



25 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT DOWNTEK



DOWN 101



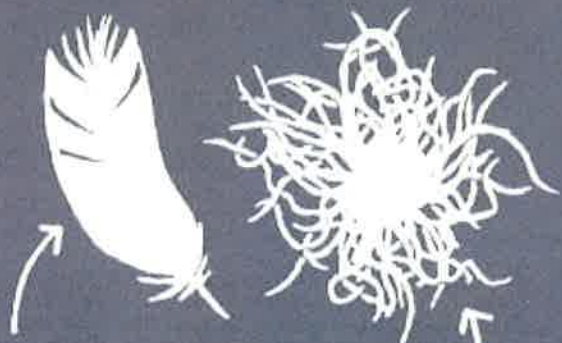
SUPER-DUPER ZOOMED-IN GOOSE DOWN



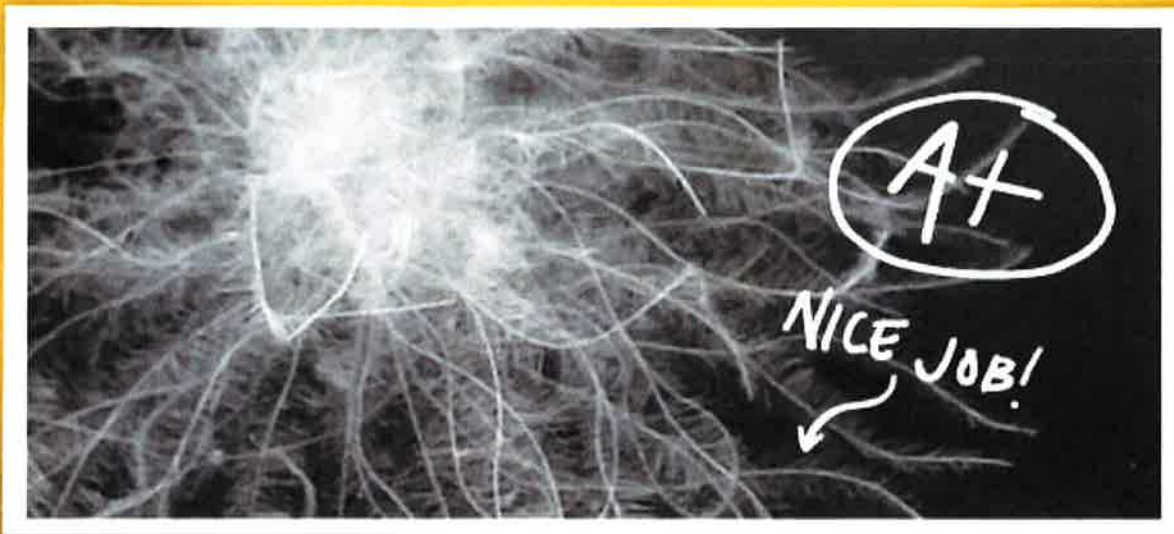
Small but Mighty

Each down cluster weighs next to nothing, but contains hundreds of branching arms called filaments that are so fine, they're invisible to the naked eye. Each ounce of down contains about 2 million filaments.

DOWN \neq FEATHERS



Feathers are flat, two-dimensional plumes. Down clusters are three-dimensional, not unlike pine branches.



Nature's Genius

Down's filaments branch out from a central stalk in irregular intervals—which makes down exceptionally warm, because the filaments' microscopic tendrils trap more air than the chunkier, heavier synthetic imitations.



KEEPING FEATHERS FROM LANDFILLS

Geese and ducks are raised for their meat, not their plumage (which would end up in a landfill if the textile industry didn't claim them). Down is merely a byproduct, worth less than 10% of the bird's total value.

Duck and goose meat aren't particularly popular in the U.S., but they're big in other parts of the world—particularly China, where each person eats about 8 pounds per year.

Battling Inhumane Practices

Down isn't the big-dollar part of the bird. But it's the outdoor industry—not meat producers—that has insisted on standards for ethical treatment of geese and ducks and adopted the **Responsible Down Standard**, a certification process that inspects farms and slaughterhouses to make sure that live-plucking, force-feeding, and other inhumane treatments aren't taking place.



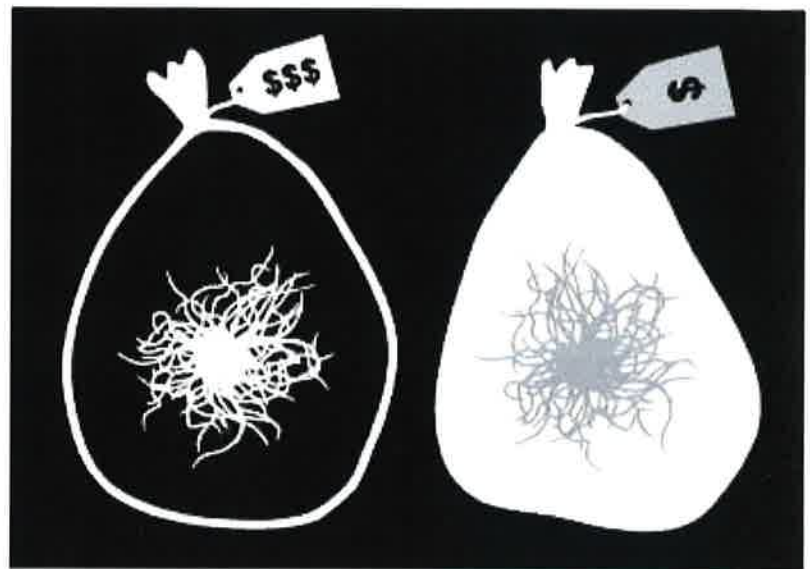


UNDERSTANDING DOWN CONTENT

Batches of down always includes at least some detritus (like feather quills) that is mixed in with the heat-trapping down clusters. So down is sold by "down content," with the purest stuff commanding the highest price: Batches that contain at least 90% down clusters are considered premium. 80/20 down content is more affordable but may contain some poky fragments, so it's sometimes paired with thicker, heavier fabrics.

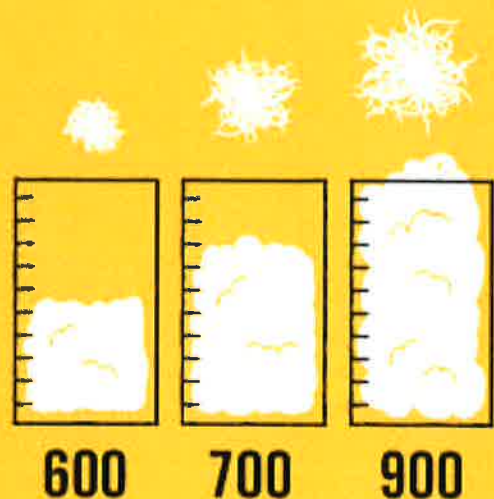
White vs. Grey

Down comes in 2 colors: white and grey. There's no difference in quality or performance, but white down is sometimes preferred because it doesn't show through a light-colored shelled fabric.



FILL POWER: A VISUAL PRIMER

Is 750-fill goose down better than 750-fill duck down? Nope. But geese have the edge at 850 fill (or higher). Very few ducks produce the kind of extra-large down clusters that result in 850 or 900-fill power.



DOWNTEK'S FOUNDATION



S D
S S

SUSTAINABLE
DOWN SOURCE

Sustainable Down Source is a bulk down supplier and the parent company of DownTek.



Down's Kryptonite

Down's major—um—downfall is that it loses all its insulating power when wet. But DownTek solves that problem by making down virtually impervious to water.

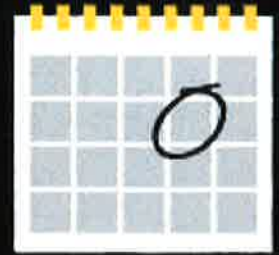


Down's Suit of Armor

DownTek coats each individual down filament with a water-repellent finish that prevents water from soaking (and collapsing) down clusters. Instead, the treatment creates a surface tension on the down clusters that forces water to bead up and roll off. It's like a suit of armor—**except that it's virtually weightless**. DownTek is no heavier than regular, untreated down.

2012

The year that
DownTek
first hit the
market.



The number of brands that now use DownTek.

It's unsinkable!

DownTek uses the IDFL DWR shake test to measure the water-resistance of its down. It's akin to plunging a clump of down into Class V rapids for 1,000 minutes and watching what happens. By the end of the test, DownTek floats on top of the water line. Regular down sinks.



ETHICS & SUSTAINABILITY



Do-gooder status

In the world of down, RDS is like a PhD: It's the ultimate stamp of approval.

Sustainable Down Source is RDS certified, meaning they meet the most stringent expectations for the ethical treatment of animals.

Green Credentials

Beyond its RDS certification, Sustainable Down Source hold a stack of other endorsements:

Higg Index

DownTek uses this metric (developed by the Sustainable Apparel Coalition) to clean up its emissions, use less electricity, promote recycling, and reduce its overall carbon footprint.

ZDHC

DownTek is a member of the Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemical Programme, which audits participants to make sure they're not mishandling nasty chemicals.

bluesign

Sustainable Down Source is a bluesign system partner and DownTek now uses bluesign approved PFC-Free chemistry—meaning that it avoids harm to people and the environment at all steps in the production process.





CARBON, BEGONE

Since 2012, DownTek has developed two water repellent products: the original DownTek that used a C6 formula, and the ZeroPFC version made using lipids. Now, in 2017, DownTek is replacing those earlier versions with **PFC-Free Water Repellent Down**. It performs as well as the original version but contains no PFCs!

Green Down

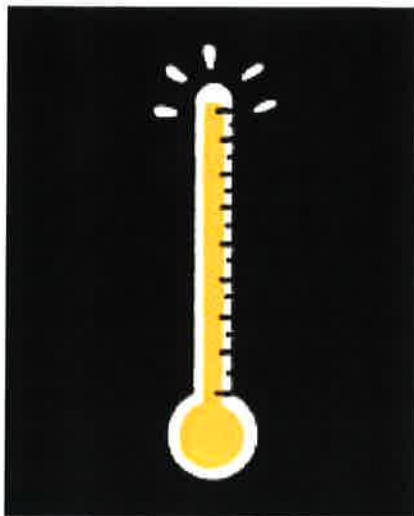
DownTek down is washed using a sustainably produced, green detergent containing no APEO's or NPEO's (the chemical stuff that persists in the environment).



Something in the air

So far, there's no way to measure how DownTek handles ambient humidity—like an ultra-muggy day in the Great Smoky Mountains. But DownTek stays dry for 27 times longer than regular down when exposed to water, so it probably works pretty well against airborne water molecules, too.

GIVE YOUR DOWN SOME LOVE



HOT STUFF

DownTek loves heat! The best thing you can do to fluff up the clusters and revive the DWR is to dry DownTek on high. However, many of the fabrics and trims used on DownTek-filled items don't love high heat—so follow the instructions on the care label, even if they prescribe a low dryer setting.

FACT OR MYTH?

Tennis balls crush down clusters

There's been a long-standing debate about whether to put tennis balls in the dryer with your down gear. Do they offer extra fluffing power or damage down's resiliency? Survey says: **Tennis balls are A-OK.**

Pro tip: Slide them into a sock for extra "fluffing" power and a quieter dryer session.

