

SHIVPRIYA TEXCHEM · KNOWLEDGE SERIES

Linen.

The original premium fibre.

Flax stem to bast fibre. Bast fibre to the coolest, strongest natural yarn in the market. A working guide to linen — its process, its character and why Indian summers keep pushing it mainstream.

~80%

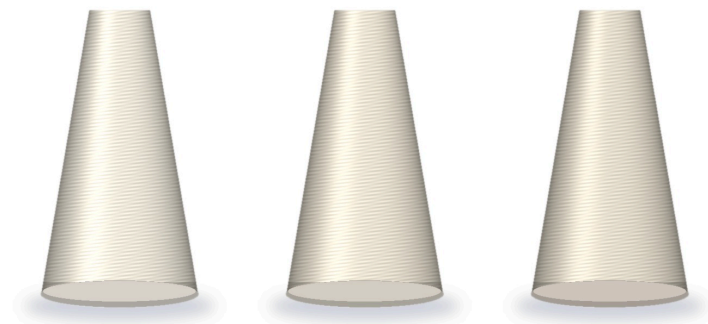
of the world's quality flax is grown in a coastal belt across France, Belgium and the Netherlands

Strongest

natural staple fibre — and it gets stronger when wet

100%

natural bast fibre; low-input crop, fully biodegradable



Bridging world-class spinning mills and your needs, since 2003.

shivpriyatexchem.com

CHAPTER 01

What exactly is linen?

Linen is spun from flax, a bast fibre taken from the stem of the plant. The fibre is long, strong, highly absorbent and naturally crisp — the textile signature of premium summer wear.

GRADE / FORM	SOURCE	WHAT IT SIGNIFIES
European flax™	France, Belgium, Netherlands	The certified benchmark for long, fine, consistent fibre
Wet-spun line yarn	Long line flax	Finest, smoothest linen yarns for premium wovens
Dry-spun tow yarn	Shorter tow fibre	Coarser, economical yarns for casual and home fabrics
Blended linen	Flax + cotton/viscose	Softer, cheaper, easier-spinning routes to the linen look
Indian spinning	Imported flax	India spins world-class linen from imported fibre — Jaya Shree is the flagship

Buyer's note. Linen counts run on the lea system (NeL), not Ne — a 60 lea linen is a different animal from a 60s cotton. Confirm the count system, the spinning route (wet vs dry spun) and fibre origin before comparing quotes.

Raw material

Bast fibre from the flax stem; retted, scutched and hackled.

Fibre length

Line fibre 30–90 cm — the longest natural staple traded

Supplied as

Line and tow fibre, or spun yarn in lea counts (NeL).

End of life

Fully biodegradable; among the lowest-input major crops.

CHAPTER 02

Stem to yarn: freeing the bast

Linen's process is about separating long bast fibres from the woody stem without breaking them — a sequence of controlled rotting and mechanical separation older than recorded history, now industrialised.



01 Harvesting

Flax is pulled, not cut, to preserve full fibre length — the first quality decision.

02 Retting

Dew or water retting lets microbes dissolve the pectin binding fibre to stem. Retting control decides colour and fineness.

03 Scutching

Mechanical beating removes the woody core (shives), separating long line fibre from shorter tow.

04 Hackling

Combing aligns line fibres into a continuous ribbon and removes remaining short fibre.

05 Wet or dry spinning

Wet spinning through hot water softens pectin for fine, smooth yarns; dry spinning gives fuller, rustic counts.

06 Finishing

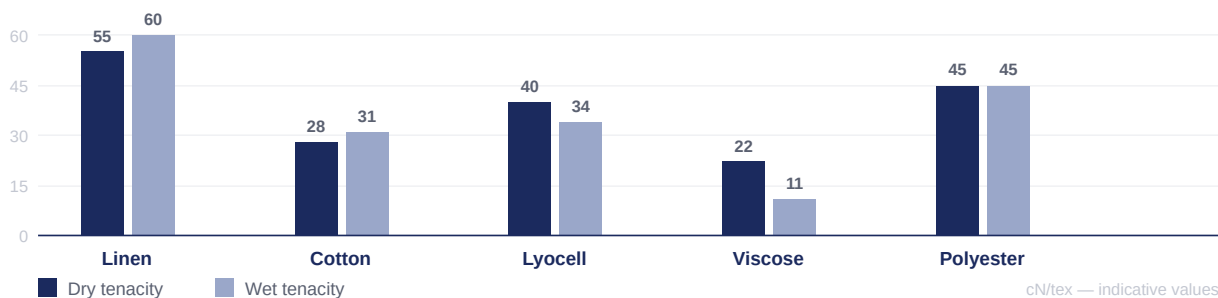
Yarns and fabrics are boiled, bleached or dyed; enzyme washing softens linen's natural crispness where wanted.

ROUTE	CHARACTER	BEST FOR
Wet-spun line	Fine, smooth, lustrous	Premium shirting, fine wovens 40–100 lea
Dry-spun tow	Fuller, rustic, uneven charm	Casual wovens, home textiles 6–25 lea
Linen blends	Softer, easier, cheaper	Mass-market summer fabrics
Knitted linen	Cool, textured knits	Polos and summer knitwear — a growing niche

CHAPTER 03

What the fibre actually does

Linen is the strength and coolness outlier among naturals: stiffer, stronger and faster-drying than cotton, with a crisp character no other fibre imitates convincingly.



PROPERTY	TYPICAL VALUE	COMMERCIAL MEANING
Tenacity	48–60 cN/tex	The strongest natural staple; stronger still when wet
Elongation	2–3%	Very low stretch — crisp hand, and the source of creasing
Moisture regain	10–12%	Absorbs fast, releases fast — the coolest wearing natural
Thermal feel	Cool to touch	High conductivity pulls heat off the skin
Lustre	Natural sheen	Pectin-smoothed line fibre carries an elegant low lustre
Crease	Pronounced	The signature and the complaint — softeners and blends manage it
Dyeing	Reactive / vat	Dyes well; slub character gives lively shade texture
Durability	Exceptional	Linen articles outlast cotton equivalents by years

Process caution for your mill. Linen punishes aggressive handling: low-elongation fibre breaks rather than stretches. Slower frame speeds, higher twist discipline and patient wet processing are the price of premium linen — and the finished price justifies it.

CHAPTER 04

Linen against the alternatives

A like-for-like view of the fibres competing for the same programme. Ratings are indicative and read horizontally, not as absolute laboratory values.

PARAMETER	LINEN	COTTON	LYOCELL	HEMP	POLY / LINEN
Origin	Flax bast	Seed fibre	Wood pulp	Hemp bast	Blend
Strength	Highest natural	Medium	High	Very high	High
Cool wearing	Best in class	Good	Excellent	Very good	Good
Crease	Pronounced	Moderate	Low	Pronounced	Managed
Hand	Crisp, dry	Soft	Fluid	Coarser	Mixed
Price	Premium	Volatile	Premium	Mid	Accessible
Biodegradable	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partial
Brand story	Heritage luxury	Familiar	Modern eco	Emerging eco	Value linen-look

The honest trade-off

Linen is expensive, crease-prone and slow to spin — its fibre supply is concentrated in one European belt and priced accordingly. It wins where its crisp, cool character is the product, not where it competes on cost.

The direction of travel

The Indian linen market has moved from export-only to a visible domestic category — linen shirting is now a standard menswear offer. Blends and knitted linen are widening the base below the premium tier.

CHAPTER 05

A European fibre, an Indian spinning story

Almost all quality flax is grown in Europe — but India has become one of the world's important linen spinning and weaving bases on imported fibre.

THE SUPPLY BASE

European flax belt

FRANCE · BELGIUM
· NL

The certified source of long line fibre; crop size moves world prices.

Jaya Shree Textiles

ADITYA BIRLA ·
LINEN CLUB

India's flagship linen spinner and the brand that built the domestic category.

Other Indian spinners

PAN-INDIA

A growing set of mills spinning linen and linen blends on imported flax.

Chinese spinners

GLOBAL SCALE

The largest linen spinning base worldwide; a price reference for imports.

Summer is the salesman

India's climate makes cool-wearing fabric a permanent demand, not a season.

Menswear adopted it

Linen shirting moved from occasion wear to office-acceptable — a structural demand shift.

Blends widen the base

Cotton-linen and viscose-linen deliver the look at accessible prices.

Premium story is intact

European fibre + natural + heritage reads as authentic luxury without explanation.

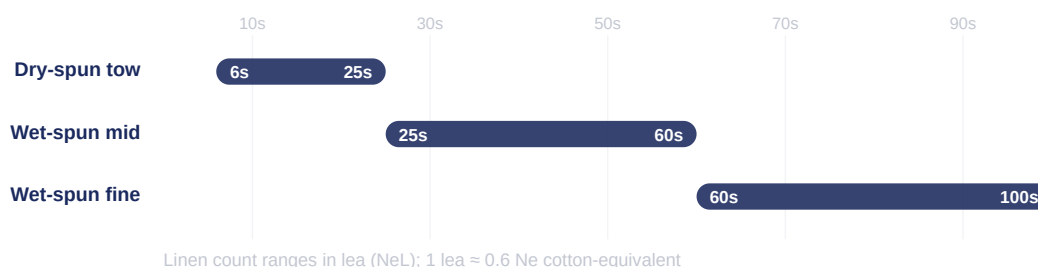
What this means for the yarn trade. Linen programmes need count-system fluency, origin documentation and realistic delivery planning around a concentrated fibre supply. We connect buyers to Indian spinners with proven linen and linen-blend capability.

All company and brand names referenced are the property of their respective owners and are used for identification and informational purposes only; no affiliation or endorsement is implied unless stated.

CHAPTER 06

100% linen yarn: lea counts and character

Linen yarn is bought on lea count, spinning route and origin. Its natural slub is a feature to be managed, not a defect to eliminate.



YARN TYPE / SYSTEM	USUAL RANGE	WHERE IT FITS
Wet-spun line	40 – 100 lea	Premium shirting and fine wovens; smoothest surface
Wet-spun mid	25 – 60 lea	The commercial heart — shirting, dresses, suiting
Dry-spun tow	6 – 25 lea	Rustic wovens, upholstery, heavy casuals
Linen blends	Ne system	Cotton/viscose-linen spun on short-staple systems
Knitting linen	Programme based	Softened yarns for polos and summer knits

Specification to order

- Count system confirmed — lea (NeL) vs Ne, always in writing
- Origin and certification (European Flax™) where the buyer claims it
- Wet-spun vs dry-spun route matched to fabric quality
- Boiled / bleached / natural shade state at delivery

Processing discipline

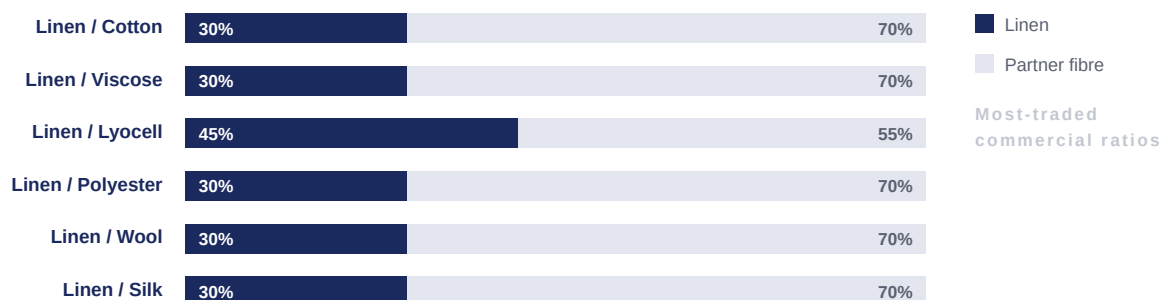
- Reduced spindle and loom speeds vs cotton practice
- Humidity high and stable — dry linen is brittle linen
- Gentle enzyme softening where hand needs relaxing
- Crease-resist finishing only where the buyer accepts the hand change

CHAPTER 07

Blends: the accessible linen look

Blending fixes linen's price and crease in one move — and has built a market many times larger than pure linen.

BLEND	COMMON RATIOS	WHAT IT DELIVERS	PRIMARY END USE
Linen / Cotton	30:70, 45:55	Linen texture with cotton softness and price	Summer shirting, casual wovens
Linen / Viscose	30:70	Fluid, softened linen look with drape	Dresses, kurtis, fusion wear
Linen / Lyocell	45:55, 30:70	Premium natural pairing — crisp yet fluid	High-end shirting, resort
Linen / Polyester	30:70	Wash-and-wear linen look	Value suiting, uniforms
Linen / Wool	30:70	Textured cool-season jacketing	Blazers, transitional suiting
Linen / Silk	30:70	Dry lustre luxury	Occasion wear, jackets



The commercial logic in one line. Thirty percent linen buys the texture, the story and most of the coolness at half the fibre cost — which is why 30:70 blends dominate the commercial market while 100% linen holds the premium shelf.

CHAPTER 08

Where linen is being used

Linen's applications follow its character: wherever crisp, cool and visibly natural is the brief, linen or its blends take the order.



Shirting

The category that built Indian linen — from premium 60 lea to blended volume.



Suiting and jackets

Summer suiting, blazers and unstructured tailoring.



Ethnic and fusion

Linen sarees and kurta fabrics carved a distinct premium niche.



Bed and table linen

The original use — premium sheeting, table and curtain fabric.



Knitted linen

Polos and summer knits; small but growing fast.



Upholstery

Durable, textured covering fabrics in tow counts.



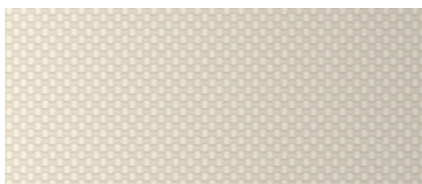
Resortwear

The default fabric language of holiday and coastal dressing.

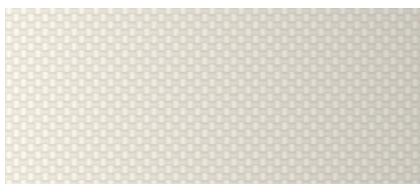


Technical heritage

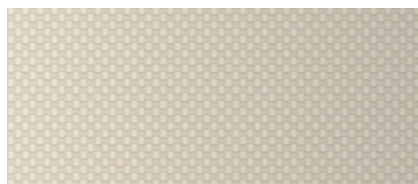
Canvas, bookbinding and speciality uses on strength and stability.



60 LEA · PREMIUM SHIRTING



LINEN / COTTON · CASUAL



TOW LINEN · UPHOLSTERY

Segment to watch in India. Linen knits and jersey. The woven story is established; the knit category is just opening — and it suits Indian summer wardrobes perfectly.

CHAPTER 09 · OUR VIEW

Linen moves from occasion to everyday premium

Climate, category growth and blend economics are converting linen from a connoisseur's fabric into a standing department of the Indian wardrobe.

01 Climate is the tailwind

Longer, hotter summers keep expanding demand for genuinely cool-wearing fabric.

03 Blends built the volume tier

30% linen blends deliver the look at mass price points across shirting and ethnic.

05 The story needs no translation

Natural, European fibre, heritage craft — the premium narrative sells itself.

02 Menswear normalised it

Linen shirting became office-acceptable — repeat purchase, not occasion purchase.

04 Indian spinning is world-class

Domestic capability on imported flax shortens chains and supports the category.

What to be realistic about

Fibre supply is concentrated and crop-priced; crease is character, and buyers must be sold it as such.



HOW SHIVPRIYA TEXCHEM CAN HELP

Authorised agent and strategic partner to India's leading spinning mills since 2003, trusted by **2,500+ customers** across polyester, viscose, cotton, PC/PV, fancy and recycled yarns. For linen and linen-blend programmes we support mill identification and capability matching, count and blend development, sampling and trial lots, mill-direct commercial terms, and delivery through our pan-India network.

Shivpriya Texchem Pvt. Ltd.

2nd Floor, Block No. 5, Jai Hind Estate, Building 1B, Dr Atmaram Merchant Road,
Near Kabutar Khanna, Bhuleshwar, Mumbai 400002
info@shivpriyatexchem.com · +91 87672 50274 · shivpriyatexchem.com

Fibre Intelligence 07
Circulated to customers & partners
Figures are indicative
industry estimates, 2026