



Defect Classification Guide

A realistic visual reference for apparel inspection, QC teams, sourcing managers, and clothing brands.

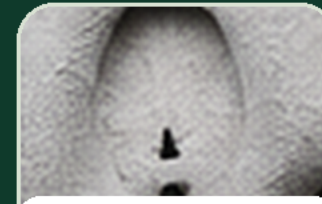
Critical - Major - Minor

Eco Jersey Limited

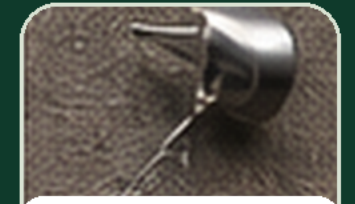
QC & Compliance Center | ecojersey.com



Open seam / broken sea



Hole or tear



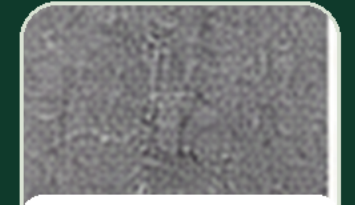
Safety violation



Incorrect size label



Stitching defect



Fabric defect



Pleats / tucks uneven



Print / panel misalign



Needle mark



Slight dirt mark



Slight yarn slub



Minor label issue

Defect severity depends on safety, function, appearance, location, recurrence, and buyer-approved quality standards.

Critical defects

Zero tolerance in most inspections



A defect that affects safety, compliance, function, or legality. Shipment should be stopped until the issue is reviewed and corrected.

Use this level when:

- Risk or non-compliance
- Product cannot be sold
- Visible repeated issue

Major defects

Limited tolerance under AQL



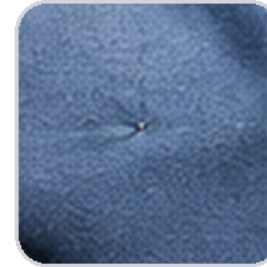
A defect that affects appearance, fit, durability, or saleability. It normally counts toward AQL accept/reject limits.

Use this level when:

- Fit or function affected
- Appearance not acceptable
- Buyer standard not met

Minor defects

Allowed within AQL limit



A small cosmetic issue that does not meaningfully affect performance or use. It still needs tracking when repeated.

Use this level when:

- Cosmetic and small
- Does not affect use
- Within agreed tolerance

These defects can stop shipment, require immediate investigation, or demand 100% recheck depending on buyer requirements.



Open seam / broken seam

CRITICAL / MAJOR

Seam opening that exposes construction weakness or causes garment failure.

Inspector action

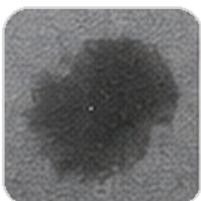


Safety violation

CRITICAL

Sharp object, broken needle, restricted item, or unsafe component found on product.

Inspector action



Oil / chemical contamination

CRITICAL / MAJOR

Visible oil, grease, chemical stain, or contaminant on garment surface.

Inspector action



Functional workmanship failure

MAJOR / CRITICAL

Zipper, snap, hood, closure, or component does not function properly.

Inspector action

Test function on sample set; repair or replace affected components.



Hole or tear

CRITICAL / MAJOR

Any visible hole, tear, burn, or puncture in garment fabric.

Inspector action



Incorrect size label

MAJOR / CRITICAL

Wrong size label or mismatch between garment measurement and label.

Inspector action



Restricted substance risk

CRITICAL

Possible banned or non-compliant substance risk in trims, print, or materials.

Inspector action



Wrong item / wrong construction

CRITICAL / MAJOR

Product style, color, print, construction, or order details do not match approval.

Inspector action

Compare against approved sample, PO, tech pack, and trim sheet.

Major defects affect saleability, durability, fit, or approved appearance. They usually count toward the AQL major defect limit.



Stitching defect

MAJOR

Skipped stitch, irregular seam, seam puckering, or weak stitch quality.

Inspector action



Pleats / tucks uneven

MAJOR

Uneven, twisted, or visibly inconsistent pleats, folds, panels, or tucks.

Inspector action



Loose thread

MAJOR / MINOR

Visible untrimmed thread that affects appearance or presentation.

Inspector action



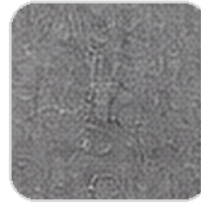
Shade variation

MAJOR

Obvious color variation between panels, sizes, or production lots.

Inspector action

Compare under light box and control shade grouping.



Fabric defect

MAJOR

Runs, snags, slubs, uneven weaving, or visible fabric surface defect.

Inspector action

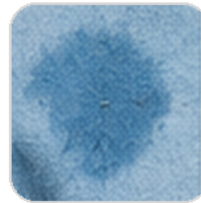


Print / panel misalignment

MAJOR

Print, pocket, panel, placket, or artwork does not align with approved standard.

Inspector action



Stain / spot

MAJOR

Visible stain, ink, water mark, or dirt spot on garment surface.

Inspector action



Embroidery inconsistency

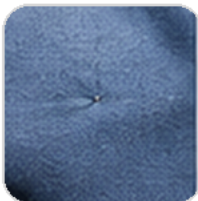
MAJOR

Uneven embroidery, skipped stitches, poor density, or wrong position.

Inspector action

Check artwork file, backing, tension, and operator settings.

Minor defects do not normally affect wearability or product function, but repeated minor defects can still harm presentation and buyer confidence.



Needle mark

MINOR

Small needle hole or mark that does not affect use or overall appearance.

Inspector action



Slight yarn slub

MINOR

Small yarn imperfection that does not affect performance or appearance significantly.

Inspector action



Thread trimming required

MINOR

Loose thread under the accepted minor length threshold.

Inspector action



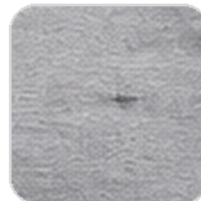
Minor print defect

MINOR

Small smudge, pinhole, or print variation within accepted tolerance.

Inspector action

Verify against approved standard; classify as major if visible or repeated.



Slight dirt mark

MINOR

Light mark that can be removed by cleaning or washing.

Inspector action



Minor label issue

MINOR

Slightly uneven or twisted label with correct content and function.

Inspector action



Slight puckering

MINOR

Minor puckering that does not impact garment fit, function, or presentation.

Inspector action



Button / accessory issue

MINOR

Slightly scratched button or trim issue that does not affect function.

Inspector action

Accept only if it does not affect product presentation or safety.

Use this page to assign each defect to the right inspection area before logging severity and quantity.

Construction



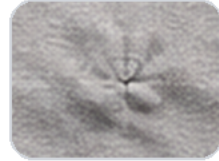
Open seam / broken seam



Stitching defect

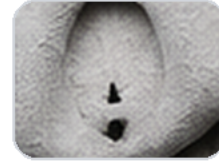


Pleats / tucks uneven

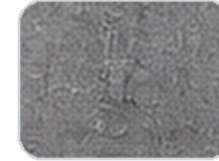


Slight puckering

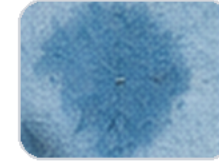
Fabric / shade



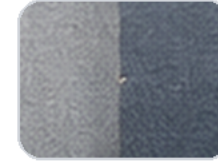
Hole or tear



Fabric defect



Stain / spot



Shade variation

Decoration / branding



Print / panel misalignment



Embroidery inconsistency



Minor print defect



Minor label issue

Trims / function



Safety violation



Functional workmanship...



Button / accessory issue



Incorrect size label

Final treatment depends on severity, quantity, location, recurrence, AQL level, and buyer-approved standard.

Level	Definition	Examples	Treatment
Critical	Safety, compliance, legal, or function risk.	Sharp object, restricted substance, major safety risk.	Reject / hold shipment and investigate.
Major	Affects appearance, durability, fit, function, or saleability.	Open seam, stain, shade variation, wrong print position.	Count in AQL and require corrective action.
Minor	Small cosmetic issue with no meaningful function impact.	Small thread, needle mark, slight puckering.	Count in AQL minor limit or rework if needed.

Inspector rule of thumb

When in doubt, classify to the higher severity level and escalate for buyer or QC manager review. Do not release shipment when critical defects are found unless approved corrective action and reinspection are completed.

A good defect guide is useful only when it drives correction. Use this workflow to prevent repeated quality issues.



Need a complete QC download pack?

Use this guide together with the AQL Inspection Chart, Apparel QC Checklist, Fabric Inspection Form, Measurement Spec Sheet, and Final Inspection Report.

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