



Image of streaking in a Bianca Spender silk dress



Image of streaking in a P Johnson silk top

Both of these garments were dry cleaned as per the care label and after the cleaning process streaks in garments appeared.

1. The issue

The dyes used on these silk garments showed insufficient colourfastness to professional drycleaning solvents.

When immersed in solvent, parts of the surface dye partially dissolved, causing:

- Loss of colour
- Uneven or streaked appearance
- Localised fading in folded or creased areas
- Increased dye removal in areas that bend or rub during tumbling (hemlines, seat, underarms, pockets, neckline)



2. Other contributing factors

Silk garments can also be affected by:

- Perfume
- Perspiration and sweat
- Alcohol
- Body oils
- Water exposure
- Long-term storage and oxidation

These substances can weaken or destabilise certain dyes, making them more vulnerable during cleaning.

If the garment is placed in a small net bag, overloaded, or cleaned with heavier items, friction increases, leading to:

- Colour removal at folds and creases
- Loose dye re-depositing onto the garment surface, creating striking or patchiness

3. Outcome

It was determined that both of these garments could not withstand the manufacturer's recommended care instructions or the normal conditions of professional drycleaning and the condition was beyond the control of the drycleaner.

The adverse change of appearance is attributable to the methods of manufacture — specifically:

- Inadequate dye fixation
- Surface-level dye application
- Poor dye colourfastness to solvent

4. Recommendation to Members

- Inspect all brightly coloured or dark silk garments carefully before cleaning.
- Pay special attention to areas prone to perspiration, alcohol contact, or previous moisture exposure.
- Use disclaimers where dye instability is suspected.
- Avoid overloading silk items in the machine or using undersized net bags.
- Document pre-existing signs of colour weakness.