

Breathable waterproof fabrics

- ✓ 12 products made of synthetic fibers
- ✓ 12 supplier profiles
- ✓ A guide on buying PVC fabrics & products from China

global  sources

Fashion Apparel & Fabrics

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Buyer's Guide to sourcing breathable waterproof fabrics

A gallery with 12 products made of synthetic fibers handpicked by our Market Analysts and profiles of 12 export-ready suppliers. Plus, a guide on buying PVC fabrics & products – written by China sourcing expert Fredrik Grönkvist.

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Blends boost breathable waterproof fabrics

Suppliers mix synthetic fibers with natural variants to enhance functional properties. PU finishes bolster moisture resistance.

Nylon and polyester remain the materials of choice for most makers in the line because of the synthetic fibers' inherent functional properties.

Nylon boasts good stretch and durability, and blending the fabric with spandex heightens these properties. Polyester, meanwhile, has strong moisture-wicking and quick-drying qualities. Mixing these materials with cotton increases breathability while wool provides softness and warmth retention. Taffeta and twill are the popular weaves.

As regards coatings, PU and TPU are widely used options that enhance water resistance. Treatments for UV protection, and preventing odor and bacteria buildup are also adopted.

Products suit law enforcement and rescue uniforms, outdoor gear, sports apparel.

The products in this gallery have been handpicked by our China-based Market Analysts for representing current trends in breathable waterproof fabrics.



10,000mm water resistance

The model 2U30036 breathable waterproof fabric from Glorytex Industrial Co. Ltd uses polyester melange jersey, bonded polyester sherpa and breathable PU. The textile weighs 600gsm and has a width of 56 to 58in. Water resistance is up to 10,000mm while moisture permeability is 5,000gsm/24h.

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Anti-static, conductive

Adopting 60:40 polyester-cotton, the model JJ-BF-03 breathable waterproof fabric from Hebei Jijia Textile Co. Ltd is anti-static and conductive. The woven textile's width is 57 or 58in. A roll contains 100 to 200m and is placed in a plastic bag then a woven bag.

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Meets EN 471 high-visibility standard

Singaotex Group's model F-007 laminated soft shell fabric complies with EN 471 high-visibility standard, and suits rescue and law enforcement uniforms. It is made of micropolar fleece, TPU membrane and stretch polyester pongee combination, weighing 310gsm. Width is 58in. The textile is water- and wind-resistant, highly breathable, heat-retentive and comfortable to wear.

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For outerwear

Using polyester twill pongee bonded with TPU membrane, the model JFN-6120 breathable waterproof fabric from Suzhou Gofuneo Textile Co. Ltd has a water resistance and moisture permeability of 2,000W/P and 2,000MVP, respectively. The textile weighs 108gsm and is designed for outerwear. Thread count is 75x75d while width is 57 or 58in.

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Uses pure nylon oxford

Suzhou Guiji Textile Co. Ltd offers the model GJ165 breathable waterproof fabric in 300x300d pure nylon oxford. The PU coated textile has 10,000W/P water resistance and 10,000MVP moisture permeability. It is 145cm wide and weighs 217gsm.

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Coated nylon fabric

The model SF-929 breathable waterproof fabric from Suzhou Shuobei Textile Co. Ltd uses 100 percent nylon. The coated textile's weight is 135gsm. It is 57 or 58in wide.

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PU coating

The water resistance and moisture permeability of Wujiang City Guoyao Textile Co. Ltd's L-107556 model is at 3,000W/P and 3,000MVP. The breathable waterproof fabric utilizes PU-coated 87:13 nylon-spandex with a thread count of 75x75d. Width is 57 or 58in while fabric weight is 300gsm.

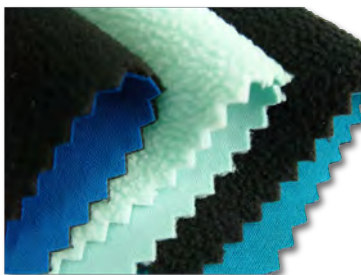
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Four-way stretch

Wujiang City Meiduolun Trade Co. Ltd's Bonded Mesh Fabric model adopts 96:4 polyester-spandex with water resistance and moisture permeability of 3,000mm and 3,000gsm/24hr. The 280gsm breathable waterproof textile features four-way stretch. Width is 152cm.

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Up to grade 4 colorfastness

Wujiang City Winsun Textile Fty's model HLKK001-3DRLC breathable waterproof fabric has a pure polyester shell and backing in 30d high-density interlock and microfiber fleece constructions. It is coated with TPU membrane. Weight is 265±15gsm while colorfastness is at grades 3 to 4 or 4. Breathability ranges from 3,000 to 5,000gsm/24h. Water resistance is at 8,000mm.

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Full dull nylon taslon oxford

The model TO610 breathable waterproof fabric from Wujiang Shangtone Textile Co. Ltd is made of full dull nylon taslon oxford with a yarn count of 210x320d, 73x48. Water resistance and moisture permeability is 5,000W/P and 5,000MVP. The textile weighs 210gsm and is 58 or 59in wide.

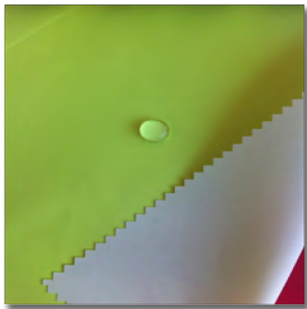
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Yarn-dyed cotton twill

Wujiang Sunfeng Textile Co. Ltd's model PC1380 breathable waterproof fabric uses 100 percent cotton twill that is yarn-dyed. It is coated with white TPU membrane, and has 3,000W/P water resistance and 3,000MVP moisture permeability. The wind-resistant textile weighs 161gsm and has a width of 57in.

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PVC-coated polyester taffeta

The PVC Coated Fabric model from Wujiang Wangduo Textile Co. Ltd is made of 100 percent polyester taffeta. The breathable waterproof textile is dyed and has a PVC coating. Weight is 180gsm while width is 58 or 59in.

Supplier comparison table

| Company name | Year established | Number of employees | Annual revenue for all products (US\$ million) | Annual exports for all products (US\$ million) | Breathable waterproof fabrics monthly capacity (meters) | Breathable waterproof fabrics exports in the past 12 months (meters) |
|--|------------------|---------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Glorytex | 1991 | >20 | 2.81 | 2.8 | 10,000 | 6,000 |
| Hebei Jijia | 2006 | 20 | 40 | 20 | 300,000 | 3.6 million |
| Singaotex | 1998 | 230 | 38 | 30 | 3 million | 4.1 million |
| Suzhou Gofuneo | 2010 | 262 | 12.85 | 8.57 | 500,000 | 1.6 million |
| Suzhou Guiji | 2005 | 120 | 10 | 5 | 150,000 | 500,000 |
| Suzhou Shuobei | 2007 | 45 | 5 | 2 | 100,000 | 350,000 |
| Wujiang City Guoyao | 2005 | 105 | 11.42 | 7 | 250,000 | 2.25 million |
| Wujiang City Meiduolun | 2012 | 175 | 2 | 2 | 50,000 | 120,000 |
| Wujiang City Winsun | 2011 | 36 | 8 | 2 | 200,000 | 270,000 |
| Wujiang Shangtone | 2009 | 25 | 8 | 5 | 200,000 | 1 million |
| Wujiang Sunfeng | 2005 | 120 | 20 | 16 | 1.8 million | 1.73 million |
| Wujiang Wangduo | 2002 | 100 | 7 | 4 | 100,000 | 1 million |

| Breathable waterproof fabrics revenue in the past 12 months (US\$ million) | Main export markets | OEM | ODM | OBM | Small orders (US\$) | Key customers | |
|--|---|------|------|-----|---------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 0.36 | US (70%), Europe (30%) | 75% | 30% | | 20,000 | Acosta, Holloway, C&A, H&M | CONTACT SUPPLIER |
| 8.7 | US(30%), Eastern Europe(35%), Middle East(35%) | 75% | 10% | 15% | 5,000 | Collinet, Shabir Carrim | CONTACT SUPPLIER |
| 24.5 | US (26%), Japan (26%), Europe (18%) | 33% | 34% | 33% | 20,000 | Wal-Mart, Ikea, Nitori | CONTACT SUPPLIER |
| 4.27 | US (40%), Western Europe (20%), Australia (10%) | 100% | | | 1,000 | JC Penny, Nike | CONTACT SUPPLIER |
| 1.6 | US (25%), Germany (20%), UK (10%) | 60% | 40% | | 1,000 | Zara, H&M | CONTACT SUPPLIER |
| 1 | Germany (45%), Vietnam (30%), Canada(25%) | 90% | 10% | | 1,000 | Chemitex S.A., Cosmoplastics S.R.L. | CONTACT SUPPLIER |
| 4.37 | Western Europe (33%), Vietnam (29%), Russia (21%), US (17%) | 37% | 46% | 17% | 5,000 | G-Y | CONTACT SUPPLIER |
| 0.35 | US (40%), Asia (30%), EU (20%), Australia (10%) | | 100% | | 1,000 | N/A | CONTACT SUPPLIER |
| 1 | Asia (75%),Western Europe (25%) | 100% | | | 1,000 | Joy, Rukka | CONTACT SUPPLIER |
| 2 | US (50%), Europe (50%) | 100% | | | 1,000 | Michael Kors, London Fog, Lindex | CONTACT SUPPLIER |
| 6.9 | Europe (50%), Southeast Asia (10%), others (20%) | | 80% | 20% | 1,000 | Toread | CONTACT SUPPLIER |
| 1.5 | US (50%), Europe (30%), Asia (20%) | 70% | 20% | 10% | 5,000 | Republic Cotton, Usha Textitle | |

Buying PVC fabrics & products from China

PVC fabrics are used in a diverse selection of products, ranging from toys, furniture and handbags to construction tarpaulins. Another very common application is in the advertising industry. Remember that billboard you drove by earlier? It was probably printed on a sheet of PVC fabric.

It is a rather simple product. However, certain types of PVC contain toxic and cancerogenic substances such as phthalates. In this article, we tell you what you need to know when importing PVC fabrics and other products made partly of PVC from China.

Product specifications

There is no universal definition of "good quality." Instead, we have technical product specifications. A product specification is anything that defines a physical aspect of a product. PVC fabrics can be manufactured according to various product specifications, which have a major impact on both durability and pricing.

Coated PVC fabric

Coated PVC fabric is more durable and commonly used in industrial and construction applications. It is also 20 to 30 percent more expensive than laminated PVC fabric.

Laminated PVC fabric

Laminated PVC fabric is not as durable as coated PVC fabric. However, it does not possess the strength to be useful for a number of applications, including furniture and advertising.

Fabric weight

While certain other plastic types are measured by their thickness, PVC fabric is measured in grams per square meter. The PVC fabric weight is the product specification with the biggest price impact. The weight depends on the application. Below follows a list of guidelines for common applications:

- Construction tarpaulins: 550 to 700 gsm
- Advertising and display: 350 to 550gsm
- Toys: 300 to 650gsm
- Furniture: 300 to 450gsm



Width

PVC fabrics are commonly produced as rolls. Therefore, the width of a single PVC sheet is limited by the roll width. Most China PVC fabric manufacturers can produce rolls with a maximum width of 3.2m. However, a handful are capable of manufacturing roll widths up to 5.1m.

Color

Most PVC fabric manufacturers use Pantone and RAL codes for color reference. However, many suppliers can also replicate colors based on physical color samples.

Manufacturers

With more than 7,000 suppliers (based mostly in Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Guangdong provinces), China is the leading manufacturer of PVC fabrics. However, there are far more companies trading PVC fabrics than actually producing them. While there are middlemen in every industry, only a minority of the suppliers selling PVC on sites are actual manufacturers. It makes sense. Since PVC plastics are used in so many industries, it is not strange that many manufacturers of other products trade PVC plastic as a side business.

However, if you are looking for the raw material rather than buying finished goods (partly made of PVC), it makes no sense to purchase from a middleman. Apart from the obvious price disadvantage (nobody works for free, especially not in China), critical product related information is easily lost or misinterpreted when filtered through an intermediary.

Getting the right PVC fabric requires that you are aware of a supplier's capability to comply with your product

specifications. Some suppliers specialize in producing PVC fabrics for advertising while others are geared toward construction and consumer product applications. This is even more critical in the case of product certification compliance. I can tell from experience that less than 10 percent of the PVC manufacturers in China are capable of producing phthalate-free PVC.

Apart from the obvious price disadvantage (nobody works for free, especially not in China), critical product related information is easily lost or misinterpreted when filtered through an intermediary.

Based in the US, Europe or Australia? Read this!

PVC contains, "by default," a number of restricted substances. While PVC can be rid of the worst toxins, far from all China manufacturers are able to do so. A common mistake importers is assuming that China suppliers are aware of the certification standards in your country or market. This is not the case. As a matter of fact, the majority of the Chinese manufacturers, including those in the PVC industry, barely have a clue about how to comply with European and US certification requirements.

The certification requirements vary depending on the usage of the PVC plastic. Below follows a list of the most important standards together with a description of when they apply.

Phthalates

Commonly used in PVC, phthalates are a group of esters used to increase the flexibility. Flexibility is quite important for certain applications that are used in cold environments. However, there's a slight drawback. Phthalates are cancerogenic and children's toys containing them are prohibited in both the US and the EU. Below follows a list of the phthalates that you need to steer clear of when importing toys from China:

- DEHP
- DBP
- DIBP
- BBP
- DINP
- DIDP

- DPHP
- DIUP
- DTDP

Compliance is critical when importing children's products and a lab test is the only way to be sure. Noncompliance is likely to result in a forced withdrawal and buyer compensation. In the EU, phthalates are regulated by the REACH directive while the US restricts usage of phthalates under the CPSIA (Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act) directive.

Fire Retardancy

PVC fabrics used for construction applications and furniture are required to be fire retardant. Depending the specific product and its usage, one of the following fire retardancy standards apply:

- B2 (Germany)
- B1 (Germany)
- M1 (France)
- M2 (France)
- NFPA 701 (US)
- BS 5852:2006 (UK)

A common mistake importers is assuming that China suppliers are aware of the certification standards in your country or market.

Compliance with the abovementioned standards should not be taken for granted when searching for PVC suppliers in China. In fact, most makers are not able to control chemical content with enough precision to satisfy US and Europe product safety regulations. Based on our experience, only less than 10 percent of suppliers are able to ensure that their products are free from substances such as phthalates and compliant with a certain fire retardancy standard. That is why finding the right supplier is hard.

Fredrik Grönkvist is the co-founder of ScandinAsian Enterprise in Shanghai. Since 2010, he and his team have helped hundreds of companies worldwide, primarily in the EU and US, to develop and manufacture products in China. He is also the main contributor on www.chinainportal.com, a leading knowledge base for small- to medium-sized enterprises importing from Asia. For further questions, you can contact him on www.chinainportal.com/contact-us/



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