

What Is Boucle? Here's What You Need To Know About the Chic French Fabric

Kathleen Willcox | January 5, 2022 | Home Improvement
[Link to original article.](#)



Photo via Instagram by guidettimodidiabitare

Interior design news flash: Bouclé fabric is having a moment. That's because settling into a bouclé-covered couch feels as comfortable as pulling on your most delicious pair of sweatpants. And bonus: The richly textured bouclé makes your sofa look haute couture instead of off-the-rack.

"I can't think of a better fabric that will help make your home feel more like a safe haven, an overall vibe we're all looking for these days," says Carrie Miller, a certified home stager at School of Home Staging in Portland, OR.

But even the most tuned-in textile devotee may not know precisely what this trending

French fabric is or what to do with it in the home. So read on to learn about this luxe fabric's history and how to decorate with bouclé.

What is bouclé?

Bouclé is a French word that means "curled" or "ringed." In textiles, bouclé is a specific type of yarn, but the term also refers to the fabric made from that yarn. Bouclé yarn is usually made from wool fiber but also comes in linen, cotton, and silk. In fabric form, the yarn appears nubby or fleecy due to little bumps that are loops in the yarn.

Most of us have seen bouclé jackets, courtesy of Coco Chanel, who popularized them. But the fabric first appeared in homes when Eero Saarinen used bouclé to design his famed Womb Chair for Florence Knoll.

Knoll requested "a chair that was like a basket of pillows," and Saarinen delivered an eminently pillow-like chair, covering it in the cozy bouclé fabric that curls upon itself.

Why is bouclé so trendy?

If you thought COVID-19 couldn't affect something as seemingly minor as textiles, think again. The pandemic changed how we work, play, and conduct our day-to-day lives by making us all more home-centric. And experts say it's only natural that the fabrics that cover the furniture we spend so much time on reflect the focus on home as well.

"Right now, we all want a more casual yet elegant home lifestyle," says Wilfredo Emanuel, an award-winning interior designer in Naples, FL. "Bouclé does it all, giving us the sensation of both a comfy texture and an elegant finish."

The nubby fabric can also withstand wear and tear.

"It's a substantial, durable fabric that holds up to daily use," says Miller. So in addition to bouclé's comfortable texture, the inherently durable fabric is also kid- and pet-friendly.

How much does bouclé fabric cost?

As with everything, the cost of fabric depends on its quality, says Karen Gutierrez, an interior designer at Phoenix's Mackenzie Collier Interiors.

"The primary material affects the cost a great deal," Gutierrez explains. "Wool, silk, and cotton are priced differently. And then the design will affect the cost, too. Typically, bouclé comes in at between \$30 to \$70 a yard, so it's not a budget-friendly fabric if you're covering a large piece of furniture."

How you can incorporate bouclé into your home

When it comes to decorating with bouclé, the possibilities are endless.

“Bouclé’s versatile and functional,” says Gutierrez. “It’s heavy enough to offer acoustic absorption when used as a window treatment, but it’s still soft and comfy on your skin. I love it in rounded pieces of all kinds and curvilinear shapes, which can be found in a lot of trending midcentury designs.”

Bouclé’s often used in a range of seating options, from sofas and settees and vintage chairs to ottomans.

Experts recommend sticking to neutrals when it comes to what color fabric to buy.

“The nubby texture looks wonderful in off-white and sand tones and offers an organic, raw, and minimalist covering for cozy but modernist spaces,” says Aimee Stern, director of the estate division at L.A.’s The Agency.

Bouclé is also showing up on throws and plush pillows, which you can use as accents with a pop of color.

Caring for your bouclé

Don’t worry, those charming curls that make up your bouclé won’t get matted over time.

“And if the bouclé fabric you have is made from linen or cotton, they can even be machine-washed,” says Gutierrez. “If you do get a stain, treat it promptly. And never use heat because it can set stains. Instead, soak up excess moisture immediately and always use a clean, soft, white cloth or natural sponge with soapy water or water-free dry-cleaning solvent. Finally, brush the stain with light, quick strokes.”