

Flock FAQ's

Q. What is Flock?

A. Flock is a precision cut fiber, often as short as 150 microns, attached to a substrate of some kind through a manufacturing process called Flocking. This process mechanically or electrostatically adheres very small fibers to a surface in a uniform way that creates a desired design effect or adds an important function.

Q. What problems does Flocking solve?

A. There are millions, but for starters, Flocking reduces objectionable noises such as buzz, squeak, rattle and echoes. It also improves the appearance of many surfaces (for example, in jewelry boxes or automobile compartments), provides a skin-friendly surface to objects, can be applied inside a tube to change a turbulent flow into a laminar flow, is used to reduce glare on screens and car windows, provides an abrasive yet decorative quality on floor mats to remove debris from shoes and creates noiseless sliding of glass on rubber-seals.

Q. What is Flock 4.0?

A. Flock 4.0 refers to the Flocking industry's evolution through R&D and the development of a new and expanding generation of end products, with some applications being very high tech.

Q. What are the basic categories of Flock?

A. Roll goods (upholstery and apparel fabrics); Object Flocking (automobile interior parts, Christmas ornaments, crafts and toys); and Flatbed Flocking, such as for greeting cards and wallpaper.

Q. What are a few of the new applications for Flocking?

A. Automobile interiors, sound dampening in electric vehicles, FEAM (Flocked Energy Absorbing Materials) and medical applications such as the swabs found in COVID tests, Flocking used on helmets to reduce the chance of brain injuries, Flocking used to manage theatrical acoustics and much, much more. In automobiles, Flocking is also an economical substitute (with additional values) for the suede-like microfiber brands used in vehicle interior trims as a substitute for leather and vinyl.

Q. What are a few of the functional advantages of Flocking?

A. There are almost too many to list but this category includes light absorption, softening the hand of an object, adding coarseness to the surface of an object, increasing the friction of an object, improving the external grip to an object. Flock also provides a luxury appearance, touch and feel; is a thermal isolator, is easy to clean, can be both water resistant and flame retardant, can be used as a filter in air conditioning; can be applied seamlessly on complex geometries and can be applied on almost all substrates. Flock is also lightweight.

Q. What are a few of the design advantages of Flock?

A. Flock is very versatile and can be applied to virtually any surface to add dimension, shimmer, luster and unique aesthetic elements. With Flocking, you take a flat object and make it look three-dimensional. It can also be used to add a variety of textures and light absorption to craft objects, such as Christmas

ornaments and ribbons and can be used along with paint or glitter as an artistic medium.

Q. Can nonwoven textiles be Flocked and if so, what are a few examples?

A. Yes. FEAM is one example.

Q. Flocking is used extensively in the automotive industry. What are a few examples?

A. Glove compartments, IP bins, map pockets, headliners for sound dampening, in window channels, on dashboards and around screens to reduce glare. Flocking is also used on compression springs in automatic trunk opening systems for noise dampening and overall, to add an increased perception of value to car interiors.

Q. How is Flocking useful on building materials?

A. It can be used on building materials such as boards for sound reduction.

Q. Does Flocking have Marine applications?

A. Yes! Flocking has been added to the bottom of boats and large vessels as a non-chemical way to prevent barnacles from attaching. It can also improve the speed of the vessels, plus save fuel consumption by reducing turbulent flows on a vessel's surface.

Q. How does Flocking add luster to an object?

A. You can add luster and shine to a surface by selecting tow (fibers) that have a high luster. You can also do the opposite by using fibers that have no or very little luster.

Q. What is the Flock Academy?

A. Flock Academy is the online Zoom version of AFA's ongoing Flock 101, which is a two-day workshop where we dive into the fundamentals of Flock and Flock production.

Q. How often is Flock Academy held?

A. It is currently held once a year, but possibly more often in the future.

Q. What is the AFA's relationship with the National Council of Textile Organizations (NCTO)?

A. We are a member organization of NCTO, which lobbies on our industry's behalf in Washington, DC, on matters of trade, customs and tariffs.

Q. What impact can Flocking have on the hand of an object?

A. The term hand refers to how an object feels to the touch. Flock can add a very soft texture to an object or a very coarse texture. For example, by using a special flock adhesive, camouflage clothing can remain soft even at low temperatures, which reduces the sound of fabric rustling as a hunter or soldier walks and moves.

Q. Why is Flocking in growing demand?

A. For a very small increase in cost, there is a very dramatic increase in perceived value.