

How to Clean Shadecloth



Like many outdoor structures, over time shade fabric can appear to be very dirty. The GALE Pacific range of shadecloth products are manufactured from High Density Polyethylene or HDPE. This material is quite inert to dirt, moisture and some chemicals. This is great, because dirt doesn't stick to the individual yarns in the fabric - additionally, HDPE won't rot like canvas and similar products.

When exposed to dust & moisture, shadecloth may appear grey and look like mildew which gives the appearance that the fabric is rotting. This is not the case; it is the dirt & moisture which is trapped in the knit pattern which gives this appearance. Periodic cleaning of shade fabrics will stop the build-up of dirt particles.

Shadecloth can be cleaned with a weak concentration of non-abrasive pH neutral detergent in warm water (maximum water temperature of 50 degrees centigrade). The detergent must not contain any acidic chemicals or solvents as this can weaken the fabric's resistance against UV radiation. Apply this using a long soft bristled mop or brush and rinse with a strong flow of fresh water.

The best method for cleaning shadecloth may involve removing the fabric and placing this on a smooth flat surface and washing with a high pressure water cleaner at a safe distance away from the fabric. Care must be taken so that the fabric is not damaged during removal, during washing and re-installation. We always suggest to seek advice from the manufacturer of your shade structure and re-install the fabric when it is dry.

There are many different fabric cleaning solutions available, so please check the ingredients of the cleaning solution to see if they contain any halogens (chlorine, bromine, Iodine etc.) or strong alkalines & acids. If you are still unsure, ask the manufacturer or request a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). This will detail all the ingredients of the cleaning solution & which will tell you what solvents, acids or alkaline chemicals are used.

Again, if you do use such cleaning solutions, please carefully follow the product's application instructions.