

Garment dye: denim trend analysis

Greige: ready to dye

- Using an ecru base, a variety of off-white and natural tones can be achieved using this process in conjunction with other finishing techniques. Fabric must be in a RTD (ready to dye) state, that is de-sized, scoured and fully bleached, without the use of optical brighteners or softeners, which can affect dye uptake.
- As reported on WGSN, untreated and unbleached ecru denim is also a durable fabric perfectly suited to pared-down functional workwear styles. This hardwearing fabric takes on laundered looks and dirty stain treatments for a strong vintage feel.



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Indigo dye

- Specialists such as Spain's Jeanologia have perfected their CDS dyeing technology system, allowing colour to be created with the true visual characteristic of indigo denim. By ensuring that the colour remains on the surface of the fibre, as with indigo, it can be abraded to give a vintage character.
- With no limitations on shades, depth or brightness, colour can also be layered to give additional depth and interest to the final surface. Jersey, checked or RTD fabrics can be indigo dyed and will gradually wash down to give a naturally aged look.



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Bi-colour effects

- Bi-colour effects, where the weft remains undyed, as in a conventional indigo denim, are possible with garment dye, depending on dye temperature, the choice of dyestuff and different fibres used in the warp and weft.
- High temperatures - higher than that used in the polymer's manufacture - can damage synthetic fibre.
- The effect of this process is fabric weft definition, a lighter reverse shade for contrast turn-ups and a stronger variance in tones



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Denim character

- To achieve genuine washed denim character, the base fabric needs to have derived from a denim construction, with all the authentic yarn slubs.
- As with indigo denims, specialist additional finishing can be used to add visual difference, handle and surface decoration.
- Heavy washing, additional pigments and staining, and surface abrasions can also be applied after garment dyeing to achieve a more textured, denim character.



Military influence: contemporary khaki

- Historically, shade inconsistencies have been one potential negative factor with regards to taking the GD route, due to the hard-to-control nature of the process. This can be used to an advantage by smaller brands to create one-off effects and product individuality.
- Garment-dye techniques are used by many brands to create unique aged looks and popular vintage replications. Washed khaki shades create a vintage military aesthetic, with crumpled finishing and scuffed or chipped metalwear.
- The current street trend for hobo styling mixes worn khaki and olive shades with textural denims and quilted jackets for a deconstructed and self-mended military aesthetic.



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Washed-out black and grey

- Washed-down black and greys have continued in strength since last year's festival scene, replacing indigo blues as the popular alternative for girls' and guys' skinnies and shorts. Flatter grey shades are also popular for cleaner chino styles.
- Garment-dyed grey and black shades can be heavily washed or coated to give an overlaundered dust-like quality for an all-important grungy aesthetic.



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Vintage tints: rose

- Vintage tints emerge as a key colour direction for garment-dye pieces, with rose tints sure to be a summer favourite.
- Matt, chalky looks are created by building up layers of colour for authentic vintage character and reflect eclectic thrift-store shades.

