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International Design Center Seminar Presented by Kira Krümm and Megan Rozin

“Under the Covers”

Informational Handout

Comforters and Fills

Coverlet:

The word coverlet is defined as a decorative bedspread which is usually quilted or channeled. These are lightweight coverings for the bed and mostly utilized in warmer climates.

Duvets:

Duvel is the French word for down, as in down from birds. Duvets are rather like comforters, except that they have replaceable, washable covers – much like large pillowcases. These cases are then filled with either a poly fill or a down insert.

Down Fills:

Depending on the brand and quality, down fills are typically made up of either Duck or Goose feathers. In some cases, they are constructed with a blend of the two species of feathers.

Poly Fills:

This is an alternative to down typically constructed of 100% Polyester or either a polyester blend combining percentages of cotton or wool. Considering your preference on weight and density, these fills are generally offered in a light, medium or heavy density range.

Down Comforter Weights and Sizes

Weights: Down Quality-Fill power is the measurement in which an ounce of down will loft and expand to fill an empty space. For example, 600 Fill power means that 600 cubic inches of this down weighs one ounce. A higher quality down has a higher fill power, and will require fewer ounces to create the same insulating warmth. An 800 Fill power comforter will have fewer ounces of down than a 600 Fill power comforter of the same warmth. If the comforter does not list the Fill power, it most likely has a Fill power below 400.

Sizes: With mattresses becoming more technologically advanced and incorporating products like latex and memory foams, they are becoming thicker. With these elevated heights in mattresses comes the need for deeper pockets in fitted sheeting and larger sizes in duvets and coverlets so that they adequately cover the box springs and accommodate the design. Along with Twin, Full, Queen and King sizes, you will now see oversized Queen and King available. This truly reinforces the need for custom bedding.

Sheeting

According to the Cotton Incorporated's *Lifestyle Monitor*™, the top four factors shoppers consider in buying sheets besides size and fit are **softness, durability, price and thread count.**

Thread Count Re-Defined: Technically speaking, thread count is the number of threads, both vertical and horizontal, in a one-inch square of fabric. Over the past few years, the notion of thread count has become increasingly influential in consumers' sheet purchases. According to Cotton Incorporated's *Lifestyle Monitor*™ survey, 34% of consumers surveyed in 2005 cited thread count to be the most important element influencing the sheets they purchased.

More commonly-used weaves in bed sheets:

Percal: A closely woven, plain weave, spun fabric made from both carded and combed cotton. The high thread count gives the fabric a silk-like feel.

Flannel: A soft medium weight plain or twill weave fabric, usually made of cotton with a napped finish on one or both sides. The raised surface provides a fluffy appearance and super soft, cozy feel. This is great for warmth during the cold winter months.

Jersey: A plain stitch knitted cloth. The fabric is knitted in circular, flatbed or warp knitted methods. Very elastic with good draping qualities.

Sateen: A weave construction that has more yarn surface on the face of the cloth than other basic weaves giving a softer hand and more lustrous look.

Terminology

Carded cotton is cotton which has been prepared for spinning into thread or yarn. Carding is an important step in the processing of many textiles, ensuring that debris is removed while aligning the fibers to make them easier to spin. Without carding, cotton thread would be coarse and extremely fragile.

Combed Cotton

Combing is a technique that has been used in the preparation of textiles for centuries. Essentially, combing is a process that helps to smooth and prepare fibers for use in spinning. Combing also helps to separate short fibers from longer ones, which also helps to make the process of spinning much easier.