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### The Denim's Characteristics as Upper Material of Footwear

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**Abstract** Recently revival made denim a prompting material in fashion throughout the world. For footwear design, denim as textile is the hot spot instead of animal leather in 2011. In this report the application of denim in footwear design is discussed. Denim has its specificity in aesthetic aspect. Also compared with leather, denim is more comfortable and healthy to wear. Designers have more freedom in decoration, painting, and composite material selections with denims in shoe design. The issues in manufacture of denim shoes are also mentioned in this work.

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## The Denim's Characteristics as Upper Material of Footwear

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**Keywords:** denim footwear decoration

**Abstract.** Recently revival made denim a prompting material in fashion throughout the world. For footwear design, denim as textile is the hot spot instead of animal leather in 2011. In this report the application of denim in footwear design is discussed. Denim has its specificity in aesthetic aspect. Also compared with leather, denim is more comfortable and healthy to wear. Designers have more freedom in decoration, painting, and composite material selections with denims in shoe design. The issues in manufacture of denim shoes are also mentioned in this work.

### Introduction

Upper material is one of the most important factors in footwear design. The traditional material is natural leather, synthetic leather, and artificial leather. As the leather dyeing and finishing technology develops rapidly. Special effects emerge continuously, e.g. printing effect, oil painting effect, and bandhnu effect. But that still cannot meet the growing demand of shoe designers. Woven material are applied more and more as shoe upper, shoe lining, and ornamental parts materials. Especially denim material has become a fashionable item owing to forming new shoe styles. Various denim shoes have been exploited by designers and manufacturers, and actually are salable and very hot in China consumer market in 2011.

In 1940s, when the California gold rush was in full swing, Levi Strauss had the canvas made into pants which was called blue jeans, and later the fabric became known as denim. From that on, denim and denim goods spread around the world. Then combined with American west cowboy, punk spirit and rock style, denim now is a symbol of cultural of USA.

Compared with natural leather, synthetic and artificial leather, denim material as fabric is specific in decoration. There are different requirements and instructions for denim from those for leather during manufacture. In this article, the characteristics of denim used as upper material in its hygiene, decoration methods, and design styles will be discussed. And issues in making and wearing shoes with denim materials will be covered as well.

### Good comfort.

Generally speaking, denim is suitable for shoe upper. Denim is made of fiber and possessed permeability and absorption which help to create a comfortable space in the shoe space. Among the upper parts (or lining) and sole parts, there is a space in the shoe where the foot always stay. The temperature and humidity of this space are critical factors for shoe comfort. Through the upper material, heat and moisture keep exchanging between the space, foot and outside of the shoe only if the foot is not in. So the upper material mainly affects the shoe hygiene. The raw material of old denim is cotton fibers which possessed superior absorption of moisture and good permeability to air and water vapor. That helps to create a comfortable and healthy environment in the shoe space.<sup>[1]</sup>

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