

FINISHING

When articles are washed and dried, they become clean. But they have a rough appearance with creases and wrinkles. They, therefore, need to be finished so that they can regain their original smooth feel and appearance.

Finishing can be done by beating, mangling, pressing or ironing. The method to use depends on the type of fabric. Finishing methods include:

- a. **Beating:** The articles is neatly folded and put on a clean smooth flat board. It is then lightly sprinkled with water and beaten with another clean flat board. Bearing is usually applied to heavy woven local fabrics.
- b. **Mangling** unstarched materials, such as bedsheets, curtains, etc. can be smoothened by folding them neatly and passing them between the rollers of a mangle. This is, however, not a common finishing method today in Nigeria.
- c. **Pressing:** This is the process of finishing laundered fabrics by pressing the iron down where needed, lifting it and then pressing it again without moving the iron about on the fabric. Steam iron can be used for pressing. All wollen articles, knitted garments, and crepes require pressing.

IRONING

This involves finishing a fabric by moving the iron to and from on the material. The iron is moved over the entire surface of the material. Effective ironing requires moisture, heat, and pressure for effective finishing.

Equipment for Ironing

Equipment for ironing includes irons and ironing boards.

Irons: There are different types of irons, such as:

- i. The flat iron, which is heated by placing it on a source of heat. Every part of the iron gets hot, including the handle. Therefore, the worker need a thick pad for the

handle when working.ii. The charcoal or coal-pot iron, which is heated by placing bits of coal or charcoal

in the pot and heating the coal. The sole or base of the iron becomes hot as the coal heats up.

Guidelines for the Use of Flat and Charcoal Irons

1. Wipe the base of the iron clean before using it. For the flat iron, rub it on very fine sand first. Wipe the surface, including base and sides with a rag. Wipe with another rag containing some pieces of candle wax. Wipe vigorously again with another clean pad.
2. Test the temperature of the iron on a piece of cloth before using it on your article.
3. Iron clothes requiring slightly hot iron or high temperature, such as cotton, first while the iron is still hot. When the iron gets cooler, fabrics, like rayon, can then be ironed.

Electric Irons

These are modern irons which use electricity. They are cleaner and easier to use than the older types of iron.

An electric iron has a thermostat which controls the electricity supply to the iron.

When the iron becomes too hot, the thermostat cuts off the electricity at a pre-set temperature. Gradually, the iron cools down. At a certain temperature, the thermostat resets, allowing the electricity to heat up the iron again. This process repeats itself over and over again. This heating and cooling of the electric iron is called the “thermostat cycle”.

An electric iron normally has different settings for different kinds of fabrics, e.g

- Cool setting for acrylics, nylon, acetate, etc.
- Warm setting for polyester mixtures and wool.
- Hot setting for cotton and linen articles.

There are two main types of electric irons:

1. The dry irons used for dry ironing.
2. The steam irons used for steam ironing.

Some Features to look for in an Electric Iron

1. Thermostatic control should have easy-to-read fabric markings.
2. It should have suitable weight (aluminium soleplate is the lightest; steel or cast iron are heavier). Light-weight iron is far less tiring.
3. The cord should be well placed to allow for right and left handed ironing.
4. It should have a comfortable handle, shaped to the hand and insulated from soleplate heat.
5. It should have a sharp point and a slanting soleplate edge.
6. It should have an indicator light which shows when it is on.

Guidelines for the Use of Electric Irons

1. Clean the soleplate before ironing.
2. Set the iron according to the fabric being ironed. A slower ironer should set the iron to the bottom and of the sector selected for the fabric.
3. Always begin by ironing the fabrics requiring a cool setting, then those fabrics which require a warm setting and end up with those that require a hot setting.
4. If starched fabrics are being ironed, the soleplate will gradually pick up cooked starch and a brown deposit may develop. Never try to scratch this off with a sharp object, such as knife. It will damage the soleplate. To remove the deposit, rub the soleplate vigorously while it is still hot on an old piece of wet cloth. If this is not successful, then rub the soleplate with a wet cloth on which some scouring powder, such as Vim, has been sprinkled. If this fails, as a last resort use sandpaper.
5. Use a holder to keep the iron cord up and away from your ironing. This makes ironing easier, and lengthens the life of the cord.

6. Ensure that the cord is not damaged thereby exposing the naked electric wire. This can lead to electric shock.
7. Switch off the electricity as soon as you finish ironing.