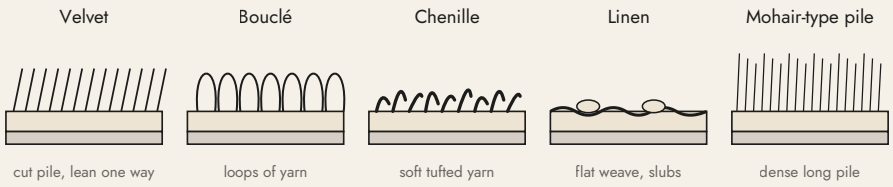
Fabric families for *upholstery*: velvet, bouclé, mohair, linen

Velvet, bouclé, chenille, mohair and linen: describe the cloth, fix the pile direction and ask for the test results.

AT A GLANCE

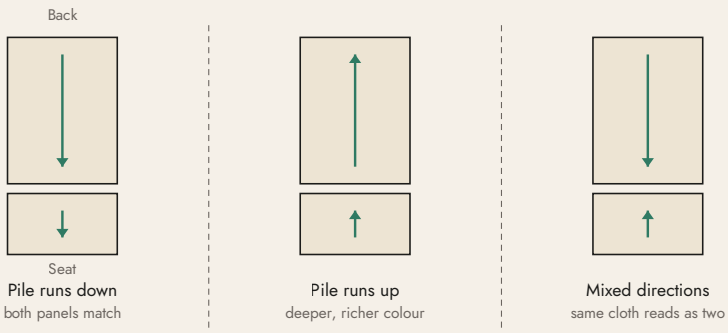
Family	What it is	Habit to plan for	Specify
Velvet	Cut pile standing on a woven base; fibre varies (cotton, polyester, viscose, mixes)	Pile lies one way, so shade changes with direction; pile can crush or mark (trade practice)	Pile direction on every panel; cut all pieces the same way; check seams
Bouclé	Looped yarn on a base; loop size varies	Loops can snag and pull; larger loops are more exposed (trade practice)	Loop scale from a sample; ask about snag resistance
Chenille	Soft tufted yarn, often woven or blended	Surface can shade, flatten or shed; construction varies	Test results for the actual cloth, not the family name
Mohair	Fibre from the Angora goat, used in pile or flat cloths	A fibre, not a cloth: the construction decides the behaviour	Name the fibre content and the construction
Linen	Flax fibre, plain or slubbed weave, often blended	Creases; slubs are natural; blends change behaviour	Fibre content; accept creasing or specify a blend

The first column is the family; the cloth you buy is a construction within it. No standard defines these families for upholstery, so the columns describe trade practice. Every figure comes from the supplier's test report.



Schematic cross-sections, not to scale. Real cloths vary within each family. Original drawing.

Surface structure of five fabric families in cross-section. Schematic and not to scale; real cloths vary. Original drawing by Make Bespoke Studio.



Pile direction on a seat and back. Matching direction keeps one colour; mixed direction splits it. Schematic. Original drawing by Make Bespoke Studio.

SPECIFICATION WORDING

NAMING THE CLOTH

Fabric [item ref]: [velvet / bouclé / chenille / mohair / linen / other], fibre content [ ] per cent [fibre], construction [cut pile / loop / flat weave], supplier reference [ ], colour [ ], width [ ] mm, as per signed sample [ref]. Family names and trade names are not accepted as a description.

PILE DIRECTION AND MATCHING

Pile direction [up / down] on all panels, marked on shop drawing [ref]. All pieces of one item are cut from the same run in the same direction. Pattern or loop scale is matched as drawing [ref]. [Partner workshop] states how arms and curves will be cut before approval.

SEAMS AND CONSTRUCTION

Seams [type], thread [ ], placed as drawing [ref]. Supplier provides seam slippage results to [method]. Looped or pile cloths: [loop / pile] is not to be pulled or flattened by pressing or fixing.

EVIDENCE AND CARE

Before approval [supplier] provides results for rub to [method and cycles], pilling to [method and grade], light fastness to [method and grade], rubbing fastness to [method and grade], and a fire report for the finished composite where required. A cleaning method for the actual cloth is provided in writing and included in the handover pack.

TERMS USED

Pile
Fibres standing up from the base of a cloth, cut (velvet) or looped (bouclé).

Pile direction
The way the pile leans; the cloth reads lighter or darker depending on the direction it is viewed from.

Bouclé
A cloth made with a looped yarn that gives a knobbly surface.

Chenille
A soft yarn with short fibres standing out from a core, or a cloth woven from it.

STANDARDS AND SOURCES

- ISO 12947 (Martindale), ISO 12945-2 (pilling), ISO 105-B02 (light), ISO 105-X12 (rubbing), ISO 13936 (seam slippage): as described on our fabric tests sheet; previews and listings read on 5 Nov 2026. Confirm current editions on BSI Knowledge.

Full guide: https://makebespoke.com/trade/technical/fabric-families-for-upholstery. Make Bespoke Studio coordinates manufacture through its partner workshops. Figures are guidance only and your specification governs; some may be superseded, so contact the studio to verify.