

Glossary of Terms

Breathability - Breathability is expressed as the amount of water vapour passing through an area of fabric over a given time. It can also be referred to as Moisture Vapour Permeability. (MVP)

Chessie Racing - A Whitbread 60 yacht entered in the 1997/8 Whitbread Round the World Race. It was owned by George Collins and was the only private entry. They came 6th overall and could have had a podium finish but for a poor last leg from La Rochelle to Southampton.

High tenacity - Much of the strength of the fabric comes from the strength of the yarns itself. High tenacity yarns are particularly good against abrasion.

Hydrostatic Head - The term used for measuring the fabric's resistance to water pressure. It is usually measured in terms of the vertical height of a column of the liquid needed to produce the same pressure. It is measured in column centimetres and could be referred to for example as 500cm.

Hydrophilic - Having an affinity to water and is generally referred to as a type of breathable coating system and an alternate to microporous.

Hydrophobic - Means water fearing or water repelling.

illbruck - A Volvo 60 boat and winner of the 2001/2 Volvo Ocean Race. Owned by German industrialist Michael illbruck.

Martindale - The name of a piece of textile testing equipment that is used to test the abrasion resistance of a fabric. It is used on both the coated and exterior surfaces and simulates abrasion in a natural and uneven way.

Microporous - 'Micro porous' is the term used for a fabric coating or film that has microscopic holes or pores that are large enough to let moisture vapour through but small enough to keep water molecules out.

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PU - PU is short for 'polyurethane', a popular coating material.

Wicking - A wicking fabric or fibre is one that conveys moisture or a liquid by capillary action. Normally used in base layers as a means for moving moisture away from the body.

RE - A test method for breathable fabrics performed by the Hohenstein Institute in Germany. The test attempts to simulate the heat and moisture transport processes occurring next to the skin. The test is performed at 35 degrees C at 40% humidity and tends to favour microporous fabrics.

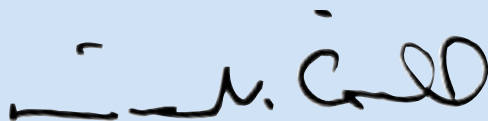
BS 7209 - A test method for breathable fabrics that measures the evaporation of water over a given time at 20°C/65% humidity. This method is preferred by Gill because of its similarity to Marine environments.

Rather than viewing this as the end of my first attempt at researching and writing a Gill clothing guide, I see this as only the beginning. This is the beginning of a new process of advising our customers on the gear they need. It's all about what works and what doesn't. It's about demystifying some of the technical processes and the jargon and hype involved. This new media format allows me to easily update the information as designs, fabrics and new options come on stream.

Even after 25 years in the industry, hardly a day goes by when I don't learn something new. Only this week, a Japanese fabric supplier was explaining a new technical coating process to me. Many of us in the business are regular sailors and, as a starting point, we're always looking for ways to improve the products we wear and improve our performance. It has often been said that I would win a lot more races if I concentrated more on what the sails were doing and less on what I was wearing and how I could improve it. Old habits die hard and it is probably too late for me to change my ways now.

Gill has been built up from a platform of offering excellent customer service, whether it be to the retailer or to the end user. We are continuously looking for ways to improve and we always aim to be straight and honest. This is one reason for being unhappy with the premium prices of some branded fabrics and the consequent high end cost of the garments.

I hope you find this Guide useful. Please feel free to e-mail any suggestions, anecdotes or tips regarding sailing kit to me at ngill100@btinternet.com as the more I hear from others, the better this guide will become. Also, if you have any questions, call our main number and our technical clothing specialists will help you. If they don't know the answer they won't rest until they find someone who does before getting back to you.



Nick Gill

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