

The BON◇TON Stores Inc.

**Softlines Color Approval Requirements &
Procedures**



2010/2011

Table of Contents

- **Introduction – page 3**
- **Policy Statement – page 4**
- **Color Standards – page 4**
- **Sample Submission Procedure – page 5**
- **Visual Color Assessment – page 7**
- **Visual Assessment Method – page 7**
- **Instrumental Color Assessment – page 7-8**
- **CSI registration and ordering information – page 9**
- **Lab Dip Color Evaluation Form – page 10**
- **Strike-off/Handloom/Knitdown Form – page 11**
- **Trims/Accessories Form – page 12**
- **Bulk Fabric Evaluation Form – page 13**

Introduction

The Bon-Ton Stores, Inc. (Bon-Ton) is committed to providing quality merchandise to our customers. Consistent color is an important element that distinguishes our private brands as leaders within the retail industry.

The ***Softlines Color Approval Requirements & Procedures*** manual is provided as a tool to our suppliers of private brand merchandise. This manual describes color procedures for fabric lab dips, yarn dyes, strike offs, trims, and bulk fabric submissions. All suppliers are required to follow guidelines and submittal procedures outlined here in all instances.

If you have any questions regarding any of the information or specifications contained within these guidelines, you may contact our buying agent or direct them to:

Meredith O'Day-Shortt and/or Amalia Recio

Color Technicians

The Bon-Ton Stores, Inc.

310 W. West Wisconsin Avenue

Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203

Phone: (414) 347-1152

E-Mail Meredith.O'Day-Shortt@bonton.com and Amalia.Recio@bonton.com

Bill Grange

Divisional Vice President of Quality Assurance

The Bon-Ton Stores, Inc.

310 W. West Wisconsin Avenue

Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203

E-Mail: Bill.Grange@bonton.com

Policy Statement

- This program is based on the mandate that Private Brand merchandise purchased by Bon-Ton should only come from responsible sourcing partners and must meet Bon-Ton color quality specifications.
- All fabric and/or other materials for Bon-Ton Private Brand merchandise are subject to visual and/or instrumental color approval by Bon-Ton prior to production.
- Final decisions regarding color quality are to be made using the light box under U30 light source. **Whenever there is a disparity between visual and instrumental color assessments, Bon-Ton will rely on visual assessment to make final decision.**
- It is expected that lab dips submitted for approval to Bon-Ton Quality Assurance are good matches to the standard and meet our requirements. **The vendor is responsible for ensuring that qualified color inspectors pre-screen all samples prior to submitting to Bon-Ton in accordance with the conditions specified in the *Softlines Color Approval Requirements & Procedures* manual.**
- Lab dips must be submitted and approved for every color and style designated on Bon-Ton Private Brand purchase orders.
- All lab dip approvals must be received prior to dyeing bulk fabric.
- **Any third round submittal lab dips being rejected by Bon-Ton color office will result in notification of failing lab dip and subsequent lab dip evaluation with product team to determine best course of action.**
- Lab dip approvals are valid for twelve months from the date they are approved. Bulk submits must still be sent for final approval by product team.
- The color approval process does not limit Bon-Ton's rights nor undermine or remove the vendor's or manufacturer's responsibilities and obligations under the Bon-Ton Stores, Inc. Purchase Order Terms and Conditions.

Color Standards

- It is the vendor's responsibility to incur all costs associated with the purchase of all color standards to be used for Bon-Ton product orders.
- All Bon-Ton color standards must be purchased from Color Solutions International (CSI) unless specified otherwise by product team or design team. See **Page 9** for CSI website registration and standard ordering information.
- It is the responsibility of the agent and vendor to ensure that all color standards and spectral data are obtained by or distributed to the appropriate producing facilities.
- Color standard spectral data will be e-mailed to agents and/or vendors that have the capability to receive .qtx or .jb5 files. The vendors must provide the Bon-Ton color office with the contact information where color standard spectral data is to be communicated. Using the .qtx files allows you to measure against the exact same data as the Bon-Ton color office.
- **Do not read and enter data from your physical swatch as the standard.**
- Standards should be stored away from light. Prolonged exposure to light will cause the color to fade.
- Minimize handling of the fabric color standard to protect the integrity of the color.
- Color standards should always be used as the target for lab dip submissions. The approved lab dip is to be followed for bulk dyeing and the original color standard used as a guide.

Sample Submission Procedure

Lab Dips

- Lab dips submitted for approval are sent to the attention of the Color Technicians. If the vendor has the capability to digitally pre-screen, then the vendor should follow the Instrumental Pre-Approval Process **before** sending any physical submits.
- Upon receipt of the color standard and/or order, agents and vendors are responsible for ensuring that lab dips are submitted within two weeks. Lab dips for programs with the earliest delivery dates take priority
- Lab dips are to be visually pre-screened to the standard by the vendor under a light box using the primary light source U30 and secondary light source D65 prior to submitting for approval. If the lab dips are not visually acceptable, they should **not** be sent to Bon-Ton. The vendor should request resubmits from the manufacturer.
- All samples must be submitted on a completed Bon-Ton **Lab Dip Color Evaluation Form (Page 10)**. Only one (1) color per form. Incomplete forms may cause comments to be delayed.
- Lab dips must be sent for every color in a style. If the color and fabrication will be used on multiple styles, all style numbers must be listed on the *Lab Dip Color Evaluation Form*.
- Submits for lab dip approval must be at a minimum 2" x 2" in size or weigh a minimum of 2 grams. **Color Office reserves the right to reject and request resubmit if lab dips do not meet these minimum size requirements.**
- Lab dips are to be submitted in the correct fiber and construction that will be used in production.
- For each lab dip submittal a minimum of four (4) color samples must be sent.
- Lab dip samples must be alpha designated on the *Lab Dip Color Evaluation Form* as: A, B, C, D, etc. If additional submissions are required, lab dips must follow in sequence, example E, F, G, H...
- Color comments from Bon-Ton Color Office will be communicated back via email to the designated agent or vendor contact person within two business days upon receiving the lab dip. Lab dips received after 1:00 pm will be logged the following day. A re-submit, if necessary, must be received by the Color Office within **seven business days** after the comments are issued.
- For fabrics that have raised surfaces and that are directional (i.e. velour, corduroy, etc), the nap direction that will be followed in production will be specified in color comments. For example, "production to be nap up". Further, the vendor must update subsequent submittal forms with this specified nap direction so all parties are aware of correct nap direction before proceeding to production.

Knitted Yarn Dyes

- Yarn Dyes lab dips are to be submitted to the attention of the Color Technicians on a completed *Lab Dip Color Evaluation Form*.
- The same submittal guidelines as specified for solid lab dips must be followed for knitted yarn dye lab dips as well.
- Submits are preferred to be submitted in a knit or woven panel. If this is not possible, yarn may be submitted wound on a 2"x 2" non-optical white card so that it can be measured with a spectrophotometer using the LAV aperture. Enough yarn must be wound on the card so that the sample is opaque and the card cannot be seen through the yarn. The card should not be bowed by tension of the wound yarn.

Strike-Offs/Handlooms/Knitdowns

- Strike-Offs/Handlooms/Knitdowns are to be submitted to the respective Bon-Ton **Product Manager** for color approval on a ***Strike-Off/Handloom/Knitdown Form (Page 11)***.
- For handlooms, a yarn skein of each color used the handloom, including white, must be attached and submitted with the handloom. Yarn dyes that are woven with multiple colors and/or that are crossed with other colored yarns in the fabric will change in color appearance after they are woven. Optional yarn skeins of a particular color that are NOT actually used the submitted handloom should NOT be attached on the submit form.

Trims/Accessories

- Trims/Accessories are to be submitted to the respective Bon-Ton **Product Manager** for color approval on a ***Trims/Accessories Form (Page 12)***.

Bulk Production Fabrics

- Bulk fabrics submitted for color evaluation are to be sent to the attention of the respective Bon-Ton **Product Manager** on a completed ***Bulk Fabric Evaluation Form (Page 13)***. The bulk must be a minimum of 6" x 6" size (larger swatches are preferred).
- The first bulk production lot is required to be submitted for final color approval. Final approval comments are to be received from Bon-Ton Stores product management and/or quality assurance prior to production.
- All applicable style numbers must be listed on the *Bulk Fabric Evaluation Form*. If the bulk submit is based on an approved lab dip with a different style number, that style number should be listed on the "Vendor Comments" line.
- Bulk submits are required to be of production quality fabric in the correct fiber content, construction, weight, etc. as contracted by the buyer.
- For programs where bulk fabric will be subject to special finishing (i.e. heavy chemical wash, enzyme, stone, frosting, etc.), a piece of both the before-wash and the after-wash bulk fabric must be submitted together for review and approval. Each must be labeled either "before-wash" or "after-wash" in the "vendor comments" section on the *Bulk Fabric Evaluation Form*. A description of the wash including the type and length of time must be listed on the *Bulk Fabric Approval Form*.
- **Vendors are to prescreen bulk fabric prior to sending for final approval.** For color, bulk fabrics will be compared visually under a light box under Ultralume 3000 (U30) as the primary light source and D65 Daylight as the secondary light source to the approved lab dip and/or original color standard. If needed, a spectrophotometer measurement to the approved lab dip and/or original color standard may be conducted.
- If multiple fabric lots are necessary to complete production or for later deliveries, vendors and their dye mills are responsible to evaluate that additional production fabric lots match the original approved bulk fabric and sort shade bands to avoid shipping shade variations to our stores. Each lot is to be reviewed to the original bulk fabric. If a vendor finds color deviation between fabric lots they must advise Bon-Ton QA color lab of the action to be taken in production to insure that goods are consistent in shade within store orders and send a shade band for review attached to a completed *Bulk Fabric Approval Form*.
- When submitting shade bands to Bon-Ton for color approval, the fabric lots must be positioned one on top of the other so that the bottom inch of the underlying fabric is showing.

Visual Color Assessment

- Final decisions regarding color quality are to be made using the light box under U30 light source. **Whenever there is a disparity between visual and instrumental color assessments, Bon-Ton will rely on visual assessment to make final decision.**
- Bon-Ton strongly recommends that vendors participate in the instrumental pre-approval process **before** they send physical samples for visual assessment.
- Bon-Ton also strongly recommends that inspectors of color goods be examined by taking the Farnsworth-Munsell 100 Hue Test. Qualified color evaluators should have a superior or normal discrimination classification (error score of 100 or less).
- Visual assessments must be performed using a standardized light box. Bon-Ton uses the SpectraLight III made by X-Rite.
- The **primary** light source used for all visual shade assessment by Bon-Ton is **Ultralume 3000 (U30)**. U30 is a commercial narrow band fluorescent light source used in the U.S. that simulates the lighting in our stores. **All submitted samples should visually match the standard under U30.**
- The **secondary** light source for visual evaluation is **D65 Daylight**. Samples for submission should be viewed under D65 and should not exhibit significant metamerism - color change due to different light conditions.

Visual Assessment Method

The following procedure must be followed for visual assessment using a standardized light box:

- The light box surface must be clear of other samples. No other colors are permitted in the light box during visual evaluation.
- The standard and the lab dip must be aligned next to each other with their edges slightly touching.
- The standard and the lab dip must be aligned in the same direction with respect to weave, knit pattern, or other textures.
- Color communication is very important and using standard color terminology (C.I.E.) is recommended. The observer should note color differences in Lightness (L^*), Chroma (C^*) and Hue (H^*) as described below:
 - Lightness (L^*), or value, describes the lightness or darkness of a color. The sample will be described as being either too light or too dark compared to the standard.
 - Chroma (C^*) is the color intensity, saturation, or purity. The sample will be described as being too bright or too dull to the standard.
 - Hue (H^*) represents the actual cast or shade of the color. This is described as too red, green, yellow, or blue compared to the standard.

Instrumental Color Assessment

Bon-Ton recommends the use of instrumental assessment to expedite the color approval process. Reliable color measurement provides the basis for color approvals by numerical tolerancing – a process that is more time efficient, cost effective, and completely objective.

- Instrumental assessment within Bon-Ton is performed using X-Rite Color-Eye 7000A spectrophotometer. In order to ensure agreement, the following configuration must be used:

- Color Difference: DEcmc(2:1)
 - Specular Gloss: Included
 - UV component: Excluded (400nm cutoff)
 - Illuminates: Primary: U30, Secondary D65
 - Observer: 10 degree
- The DEcmc 1.00 tolerance is used as a guide for pass / fail judgment. The overall value difference (DL*) and the overall chroma difference (DC*) should be within +/-1.00. The overall hue difference (DH*) should be within +/-0.50 when reviewing in U30. To ensure consistency in both light sources DE 1.50 tolerance is used as a guide for pass/fail judgment in D65.
 - DL* = Difference between the standard lab dip value- light/dark
 - DC* = Difference between the standard and lab dip chroma – bright / dull
 - DH* = Difference between the standard and lab dip in the overall hue
 - Color samples should be measured in the spectrophotometer in the following manner:
 - Samples are to be folded in half (two ply) for measurement. If the sample is not opaque after two folds, then the sample layers should be increased so as to achieve an opaque sample. If it is impossible to achieve an opaque sample, then the sample shall be measured using a white tile backing.
 - All samples should be measured four (4) times and averaged. The samples should be rotated 90 degrees between measurements.

The instrumental tolerance reduces the number of off-quality lab dips and helps to guide color matching, but the evaluation by Bon-Ton involves both instrumental and visual methods. **Bon-Ton reserves the right to reject samples based on visual appearance.**

CSI Registration and Ordering Information

TO SET UP A CSI ACCOUNT:

1. access the CSI website: www.colorsolutionsinternational.com
2. click on “My CSI”
3. select “request new user” and follow directions

TO PLACE A CSI ORDER:

1. access the CSI website: www.colorsolutionsinternational.com
2. click on “My CSI”
3. login
4. click on “place orders / search”
 - a. search by color
 - i. do NOT select a division
 - ii. input color name
 - b. choose division
 - i. choose season
 - ii. select colors
5. follow instructions to complete order

If you have any questions please contact CSI directly at 1-800 962-6023 or online at www.colorsolutionsinternational.com.

BON-TON

Lab Dip Color Evaluation Form

For Solid Colors Only (Softlines)

Submit Status (Check One): 1st 2nd 3rd Other

| | |
|--|--|
| Color Name: | Check One: <input type="checkbox"/> Body Fabric <input type="checkbox"/> Lining <input type="checkbox"/> Trim <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| Color Code: | Date Submitted: |
| Bon-Ton PM: | Final Approval Due Date: |
| Brand Name: | Ex-Factory Date: |
| Season: | Send Results to: |
| Style Number(s): | Email Address: |
| Vendor Name: | Phone No.: |
| Dye Mill Name: | Agent: |
| Factory Name: | Dye Class: |
| Fiber/Fabrication: | Finish/Wash Type: |
| Garment Description: | Are lab dips finished/washed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <i>Lab dips must be reviewed visually to the standard by qualified color inspectors prior to being submitted by the vendor/mill.</i> | |

Each lab dip must be a minimum 2"x 2" in size and alpha designated (A, B, C, D,...). Light Sources: Primary U30 / Secondary D65

| | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|---|
| (Attach 2"x 2" Swatch) | (Attach 2"x 2" Swatch) | Bon-Ton Color Office Use Only: |
| | | Lab Dip # _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Pass <input type="checkbox"/> Fail |
| (Attach 2"x 2" Swatch) | | Lab Dip: |
| (Attach 2"x 2" Swatch) | | Lab Dip: |
| (Attach 2"x 2" Swatch) | | Lab Dip: |
| (Attach 2"x 2" Swatch) | | Lab Dip: |

Lab dip appears to the standard as:

Value:

Chroma:

Hue:

| | | |
|------------------------|--|---|
| (Attach 2"x 2" Swatch) | | Final Decision: _____ |
| (Attach 2"x 2" Swatch) | | Date: _____ By: _____ (initial) |
| (Attach 2"x 2" Swatch) | | Bon-Ton Color Office Comments: |
| (Attach 2"x 2" Swatch) | | _____ |
| (Attach 2"x 2" Swatch) | | _____ |
| (Attach 2"x 2" Swatch) | | _____ |
| (Attach 2"x 2" Swatch) | | _____ |

Vendor/Mill Comments

Report No.: _____

BON TON

Strike-off/Handloom/Knitdown Form

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Color Name: | Date Submitted: |
| Color Code: | Date Received by Bon-Ton |
| Bon-Ton PM: | Final Approval Due Date: |
| Brand Name: | Ex-Factory Date: |
| Season: | In-Store Month: |
| Style Number(s): | Send Results to: |
| Vendor Name: | Email Address: |
| Mill Name: | Phone No.: |
| Country: | Fax No.: |
| Fiber/Fabrication: | (Check One): <input type="checkbox"/> Print <input type="checkbox"/> Y/D Plaid <input type="checkbox"/> Stripe |
| Fabric Weight: | • <i>If Y/D Plaid or Stripe, have lab dips been approved?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Garment Description: | • <i>Does this need to coordinate with solids?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| | • <i>If yes, have solids been approved?</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| | Vendor Comments: |

Strike-offs must be submitted to Bon Ton Product Manager. Submits must include full repeats in all directions.

(Attach Fabric Swatch Here)

Submitted for: (Check All That Apply)

| | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quality/Hand Feel: | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected | By: _____ | Date: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern/Placement/Layout/Emb.: | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected | By: _____ | Date: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construction: | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected | By: _____ | Date: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Color: | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected | By: _____ | Date: _____ |

Comments:

BON-TON

Trims & Accessories Approval Form

SAMPLE STATUS: Pre-Pro Bulk Dev. SUBMIT STATAUS 1st 2nd 3rd Other

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Item Description: | Date Submitted: |
| Color Name: | Date Received by Bon-Ton: |
| Bon-Ton Product Mgr: | Final Approval Due Date: |
| Bon-Ton Brand Name: | Ex-Factory Date: |
| Season: | In-Store Month: |
| ALL Applicable Style #'s: | Contact to Send Results to: |
| Agent Office: | Email Address: |
| Vendor Name: | Phone No.: |
| Dye Mill /Trim Supplier: | Fax No.: |
| Country: | Is the submitted item(s) finished or washed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Fiber/Construction: | • <i>List any special finish or wash that will used for production:</i> |
| Fabric Weight: | EVALUATE FOR: |
| Garment Description: | |

The "Trims & Accessories" form must be emailed to the Bon-Ton Product Manager with ALL required information completed **prior** to sending actionable product for approval. Bon-Ton Light Sources: **Primary U30 / Secondary Daylight D65**

ATTACH ITEM(S):

Bon-Ton COMMENTS:

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quality: | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected | By: _____ | Date: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Size/Length: | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected | By: _____ | Date: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Color: | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected | By: _____ | Date: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Style Details | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected | By: _____ | Date: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain) | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved | <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected | By: _____ | Date: _____ |

Comments or changes to be made:

BON-TON

Bulk Fabric Evaluation Form

| | |
|---|---|
| Color Name: | (Check One): <input type="checkbox"/> Body Fabric <input type="checkbox"/> Trim <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| Color Code: | Date Submitted: |
| Bon-Ton PM: | Date Received by Bon-Ton |
| Brand Name: | Final Approval Due Date: |
| Season: | Ex-Factory Date: |
| Style Number(s): | Send Results to: |
| Vendor Name: | Email Address: |
| Mill Name: | Phone No.: |
| Factory: | Agent: |
| Fiber/Fabrication: | Y/D Plaid, or Stripe: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Fabric Weight: | Finish/Wash Type: |
| Garment Description: | Vendor Comments: |
| (Bulk Fabric is to be minimum 5"x 5" size. Viewing condition light sources: Primary U30 / Secondary D65) | |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Bulk fabric must be reviewed visually to the approved lab dip by qualified color inspectors prior to being submitted by the vendor/mill.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Attach Fabric Swatch Here)</p> | |
| Submitted for: (Check All That Apply) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quality/Hand Feel: | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected By: _____ Date: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Color: | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected By: _____ Date: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected By: _____ Date: _____ |
| Comments: | |

