In commercial usage, the word is particularly applied to a fabric made of wool. The word is Teutonic, though it does not appear in all the branches of the language. It appears in German as *Kleid*, dress (*Kleidung*, clothing), and in Dutch as *kleed*. The ultimate origin is unknown; it may be connected with the root *klei-* meaning to stick, cling to, which appears in "clay," "cleave" and other words. The original meaning would be either that which clings to the body, or that which is pressed or "felted" together. The regular plural of "cloth" was "clothes," which is now confined in meaning to articles of clothing, garments, in which sense the singular "cloth" is not now used. For that word, in its modern sense of material, the plural "cloths" is used. This form dates from the beginning of the 17th century, but the distinction in meaning between "cloths" and "clothes" is a 19th-century one.

**CLOTH**, properly a covering, especially for the body, clothing, then the material of which such a covering is made; hence any material woven of wool or hair, cotton, flax or vegetable fibre.