

**Federal Trade Commission Definition for Olefin Fiber:** A manufactured fiber in which the fiberforming substance is any long-chain synthetic polymer composed of at least 85% by weight of ethylene, propylene, or other olefin units, except amorphous (*non-crystalline*) polyolefins qualifying under category (1) of Paragraph (I) of Rule 7. (Complete FTC Fiber Rules [here](#).)

**Basic Principles of Olefin Fiber Production** — Olefin fibers (polypropylene and polyethylene) are products of the polymerization of propylene and ethylene gases. For the products to be of use as fibers, polymerization must be carried out under controlled conditions with special catalysts that give chains with few branches. Olefin fibers are characterized by their resistance to moisture and chemicals. Of the two, polypropylene is the more favored for general textile applications because of its higher melting point; and the use of polypropylene has progressed rapidly since its introduction. The fibers resist dyeing, so colored olefin fibers are produced by adding dye directly to the polymer prior to or during [melt spinning](#). A range of characteristics can be imparted to olefin fibers with additives, variations in the polymer, and by use of different process conditions.

#### **Olefin Fiber Characteristics**

- Able to give good bulk and cover
- Abrasion resistant
- Colorfast
- Quick drying
- Low static
- Resistant to deterioration from chemicals, mildew, perspiration, rot and weather
- Thermally bondable
- Stain and soil resistant
- Strong
- Sunlight resistant
- Dry hand; wicks body moisture from the skin
- Very comfortable
- Very lightweight (*olefin fibers have the lowest specific gravity of all fibers*)

#### **Some Major Olefin Fiber Uses**

- **Apparel:** Activewear and sportswear; socks; thermal underwear; lining fabrics
- **Automotive:** Interior fabrics used in or on kick panel, package shelf, seat construction, truck liners, load decks, etc.
- **Home Furnishings:** Indoor and outdoor carpets; carpet backing; upholstery and wall coverings; furniture and bedding construction fabrics
- **Industrial:** Carpets; disposable, durable nonwoven fabrics; ropes; filter fabrics; bagging; geotextiles

#### **General Olefin Fiber Care Tips**

- Most stains on fabric can be readily removed by spotting with lukewarm water and detergent.
- Bleaches can be used if needed.
- If fabric is laundered, it should be line dried or tumble dried with gentle heat or no heat. Olefin dries very rapidly.
- Do not iron. (*For specific instructions, refer to garment's sewn-in care label.*)