What to Check When Ordering Custom Workwear for Your Team

Ordering custom workwear for a team can feel straightforward until you are faced with dozens of fabric options, sizing charts, and decoration methods. A little preparation goes a long way toward avoiding disappointment. Whether you need polo shirts for a sales team, waterproof jackets for outdoor crews, or branded fleeces for the office, working through a few practical checks before you place the order saves time, money, and frustration.

Know the environment your team works in

The first thing to consider is where and how the clothing will be worn. A warehouse operative needs different material than someone working a trade stand at an exhibition. Think about temperature, movement, and safety requirements. For outdoor roles, breathable and water-resistant fabrics matter more than style. For indoor desk roles, comfort and a smart appearance take priority.

Check whether the clothing needs to meet any safety standards, such as high-visibility requirements or flame resistance. If your team works near moving vehicles, high-vis workwear is not optional. If they work in catering, you may need fabrics that repel stains or tolerate frequent hot washing. Knowing the environment first means you choose the right base garment before you even think about the logo.

Pick the right fabric for the job

Cotton is comfortable and breathable but can shrink and crease. Polyester is durable and colourfast but can feel less breathable in hot weather. Blends try to balance the two: a 65 percent polyester and 35 percent cotton mix is a common choice for polo shirts because it holds colour well and resists wrinkles. For fleeces and hoodies, a cotton-polyester blend feels soft and washes well.

If your team will wear the clothing in active roles, look for fabrics with moisture-wicking properties. These pull sweat away from the skin and dry quickly, which makes a big difference on a warm day. For roles that involve sitting or standing in one spot, a heavier fabric weight (around 250 gsm or more) gives a more substantial feel and lasts longer. Lighter fabrics around 150 gsm suit warmer environments or short-term use.



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Get the sizing right for everyone

Sizing is one of the most common sources of returns. People come in different shapes, and garment sizes vary between brands and even between styles from the same brand. Do not rely on a single size chart. Ask your supplier for a sizing guide specific to the garment you are ordering.

Provide your team with clear instructions on how to measure themselves: chest, waist, hip, and inside leg where relevant. Ask them to measure a well-fitting garment they already own rather than taking body measurements, as this often gives more reliable results. Offer a size swap process after the order arrives, because even with good measurements, some people will want a different fit.

If your team includes a wide range of sizes, order a sample of the garment in a few sizes before you commit to a bulk order. This lets people try the actual item and confirm their choice. The cost of a few samples is much lower than the cost of exchanging dozens of items later.

Choose the right decoration method

The way your logo or design is applied to the garment affects both the look and the longevity. Embroidery is a classic choice for polo shirts, jackets, and caps. It looks professional and lasts the lifetime of the garment, but it is not suitable for fine details or small text. Screen printing works well for simple designs on t-shirts and sweatshirts and gives a smooth, durable finish at a low per-unit cost. For more complex designs with multiple colours or gradients, digital transfer or direct-to-garment printing can reproduce the artwork accurately.

Consider the position of the decoration too. A left-chest logo is standard for corporate wear. A larger design on the back or sleeve may require a different decoration method or a higher setup cost. Talk to your supplier about the options for your specific garment. Some fabrics take embroidery better than others, and some colours require an underbase for the print to show clearly.

When you work with a supplier that handles decoration in-house, the process tends to be smoother. A company like Bulk Branded, for example, offers a range of clothing options and can advise on which decoration method suits your design and budget. Getting that advice early helps you avoid a design that looks great on screen but does not transfer well to fabric.

Check the artwork requirements early

Your supplier will need your artwork in a specific format. Vector files such as Adobe Illustrator (AI) or EPS are preferred for embroidery and screen printing because they scale without losing quality. If your logo exists only as a JPEG or PNG, the supplier may need to redraw it, which

adds time and cost. Ask upfront what file format they require and whether they can handle the conversion.



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Also check the colour matching. Embroidery thread colours and printing inks are limited compared to what you see on a screen. Your supplier should show you a colour reference or a physical sample before production. This is especially important if your logo includes a specific brand colour that needs to be matched closely. A digital proof on screen is useful, but a physical sample is more reliable.

Plan for the order quantity and lead time

Custom workwear orders usually have minimum quantities, especially for embroidery or screen printing. If you need only a few garments, check whether the supplier offers a low minimum or can combine items to reach the threshold. Some suppliers charge a setup fee for smaller runs, so it pays to ask.

Lead times vary depending on the garment availability and the decoration method. Standard orders can take two to four weeks from the date of order confirmation. If you need the clothing by a specific date, order at least six weeks ahead to allow for production delays and shipping. Rush orders are sometimes possible but come at a premium and carry more risk of errors.

Order a few extra garments beyond your team size. Sizes can be misjudged, and a new team member may join before the next order. Having spares also helps if a garment gets damaged or lost. A common rule is to add 10 percent to your order quantity for contingencies.

Think about care and longevity

Custom workwear needs to look good after repeated washing. Check the care instructions for the garment and the decoration. Some prints crack or peel after a few washes if not applied correctly. Embroidery is generally more durable but can fray if the stitching is loose or the fabric is delicate.

Teach your team how to care for the clothing. Washing at 30 degrees, turning garments inside out, and avoiding fabric softeners can extend the life of both the fabric and the decoration. If the workwear is for roles where it gets heavily soiled, choose darker colours that hide stains better and fabrics that tolerate higher wash temperatures.

A little thought about care at the ordering stage means the clothing still represents your brand well a year later. Replacing faded or damaged garments too often adds unnecessary cost, so it

is worth spending a bit more on quality upfront.

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Get a sample and approve a proof

Before you give the green light for the full order, ask for a physical sample. This is the only way to check the fabric feel, the colour accuracy, the fit, and the quality of the decoration. A digital proof shows you the layout and colours, but it does not tell you how the garment feels or how the logo sits on the material.

If the supplier charges for the sample, consider it a cheap insurance policy against a batch of garments that nobody wants to wear. When the sample is approved, the supplier has a clear reference for the rest of the production run. That single step can prevent the most common problems: wrong colour, poor print alignment, or uncomfortable fabric.

Working with a reliable supplier makes a real difference. A company such as Bulk Branded can guide you through each of these checks, from fabric selection to decoration choice, and help you avoid the pitfalls that come with ordering custom workwear for the first time. Taking the time to go through this checklist before you order means the clothing your team receives will fit well, look professional, and last through many washes.

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