

AUGUST 10, 2015

by DEREK

Be Careful with Garment Steamers

Here's a good example of why you should be careful with garment steamers. StyleForum member Rysla recently went to his tailor's for some basic alterations. When his tailor saw he was wearing a sport coat, she offered to steam it for free. The result? The lapels are now puckered. This is a 100% cashmere jacket too, from one of the more expensive Italian labels, Cesare Attolini. Ouch.

Jeffery Diduch, who works as a professional patternmaker and tailor, has long warned people about the dangers of steaming. Not only can steamers take all the shape out of a jacket, they can also cause seams to blow out and pucker. The good news is that you can restore the jacket through a professional hand press. A good tailor should be able to do this for you, although I just send my stuff to [RAVE FabriCARE](#).

So, if you can't use steamers, how do you deal with wrinkles? Either learn how to press something yourself or just let your jacket hang for a day or two. If the material is good, most of the wrinkles should fall out naturally. Anything left can be chalked up to *sprezzatura*.

You can also just be very, very careful with a steamer. Don't use a lot of steam and keep the machine away from seams, then give your jacket or pants a day of rest before wearing them again (wearing a freshly steamed garment can just cause more wrinkles). Many tailors will still wince at the suggestion, but it's a nice compromise between needing to learn how to hand press a jacket yourself and waving a steamer around like you're Mickey in Fantasia.