

What material is best for printing custom apparel?

With so many garment options to choose from, you may be wondering what type of material is the best for printing custom apparel. The answer depends on a number of factors. Let's look at some of the most common materials in apparel printing and when they are the ideal choice.



Cotton

- ▶ Soft, natural fiber made from part of the cotton plant
- ▶ Suitable for almost all printing techniques (especially screen printing and DTG)
- ▶ Not suitable for sublimation
- ▶ Comfortable for the wearer with good breathability
- ▶ Tends to shrink when washed and dried
- ▶ Wrinkles easily
- ▶ Not as durable as other materials

Polyester

- ▶ Type of polymer made from natural or synthetic materials
- ▶ Best for sublimation
- ▶ Not suitable for printing methods involving dye migration (e.g. screen printing, DTG)
- ▶ Moisture-wicking properties ideal for sportswear
- ▶ Durable
- ▶ Wrinkle-resistant
- ▶ Does not tend to shrink when washed and dried



Rayon

- ▶ Semi-synthetic material made from wood and agricultural product fibers
- ▶ Often blended with other fabrics
- ▶ Ability to mimic other types of fabrics, so properties vary
- ▶ Can be rendered soft and comfortable
- ▶ Drapes well
- ▶ Not as durable as other materials
- ▶ Easily stretches out of shape
- ▶ Works moderately well with most printing methods but depends on the type of rayon

What about blended fabrics?

Blended fabrics provide a mix of advantages and disadvantages between two different types of fabrics.

Cotton-polyester blends are more durable and wrinkle-resistant while maintaining some of the softness of cotton, but they are also more difficult to print on than 100% cotton garments.

Tri-blend fabrics are soft and comfortable with good draping and moisture-wicking properties, but may not be as durable as 100% polyester garments. They are also more difficult to print on than 100% cotton garments.

