

## 21 reasons NOT to choose a true quality cleaner (extended version)



True quality cleaners aren't for everyone.

At RAVE FabriCARE, for example, we've developed a particular viewpoint as to what constitutes true quality cleaning. And we've detailed those viewpoints in written quality standards, position papers, white papers and ebooks.

We make no apologies for the viewpoints espoused in these documents.

This is who we are and what we stand for.

With this in mind, here are the top 21 reasons **not** to choose a True Quality Cleaner.....

1. You're mesmerized by the "sizzle" (the glitzy brochures, technological gizmos and fancy packaging) and have no interest in the "steak" (the quality of the product).
2. You're willing to accept tired, superlative-laden and jargon-sprinkled cliches as a substitute for specific technical information about processes and craftsmanship employed.
3. You're delighted that your cleaner glues or heat seals bar coded labels onto all your fine garments and household textiles.
4. You don't own any fine garments or garments with trims or embellishments. So you're not particularly concerned with the process or craftsmanship used to care for your garments.
5. You're happy to turn a blind eye to the fact that your fine garments are being tossed into a cleaning machine with little or no pre-spotting.
6. You appreciate the fact that your fine garments are being cleaned in a relatively aggressive, dye-stripping dry cleaning solvent such as per-chloroethylene (aka perc), synthetic petroleum or formaldehyde dibutyl acetal.
7. You don't care that your fine garments are being cleaned in a dry cleaning solvent that, in all likelihood, has not been continuously filtered and purified.
8. You insist that your fine garments be cleaned in a dry cleaning solvent that's not dermatologically friendly.
9. You're not averse to wearing garments that smell of dry cleaning solvent and/or other soluble impurities such as food oils, food fats, body oils, creams and lotions.
10. You favor the "washed out look." So you want your fine garments to fade. The sooner the better.
11. You love the feeling of stiff, scratchy garments against your skin.
12. You prefer the smell of fragranced or perfumed garments over odorless garments.
13. You don't care that your fine garments are machine pressed at a rate of 20 to 40 per hour per presser and not hand ironed as promised.
14. You believe the verbal claim that your sweaters and knits are measured before cleaning and blocked to those measurements after cleaning with no proof of blocking provided

15. You're unconcerned that your laundered shirts are brushed, bleached, boiled and baked in 4 to 6 hours.
16. You don't care that your laundered shirts are machine pressed at a rate of 40 to 50 per hour per presser and not hand ironed as promised.
17. You like your laundered shirts "starched" with cheap synthetic glues.
18. You don't believe that creases in the sleeves of your laundered shirts is a sign of poor craftsmanship and display an I-pressed-this-shirt-myself-while-watching-TV look.
19. You're satisfied with a cleaner who stuffs multiple laundered shirts into a single bag (hanger shirts) and who machine folds your laundered shirts into a rumpled mess (folded shirts).
20. You always require all your fine garments to be returned in 1 to 3 days.
21. You believe that quality has no inherent value and that garment care, like sugar and salt, is nothing more than a commodity available at any cleaner.

**That's the summary. Now here's the detail.....**

### **1. You're mesmerized by the "sizzle" (the glitzy brochures, technological gizmos and fancy packaging) and have no interest in the "steak"**

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Many cleaners pass themselves off as true quality cleaners by diverting their customers' attention to the **"sizzle"** (slick, multicolor brochures; technological gizmos; fancy packaging such as logo printed tissue and poly, and wood and chrome hangers; granite countertops and recessed lighting; etc.). And away from the **"steak"** (the quality of the product they produce).

Truth is, you'll find that their product (the "steak") – when stripped of the fancy packaging – is typically only average or slightly above average. At best.

On the other hand, if you're looking for the **"steak"** and the **"sizzle"**, put a true quality cleaner to work for you.

### **2. You're willing to accept tired, superlative-laden and jargon-sprinkled cliches as a substitute for specific technical information about the processes and craftsmanship employed**

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Cleaners love to hide behind nebulous buzzwords and gobbledygook such as

- "we meet or exceed the industry's highest standards"
- "we focus on the details"
- "we work hard to earn your compliments"
- "we provide great cleaning, fabulous service and quick turnaround"
- "we treat your everyday wear as if they were fine couture pieces".

So professional sounding. So poetic. **And so utterly meaningless.**

Of course, your intuition and experience should tell you that these cliches are, at best, nothing more than puffery.

So couple your intuition and experience with this thought: **true quality** is not about a few details. **It's about hundreds of details.** And, specifically, it's the **combination of those hundreds of details** that produces true quality cleaning.

Truth is, notwithstanding all these claims, the entire modus operandi of the vast majority of cleaners is geared to getting your garments into a machine, onto a press, and into a bag. ASAP. They're in by 9:00 and out by 5:00; or picked up on day 1 and delivered on day 3.

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, we don't hide behind cliches. And we don't blather in industry jargon that sounds vaguely impressive in an attempt to sound good while hiding what's really going on.

You know why?

Because informed clients can see through the smoke screen. Informed clients can spot internal contradictions a mile away.

At RAVE FabriCARE, we tell you exactly what we do and why we don't do what the vast majority of cleaners do. In plain English.

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We also provide you with accurate information about our processes and craftsmanship. **And with a degree of specificity that's unheard of in the dry cleaning industry.**

And why do we provide this information?

**Because the more you know about our processes and craftsmanship, the better you'll be able to differentiate between true quality cleaning and ordinary, bang and hang cleaning.**

### **3. You're delighted that your cleaner glues or heat seals bar coded labels onto all your fine garments and household textiles**

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Visualize, for a moment, a Fedex or UPS sorting facility with a web of conveyor belts and bar code scanners strategically mounted above those conveyor belts. Further, visualize letters and boxes of all shapes and sizes, all imprinted with a bar code, shuttling along a conveyor belt from point to point.

Now, instead of letters and boxes, visualize your fine garments and household textiles, suspended on hangers, being roller-coasted around a dry cleaning plant from point to point on an automated distribution and assembly conveyor.

The automated movement of garments is the latest "technological breakthrough" to hit the dry cleaning industry.

This technology has been embraced by many cleaners. Primarily by **volume-oriented** cleaners who operate at the **low end of the quality/price spectrum** and whose business model is based on maximizing efficiency and minimizing costs.

And the foundation for such a system?

Bar coded labels that are glued or heat sealed onto your garments and household textiles.

Can you picture your fine garments being shuttled around a dry cleaning plant from cleaning to steaming/pressing to assembly to bagging to storage?

Can you imagine your delicate silk, linen and cotton blouses and shirts being crushed between heavy wool coats and sweaters?

All in the name of maximizing efficiency and minimizing costs?

So, next time you see bar coded labels glued or heat sealed onto your fine garments and household textiles consider this: **Do you want your fine garments and household textiles** being shuttled around like slabs of meat in a slaughter house?

**We don't think so.**

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, we move your fine garments and household textiles around our facility **by hand**. Gently. From cleaning to finishing to inspection to assembly to packaging to storage/delivery.

**All by hand. All very gently.**

Careful handling of your fine garments and household textiles through the entire garment care process is just one sign of true quality cleaning.

Bar code labels that are glued or heat sealed onto your fine garments and household textiles points is one sure sign of ordinary, bang and hang cleaning.

### **4. You don't own any designer, hi-fashion, specialty (garments with trims and embellishments) or couture garments. So you're not particularly concerned with the process or craftsmanship used to care for your garments**

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You've heard the claim from the vast majority of cleaners before: We know how to handle your fine designer garments, high fashion garments, specialty garments (garments with trims or embellishments) and couture garments.

And the claim that, even though our **bread and butter** is regular garments (shirts, blouses, polo shirts, trousers, slacks and jeans), we treat **all your regular garments** as if each one were a fine couture piece.

Sure they do.

And donkey's fly and jaybirds wear derby hats!

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, **our bread and butter is designer, high fashion, specialty and couture garments and gowns**. This has allowed

us to become highly skilled in cleaning and finishing these garments and gowns.

More specifically, we can expertly, safely and effectively clean almost any garment or gown with trim or embellishments. Whether it's beads, sequins or rhinestones; plastic, vinyl or rubber; paint, glitter or silkscreen; appliques or embroidery; suede, leather or fur. Or a St. John Knit blazer heavily embellished with paillettes and/or rhinestones.

At RAVE FabriCARE, **we actually do treat your regular garments with the same extraordinary care** that we lavish on your fine designer, high fashion, specialty and couture garments.

And that's a statement of fact.

Not an irrational claim.

#### 5. You're happy to turn a blind eye to the fact that your fine garments are being tossed into a cleaning machine with little or no pre-spotting

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At the vast majority of cleaners, the stain removal process (known as pre-spotting) is skipped entirely.

At these cleaners, their "stain removal technician" merely loads and unloads a machine and hopes that the stains will miraculously disappear based on a combination of

- the dry cleaning solvent (the more aggressive the better),
- the dry cleaning detergent (the cheaper the better),
- the addition or injection of moisture into the dry cleaning machine (a reckless undertaking), and
- the dry cleaning machine's tumbling action (the faster the better).

At best, they'll post-spot your garments **after** they've been cleaned. The problem, of course, is that post-spotting is often too late. The heat of the dry cleaning machine's dry cycle may have already set any stains and spills.

At the vast majority of cleaners, even simple stains and spills receive one of those sorry-we-tried-but-we-couldn't tags.

Now, there are many cleaners who'll try to convince you that they **do**, in fact, invest time and resources in the pre-spotting process.

As "proof", they'll often cite the number of "stain removal technicians" they employ and the cumulative years of their "experience".

Yet, in the very next sentence, they'll boast about their fabulous in-by-9:00-out-by-5:00, picked-up-on-day-1-delivered-in-day-3-service.

**The inherent contradiction in these 2 statements** should be obvious...

**It takes time** to professionally clean your garments (i.e., to pre-spot the garments; hang dry the garments prior to dry cleaning; employ a multi-stage cleaning process that might involve dry cleaning, wet cleaning, hand washing and/or garment restoration techniques; etc.).

And **it takes time** to professionally hand finish, inspect, repair and package your garments.

Given all these time-dependent tasks, **how likely is it that all these tasks can be completed** in 1 to 3 days?

With the **actual performance** of all these time-consuming tasks? Or with the **promotional claims** that all these tasks are actually performed?

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, **you'll never have to worry about promotional claims of actual performance.**

We invest the time necessary to do the job right.

We perform extensive stain removal and cleaning procedures on every garment and household textile. Often using a multi-stage process, involving dry cleaning, wet cleaning, hand washing and/or restoration techniques, to protect your investment. Even if that means taking the time to treat the same garment or household textile multiple times until the stain has been removed or minimized.

**6. You appreciate the fact that your fine garments are being cleaned in a relatively aggressive, dye stripping dry cleaning solvent such as perchloroethylene (aka perc), synthetic petroleum or formaldehyde dibutyl acetal**

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95% of all cleaners will clean your fine garments in one of three relatively aggressive dry cleaning solvents: perchloroethylene aka “perc” (a by-product of the manufacture of chlorine), synthetic petroleum (a by-product of the manufacture of gasoline) or formaldehyde dibutyl acetal.

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, we use siloxane, a dry cleaning fluid that’s used by fewer than 5% of all cleaners.

**It’s completely odorless and dermatologically friendly.** No dry cleaning solvent smell. No fragrance or perfume smell. Ever.

**It’s extremely gentle.** So gentle it’s used as a base ingredient in many personal care products you apply to your skin on a daily basis. Such as shampoos, antiperspirants, deodorants and moisturizing creams.

**And it’s chemically inert.** Which means that our dry cleaning fluid won’t “bleed” or “fade” your colors.

Odorless and dermatologically friendly. Extremely gentle. Chemically inert.

Just three reasons why our dry cleaning fluid is perfectly compatible with the delicate nature of bespoke, made-to-measure, designer, high fashion, specialty and couture garments. As well as your fine business and casual apparel.

**7. You don’t care that your fine garments are being cleaned in a dry cleaning solvent that, in all likelihood, has not been continuously filtered and purified**

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Very few cleaners **continuously purify** (or “distill”) **every single drop** of their dry cleaning solvent **before** and **after** each load. And **filter every single drop** of their dry cleaning solvent **during** each load.

Nonetheless, that **won’t stop them from claiming that their dry cleaning solvent is “clean and pure.”**

Cleaning your fine garments in a dry cleaning solvent that has not been continuously purified and filtered is just like washing your clothes in a home washer and reusing the same dirty water over and over again.

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, we both **continuously purify** (or “distill”) and **continuously filter** our dry cleaning fluid. **Every single drop.**

As a result every garment and household textile is cleaned in crystal clear, freshly purified and freshly filtered dry cleaning fluid. As clear as bottled mountain spring water.

**Crystal clear dry cleaning fluid...**

**It’s your only guarantee** against greyish and dingy whites, creams and pastels; dull and faded colors; and that all-to-familiar “dry cleaning solvent smell.”

**8. You insist that your fine garments be cleaned in a dry cleaning solvent that’s not dermatologically friendly**

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Many individuals have **skin sensitivities** to one or more of the following:

- **Sensitivity to the virgin dry cleaning solvent itself**

95% of all cleaners will clean your fine garments in one of three dry cleaning solvents: perchloroethylene aka perc (a by-product of the manufacture of chlorine), synthetic petroleum (a by-product of the manufacture of gasoline) or formaldehyde dibutyl acetal.

- **Sensitivity to all the accumulated soluble impurities in the dry cleaning solvent.**

These impurities include bacteria, food oils, food fats, body oils, creams and lotions that are deposited on and absorbed by your garments and household textiles when cleaned in “dirty dry cleaning solvent”, i.e., dry cleaning solvent that has not been continuously purified.

- **Sensitivity to the fragrance or perfume in the dry cleaning solvent.**

Many cleaners add or inject fragrance or

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perfume to their dry cleaning solvent to “disguise” or “neutralize” the odor associated with cleaning in dry cleaning solvent that has not been continuously purified.

The research suggests that most individuals are not sensitive to the virgin dry cleaning solvent per se.

But they are **sensitive to the impurities** in the dry cleaning fluid and/or to the **fragrance or perfume added** to “disguise” or “neutralize” those impurities.

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, **you’ll never have to worry about any of these issues.**

That’s because our dry cleaning fluid is non-chlorinated, non-hydrocarbon, non-formaldehyde, fragrance-free, perfume-free and completely odorless.

We call it Free & Clear Dry Cleaning.®

**It’s ideal for the chemically-sensitive** who are **unable to tolerate** dry cleaning solvents like perchloroethylene, synthetic petroleum or formaldehyde dibutyl acetal, the dry cleaning solvents used by more than 95% of all dry cleaners. And for those who are **unable to tolerate** the fragrances or perfumes that are part of a cleaner’s bag of tricks.

#### **9. You are not averse to wearing garments that smell of dry cleaning solvent and/or other soluble impurities such as food oils, food fats, body oils, creams and lotions**

Your clothes will only **smell of dry cleaning solvent** if your cleaner shortens the dry and deodorize cycle of their dry cleaning machine(s). This often happens in cleaners where the pressure to “get the garments out” (i.e., into a machine, onto a press, into a bag and onto a conveyor or truck) is constant and hectic.

But, more likely than not, **you’re not smelling dry cleaning solvent at all.**

Instead, **you’re smelling all the contaminants** in the dry cleaning solvent.

That’s because few cleaners **both** continuously purify **every single drop** of their dry cleaning

solvent **before and after** each load, and continuously filter **every single drop** of their dry cleaning solvent **during** each load.

Continuous purification is much like boiling your tap water at home to obtain pure water; continuous filtration is much like filtering your tap water to remove any additional impurities.

As a result, **soluble impurities**, such as bacteria, food fats, food oils, body oils, creams and lotions, accumulate in the dry cleaning solvent.

And **insoluble impurities**, such as sand, dander and hair, float around in the dry cleaning solvent.

The soluble impurities are then absorbed by the fibers of your garments and household textiles during the dry cleaning “wash” cycle.

In particular, **natural fibers, such as silk, wool, linen and cotton, absorb these impurities like a sponge absorbs liquid.**

Instead of your cleaner continuously purifying and continuously filtering his dry cleaning solvent, **your garments and household textiles are functioning as your cleaner’s “cleaning filter.”**

So you’re probably not smelling dry cleaning solvent at all.

Instead, you’re smelling the **accumulated contaminants in your garments and household textiles** — contaminants **deposited on your** garments and household textiles and contaminants **absorbed by** your garments and household textiles from your cleaner’s “dirty dry cleaning solvent.”

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, your garments and household textiles are **always** cleaned in dry cleaning fluid that’s **both** continuously purified and continuously filtered. **Every single drop.**

So our dry cleaning fluid is absolutely crystal clear. **As clear as bottled mountain spring water.**

Fact is, crystal clear, freshly purified and filtered dry cleaning fluid is **your only guarantee** against greyish and dingy whites, creams and pastels; dull and faded colors; and that all-too-familiar “dry cleaning solvent smell.”

## 10. You favor the “washed out look.” So you want your fine garments to fade

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You **want** your fine garments to fade.

The sooner the better.

Ordinary cleaning has a tendency to dull and fade your darker colored garments.

For 3 reasons:

- Dry cleaning your dark colored garments in “**dirty dry cleaning solvent**” will tend to dull your colors.
- Perchloroethylene (aka “perc”), petroleum, synthetic petroleum and formaldehyde dibutyl acetal — the dry cleaning solvents used by 95% of all cleaners — **are not chemically inert**. This means that these dry cleaning solvents react chemically with the dyes in your garments. The result? “Bleeding”, “pulling” or “fading” of dyes.
- Cleaners often elect to wash as many of your cotton and linen garment as possible. Even if you specified dry clean only. Even if the care label said “dry clean only”. This way your garments won’t smell of dry cleaning solvent and/or soluble impurities from the dry cleaning solvent.

For the cleaner, it often comes down to a simple choice: **do we stink ‘em OR do we fade ‘em**.

And most cleaners would rather fade ‘em than stink ‘em.

By contrast:

- Our dry cleaning fluid is always **crystal clear**. As clear as bottled mountain spring water. So cleaning your fine garments and household textiles in our dry cleaning fluid won’t dull your colors.
- Our dry cleaning fluid is **chemically inert**. This means that our dry cleaning fluid does not react chemically with the dyes in your fabrics. The result? No “bleeding”, “pulling” or “fading” of dyes.
- Our dry cleaning fluid is **very gentle** on fabrics. So gentle, it’s in many of the personal care products you use on a daily basis. Such as shampoos, antiperspirants, deodorants and moisturizing creams.

- Our dry cleaning fluid is **completely odorless**. So we can confidently dry clean all your cottons and linens, leaving them clean, bright and soft as butter. We **never** have to choose between stinking ‘em or fading ‘em.

AT RAVE FabriCARE, **we’ll always dry clean all your cottons and linens** (other than laundered shirts and most bed and table linens), leaving them clean, bright and soft as butter.

## 11. You love the feeling of stiff, scratchy garments against your skin

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Sizing is to dry cleaning what starch is to shirt laundry.

Cleaners **love** sizing.

So they add or inject sizing into their dry cleaning machines during the dry cleaning “wash cycle”. In much the same way that you might add detergent or softener to your home washer.

### Their stated reason?

According to one Arizona cleaner’s literature, to “keep each garment feeling new and crisp”. And to “retain your garment’s original shape, weight and feel” (and no, we didn’t make those statements up!).

### And the true reason?

The more sizing they add, the quicker and easier it is for their operators to bang out your garments on a press.

### What gets sized?

**Everything in the load.** Cottons. Linens. Silks. Rayons. Wools such as alpaca, angora, camelhair, cashmere, escorial, marino, mohair and vicuna. Super 100s, 120s, 150s and 160s.

Is it any wonder your fine wools and silks feel and drape like cardboard when you get them back from the cleaner.

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, we **never** add or inject sizing into our dry cleaning machines. We want your fine wools and silks to feel like butter, not like cardboard.

At RAVE FabriCARE, we believe that sizing should **never** be applied to an entire load of dry cleaning.

And we believe that sizing should be applied to cottons and linens only and then only by a skilled hand finisher. **During the hand finishing stage only.** And only in accordance with your **stated personal preferences.**

## 12. You prefer the smell of fragranced or perfumed garments over odorless garments

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Garments should **always** be cleaned in a dry cleaning solvent or fluid that's **both continuously purified and continuously filtered. Every single drop.**

This way your garments are cleaned in a dry cleaning solvent or fluid that's absolutely crystal clear. As clear as bottled mountain spring water.

**Continuous purification** is much like boiling your tap water at home to obtain pure water; **continuous filtration** is much like filtering your tap water to remove any additional impurities.

Fact is, crystal clear, freshly purified and filtered dry cleaning solvent or fluid **is your only guarantee** against greyish and dingy whites, creams and pastels; dull and faded colors; and that all-to-familiar "dry cleaning smell."

Unfortunately, very few cleaners **both continuously purify every single drop** of their dry cleaning solvent **before and after** each load, and **continuously filter every single drop** of their dry cleaning solvent **during** each load.

So **soluble impurities**, such as bacteria, food oils, food fats, body oils, creams and lotions, accumulate in the dry cleaning solvent.

**And insoluble impurities**, such as sand, dander and hair, float around in the dry cleaning solvent.

The soluble impurities are then absorbed by the fibers of your garments during the dry cleaning "wash" cycle. In particular, natural fibers, such as silk, wool, linen and cotton, absorb these impurities like a sponge absorbs liquid.

Instead of your cleaner **both** continuously purifying and continuously filtering his dry

cleaning solvent, **your** garments are functioning as your cleaner's "cleaning filter".

So you're probably not smelling dry cleaning solvent at all.

Instead, you're smelling the **accumulated contaminants in your garments and household textiles – contaminants deposited** on your garments and household textiles and **contaminants absorbed** by your garments and household textiles from your cleaner's "dirty dry cleaning solvent."

And how do cleaners deal with the resultant odor?

They simply add or inject fragrance or perfume into their dry cleaning solvent.

Many cleaners will tell you they do this to impart a "breath of fresh air" into your garments.

Truth is, these fragrances and perfumes are added **solely** to "disguise" or "neutralize" the odor associated with cleaning in dry cleaning solvent that has not been both continuously purified and continuously filtered.

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, we **never** add fragrance or perfume to our dry cleaning fluid.

And the reason?

We clean in dry cleaning fluid that's crystal clear. As clear as bottled mountain spring water. Pure dry cleaning fluid means zero odor. And zero odor means no need for fragrance or perfume.

## 13. You don't care that your fine garments are machine pressed at a rate of 20 to 40 garments per hour per presser and not hand ironed as promised

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At the vast majority of cleaners, your fine garments are pressed by machine. Typically, with way too much pressure, using way too much steam, at way too high a temperature, for way too long.

So they exhibit those common "bang and hang" **machine pressing** practices found at ordinary cleaners: crushed nap; shine; seam, flap and button impressions; moire-like press pad impressions; double creases; wrinkled seams and linings; and other "crimes of fashion".

Of course, **every cleaner will vehemently deny** that they machine press your fine garments. Yet, at the same time, they boast about their quick, 1 to 3 day turnaround time.

It's an inherent contradiction in claims.

**You can't have it both ways:** Speed of production is incompatible with quality of product.

In the garment care business, you're **either** in the quality business **OR** in the speed business.

It's not possible to routinely deliver **both** quality of product **and** speed – simultaneously.

At RAVE FabriCARE by contrast, your fine garments are delicately finished. The old-fashioned way. **By hand.** Using a hand iron. Both inside and out.

**No matter how long it might take.**

And they're finished by a **skilled garment finisher** who specializes in only **one particular category of garment** (say slacks/trousers; or blouses/shirts; or blazers/sport coats; or sweaters).

Not by some **semi-skilled jack of all trades** who skips from slacks/trousers to blouses/shirts to blazers/sport coats to sweaters depending on the needs of the cleaner.

"Pressing", as practiced by the vast majority of cleaners, is such a poor descriptor of the art of finishing.

Of course, a skilled finisher must know how to apply pressure to achieve a smooth finish on a linen or cotton. But a smooth, soft, hand-finish, that minimizes the possibility of shine or seam, flap or button impressions, best defines the finest professional finishing.

If you're looking for validation of this point of view, broach the subject of "pressing by dry cleaners" with any bespoke tailor and watch their blood pressure rise. And make sure you bring a portable defibrillator with you. Your tailor may need it.

#### 14. You believe the verbal claim that your sweaters and knits are measured before cleaning and blocked to those measurements after cleaning with no proof of blocking provided

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For a variety of reasons, the dimensions of some sweaters and knits may change during the cleaning and finishing process.

For this reason, every sweater and knit garment should be **measured prior to cleaning**, and then de-pilled, de-linted and **blocked to their original measurements after cleaning**.

Blocking involves:

- Measuring all dimensions of a garment **prior** to cleaning.
- Maintaining a record of all those dimensions.
- Shaping the garment to those original measurements, using hands and steam.
- Applying a vacuum to "dry" the steam and "lock" the shape into place.
- Returning the garment with **proof of blocking that reflects the original and current measurements**.

If you asked any cleaner whether they measured **all** their sweaters and knits prior to cleaning, and then blocked those sweaters and knits to their original measurements, **you'd probably receive a lukewarm assurance that they do.**

The real question is this:

**Can your dry cleaner define the term "blocking"?**

**And even if your dry cleaner understands the meaning of the term "blocking", can you believe that they actually pre-measure and post-measure your garment in the absence of PROOF OF BLOCKING?**

At RAVE FabriCARE, we say no.

Our experience tells us that these assurances are bogus.

Which is why, at RAVE FabriCARE, every sweater and knit garment is carefully measured (up to 12 separate dimensions) prior to cleaning.

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These dimensions are then noted on one of four custom printed blocking tags – for sweaters/blouses, slacks/trousers, dresses and skirts.

The blocking tag accompanies your garment through the entire cleaning, finishing, inspection and packaging process.

At the packaging stage, we hang the blocking tag on your garment hanger or place it in your breathable sweater bag.

While almost every cleaner **claims** that they block their sweaters and knits, **RAVE FabriCARE puts the proof of blocking right in your hands.**

Because claims without proof are just hallucinations.

#### **15. You're unconcerned that your laundered shirts are brushed, bleached, boiled and baked in 4 to 6 hours**

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By way of background, here's what happens to your laundered shirts – even at so-called “better cleaners” and self-styled “couture care specialists”.

Your shirt is laundered for 20 to 40 minutes using conventional washing techniques – scrubbing with nylon brushes, hot water, harsh caustic industrial grade detergents, and bleaches.

Then it's **pressed on a series of machines** that have all the precision of a sledgehammer: one for the body, one for the sleeves and one for the collar and cuffs. Typically, at the rate of 40 to 50 an hour per presser.

Next, your shirt is **“strategically touched up”** by hand on the sleeves and underarms. If there's time. If deemed necessary. If you're lucky.

Finally, **the sleeves are creased from the shoulder to the top of the cuff** – often all the way to the end of the cuff.

This is the shirt that's **passed off to customers** as a “hand ironed laundered shirt” or a “hand finished laundered shirt.”

At the vast majority of cleaners, **these shirt travesties are called “standard operating procedures”.**

And the results?

A machine mangled, dishwasher dingy, cardboard crusty shirt. That'll last 25 to 35 cleanings, at best (that's the “industry insurance standard”). Before you're forced to throw them out or consign them to the charity bin.

At RAVE FabriCARE, we're different.

First, **we soak your fine shirts** in our odorless, dermatologically friendly, fabric gentle dry cleaning fluid.

This is the **only way to safely and gently dissolve oil-based stains** – such as body oil, creams and lotions, and other grease deposits – without scrubbing your collars and cuffs with nylon brushes and washing in hot water in an (often futile) attempt to dissolve the oil-based stains.

This is also the only way to ensure that, when your shirt is finally hand ironed, those body oils and grease deposits don't transform or oxidize through heat into difficult-to-remove yellow or brown stains.

Next, **we soak your fine shirts** in special water-based solutions to relax the fibers. And **release soil and water-based stains**. For a minimum of 8 hours (12 hours for shirts with french cuffs).

Why is soaking critical to the care of fine shirts?

Because **soaking reduces the wear and tear** that would result from the use of conventional washing techniques (aka the scrubbing/hot water/industrial detergent/bleach method).

After soaking, **we gently launder your fine shirts for about 3 to 5 minutes (not 20 to 40 minutes).**

And how do we launder them?

In cold to cool water. Using only the finest pH balanced, fragrance free, phosphate free enzyme detergents manufactured by Sanitone ®. Using specialized, computer-controlled wet cleaning machines, where microprocessors control water temperature, cylinder speeds, mechanical action and moisture removal to exacting specifications.

Finally, every laundered shirt is **steamed out and hand ironed.**

You read that correctly: steamed out and hand ironed. **As a matter of routine.** Not machine pressed and then “strategically touched up”. If there’s time. If deemed necessary. If you’re lucky.

Truth is, any cleaner can “clean and press” a shirt in 4 to 6 hours. But only RAVE FabriCARE crafts an extraordinary shirt.

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**16. You don’t care that your laundered shirts are machine pressed at a rate of 40 to 50 per hour per presser and not hand ironed as promised**

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By way of background, here’s what happens to your laundered shirts — even at the so-called “better cleaners” and self-styled “couture care specialists”.

Your shirt is **laundered using conventional washing techniques** — scrubbing, hot water, harsh caustic industrial grade detergents and bleaches.

Then it’s **pressed on a series of machines** that have all the precision of a sledgehammer: one for the body, one for the sleeves and one for the collar and cuffs. Typically, at the rate of 40 to 50 an hour per presser.

Next, your shirt is **“strategically touched up”** by hand on the sleeves and underarms. If there’s time. If deemed necessary. If you’re lucky.

Finally, the **sleeves are creased from the shoulder to the top of the cuff** — often all the way to the end of the cuff.

This is the shirt that’s **passed off to the public** as a “hand ironed laundered shirt” or a “hand finished laundered shirt.”

Unfortunately, a 2 to 4 minute **touched up shirt** is not an 8 to 12 minute **hand ironed shirt**.

To qualify as a hand-ironed laundered shirt, the shirt must be **PARTIALLY steamed by machine and then COMPLETELY pressed by hand** (that’s a “hand ironed laundered shirt”).

**Not COMPLETELY pressed by machine and then PARTIALLY touched up by hand** (that’s a “hand touched up laundered shirt”).

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, every laundered shirt is hand ironed. As a matter of routine.

We’d never pass off a machine pressed laundered shirt as a hand ironed laundered shirt in the hope that you’d never know the difference between a \$2 or \$4 machine pressed laundered shirt and a \$10 to \$20 hand ironed laundered shirt.

**Note to metro Phoenix area residents:**

If your cleaner automatically creases the sleeves the sleeves of your shirts, the likelihood that your shirt was machine pressed is **almost guaranteed**.

Why do we say that?

**Because no cleaner who hand irons their shirts would ever consider destroying that hand work by creasing the sleeves of your shirts.**

If your cleaner charges you \$8 to \$12 for a hand ironed laundered shirt, make sure that you’re getting a hand ironed laundered shirt. Not a machine pressed laundered shirt that’s been strategically touched up with a hand iron.

Why do we say that?

**Because we know of no cleaner in the metro Phoenix area — other than RAVE FabriCARE — that hand irons your laundered shirts.**

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**17. You like your shirts “starched” with cheap synthetic glues**

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There are basically 2 types of starch — synthetic and natural.

Most cleaners starch their shirts with a cheap synthetic glue that **adheres to your shirt’s fibers like a coat of paint** (it’s poly vinyl chloride aka PVC).

Every time your shirts are starched another “coat” is added. The build-up continues in this fashion because synthetic starch does not dissolve easily when it comes into contact with water in the washer wheel.

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, we only use the finest, natural wheat starch which dissolves immediately on contact with water.

One more thing about synthetic starch. The continuous build-up on each starching also abrades the fibers of your shirts rather quickly.

That's because, instead of "collapsing" when it comes into contact with water in the washer wheel, the shirt maintains its rigidity. It's just like throwing an ultra-thin piece of plywood into the washer wheel and tumbling that piece of wood for 20 plus minutes.

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### **18. You don't believe that creases in the sleeves of your laundered shirts is a sign of poor craftsmanship and displays a I-pressed-this-shirt-myself-while-watching-TV look**

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For reasons that we are still trying to understand, some individuals actually like creases in the sleeves of their shirts.

In this sub-section, we're not referring to those individuals who actually like creases in the sleeves of their shirts.

Instead, we're referring to the 99% of individuals who have never expressed a preference for "creased sleeves."

Fact is, the vast majority of cleaners automatically crease your sleeves for one reason and one reason only: it quickly covers up a whole host of telltale signs that the shirt has been machine pressed by a semi-skilled machine operator.

Creasing the sleeves of a shirt is just like painting over rusty metal. And hoping that no one will notice all the other signs that the metal is in poor condition.

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, we prefer an uncreased or rolled sleeve.

In our opinion, a rolled sleeve is the first sign, amongst many others, of a professionally hand ironed shirt; a creased sleeve is the first sign of a machine pressed shirt and displays all the professionalism of a pressed-at-home look.

After all, if shirt tailors and manufacturers intended that the sleeves of their shirts to be creased wouldn't they have creased the sleeves of your shirts in the first place?

### **19. You're satisfied with a cleaner who stuffs multiple shirts into a single bag (hanger shirts) and who machine folds your laundered shirts into a rumpled mess (folded shirts)**

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At the vast majority of cleaners, your hanger laundered shirts are stuffed into a narrow poly bag. Often 5 or 6 to a bag.

It's easy to understand why.

After all, why bother with quality packaging if the shirts on the inside are mediocre at best.

And why do your folded laundered shirts look like a mess?

Because they're:

- machine pressed
- machine folded
- stuffed into a thin poly bag.

We like to call this the "slept in" look. It's a look that's available at over 26,000 ordinary cleaners throughout North America.

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, we do things differently.

As regards your hanger shirts, we bag our laundered shirts using extra wide, extra thick poly bags. One shirt to a bag.

And your folded laundered shirt?

- We carefully fold your shirt in half. Not in thirds, like almost every other cleaner
  - We carefully fold by hand. Never by machine, like almost every other cleaner.
  - We carefully cushion the folds with sheets of unbuffered, acid-free tissue. Not with regular tissue or no tissue, like almost every other cleaner.
  - We carefully support the body and collar with a thick, long shirt board and a collar support. Not with a flimsy, short board and no collar support, like almost every other cleaner.
  - We seal the shirt in a heavy gauge, wide shirt bag with a "built in" cushion of air. Not in a thin, narrow poly bag that crushes your shirt, like almost every other cleaner.
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We also offer a “short fold” shirt, tailored to the depth of your storage cabinetry. Just specify the maximum length of the poly bag and we’ll accommodate your needs. **Same folding process; shorter poly bag.**

So go ahead. Manhandle our folded shirts. Stuff ‘em in that suitcase.

You’ll find that the RAVE FabriCARE folded shirt travels beautifully. With practically no wrinkles or creases.

Fact is, if you’re traveling, our folded shirts will arrive at their destination in far better condition than the hangered shirts you might have personally carried in a garment bag.

What’s more, upon arrival at your destination, there’ll be absolutely no need to send your shirts to the hotel valet for “pressing”. That’ll save you \$10 to \$30 per shirt in hotel valet costs. And we’d bet that the quality of their “pressing” wouldn’t come close to matching the quality of your well-travelled, folded RAVE FabriCARE shirt.

## **20. You always require that all your fine garments be returned to you in 1 to 3 days**

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There are over 400 cleaners in the metro Phoenix area.

And **every single one** would be delighted to accommodate your request for same or next day service. **And every single one** who offers pickup and delivery service will be delighted to pickup your cleaning on day 1 and deliver on day 3.

That’s because their entire *modus operandi* is geared to getting your garments into a machine, onto a press and into a bag. ASAP.

Same or next day in-store service and 3 day pickup and delivery service is standard operating procedure at almost every cleaner in the metro Phoenix area (and probably in the US as well).

Yet, at the same time, they’ll tell you that their “exceptional dry cleaning and laundry service” is the result of their “attention to detail.”

Truth is, **you can’t have it both ways**: true quality, in garment care, is simply not compatible with speed (on a consistent, routine basis).

It’s the same reason Morton’s ® cannot prepare their fine steaks at the speed of a Denny’s ®. And the same reason Vidal Sassoon’s ® cannot execute their styles at the speed of a Super Cuts ®.

At RAVE FabriCARE, by contrast, we take about 5 days to return your fine garments.

Why?

Because **we actually perform** all the time consuming tasks necessary to professionally clean, hand finish, inspect, repair and package your fine garments.

At RAVE FabriCARE, **we don’t just claim that we perform** all these time consuming tasks.

We take the time to execute on our commitment to true quality cleaning.

## **21. You believe that quality has no inherent value and that garment care, like sugar and salt, is nothing more than a commodity available at any cleaner**

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The vast majority of cleaners are quite ordinary.

**They’ll all produce a garment that’s “good enough, fast enough and cheap enough”.**

In much the same way that Denny’s ® serves steaks, Fantastic Sams ® cuts hair, 7-Eleven ® brews coffee, Sunny Delight ® prepares orange juice and Motel 6 ® provides accommodations.

The real question is this: **are you looking for extraordinary or are you satisfied with good enough, fast enough and cheap enough?**

At RAVE FabriCARE, we believe that good is never good enough, that true quality has inherent value, and that, without true quality, nothing else matters.

So we acquired the specialized equipment, technologies and facilities. We refined the stain removal, cleaning and restoration processes. We accumulated the knowledge, expertise and skills. We developed the internal operating procedures. And we established each service we offer as “best of class”.

All, so you’ll never have to worry about your bespoke, made-to-measure, designer, high

fashion, specialty and couture garments and household textiles.

Or even think about the hundreds of technical details that go into delivering true quality cleaning.



**Stu Bloom**

Founder and President of RAVE FabriCARE

RAVE FabriCARE, based in Scottsdale, Arizona, cares for fine garments, household textiles and accessories and serves clients in the USA and Canada and in other selected countries throughout the world. Stu is the author of various Position Papers, White Papers and Ebooks on these subjects, all of which are available from [ravefabricare.com/downloads/free-stuff](http://ravefabricare.com/downloads/free-stuff). He is an evangelist for true quality cleaning and is a contributor to and editor of True Quality Cleaning, RAVE FabriCARE's blog.



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