countries now follow the International Standards system (see UK 2012).
EUROPE 1963 - 1984
EUROPE 1985 - 2004
JAPAN >2017
JAPAN 2014
USA >1993
CANADA 1972 - 2002
 The current US system is ASTM as pictured here.

Step 2: Fold inwards along this line

The US used text-based care labels from 1972-1993, only allowing symbols without words from 1997.
 Canada's traffic light system meant each symbol was coloured as stop, be careful or go ahead.



Worldwide care labels a selection

Step 3: Cut along this line

All illustrations by CC Magazine
 Research sources listed online

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Guide to dating vintage with labels



September 2021

Labels can tell you the earliest possible date your clothing was manufactured, but not the latest. It could take a few years for the changes to be implemented by manufacturers. Remember, there's always exceptions to the rule, such as a pair of 1999 River Island pedal pushers with no dry symbol, the inclusion of the " symbol on recent labels or a different iron shape. Use your judgement!

White wash symbol on a black or coloured background. Additional care instructions written alongside or below.

Introduction of ironing, dry cleaning and bleaching symbols. Background colour removed.

Wash temperatures added to the tubs.

Introduction of the drying symbol. Pointy hand changes to rounded hand.

Wash numbers removed.

Introduction of underlines under tubs (reduced agitation).

Addition of temperature dots on drying label.

Order of symbols changed to process order. Broken underline (- -) changed to double underline (=)

Re-shaping of symbols.

UK care label timeline

showing 2x wash tubs for comparison



Step 1: Fold inwards along this line

Union labels

Union labels are for US-made clothing and like the Woolmark, they are opt-in so their omission doesn't mean the clothing predates the union.

This is not a complete set, there are other unions who used labelling throughout the last century and earlier versions of these labels that we don't have visuals for.

REGISTERED ID NO.

US garment identification number
Issued in numerical order
Average of 2635 issued per year
Currently at no. 165260 (at time of print)
Opt-in scheme

WPL NUMBERS

e.g. **WPL 00798** **WPL 12483**
WPL followed by 5 digits
00101 to 13669
Issued 1941 - 1959

RN NUMBERS

e.g. **RN 16253** **RN 03602**
RN followed by 5 or 6 digits
00101 to 04086 1952 - 1959
13670+ >1959

1933 - 1935



1938 - 1964



1976



1995



2004



1940 1956 1963 1974



1968



1949

UNITE
founded in 1995
label rebranded in 2004



1939 variant

NATIONAL RECOVERY
Blue eagle label launched in 1933
Rosette label launched 1938
Used alongside ILGWU label from May 1960



1939

ACTWU
founded in 1976
merged into UNITE in 1995



1936

ACWA
founded in 1914
first labels in 1933
merged into ACTWU in 1976



1933

ILGWU
founded in 1900
few attempts at labelling from 1905
merged into UNITE in 1995

