

# KOTHEA

## Cigarette & Match Test

## Designer's Worksheet

**The Cigarette & Match Tests BS 5852** are fire retardancy tests for **residential upholstery**. This document is intended to be read by interior designers and as such you do not need to understand the details of the tests. Interior designers must, however, ensure that they comply with the associated British Standards by ensuring that the fabrics they specify are fit for that purpose.

1. If you are sourcing furniture for your client then the vendor of the furniture needs to provide you with appropriate information to prove compliance.
2. If you are specifying fabric for furniture to be made up, then you need to ask the fabric supplier for the fabric's compliance to the standards and/or arrange fire treatment.
3. You will need to ensure that you have specified the appropriate fabrics for the visible and non-visible parts of the furniture.
4. You will need to liaise with your upholsterer to ensure that any additional materials such as foam and fabric lining are adequate.

The cigarette and match tests fall under BS 5852. The test(s) involve the fabric being exposed to different 'ignition sources' essentially simulating possible real life causes of domestic fires. The 'ignition sources' are ways that the fabric could plausibly be burnt. There are 8 different sources/types of combustion but you only normally need to deal with sources 0, 1 and 5.

Source 0 = Cigarette (smouldering cigarette)

Source 1 = Match (simulated match)

Source 5 = Crib. (Wooden crib or Crib 5)

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Source 5, or Crib 5 as it is frequently known as, is usually a contract standard for upholstery. In contract upholstery you might also come across BS 7176 which determines specific risk or hazard areas that your fabric is being installed into. In simple terms, BS 7176 covers all 3 of the above tests. Furthermore, whilst Crib 5 is the highest standard of the 3 tests it does not follow that a fabric which passes Crib 5 will also pass the cigarette and match test – even though it is likely to.

## Exceptions, Mandates & Exemptions

- Fabric is exempted if it is 75% by weight of cotton, silk, viscose, wool i.e. 75% natural fibres. A FR inter-liner must also be used to keep the exemption.
- Furniture **MUST IN ALL CASES** pass the cigarette test. No exceptions.
- Cigarette Test will be undertaken using standard foam – this presents a worst-case scenario.
- For fabrics that do not inherently pass the required test then treatments are usually available, often where the back side of the fabric is coated with a fire resistant substance not affecting the look and feel of the fabric
- For already made-up furniture, we doubt that it is possible to **treat** it retrospectively to pass the tests. However it may be possible to prove that the fabrics that have already been used are in fact compliant.

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## Resources:

Verity du Sautoy,

Marketing At KOTHEA - <http://www.kothea.com/>

Designers' Fabric Knowledgebase – <http://blog.kothea.com/>

Source: [Variety of blog posts 2009/2010, Textiles FR](#)

Related Design Resources: [Fire Retardancy, shade change, velvet upholstery, colour fastness in fabrics.](#)

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