

KNOW YOUR FABRICS



HOW DO WE DECIPHER WHICH FABRICS ARE SUSTAINABLE?

There are many aspects involved in conscious fashion, including sustainable fabrics and textiles.

Textile waste within the industry is a big issue to tackle. A lot of the world's textiles are **put into landfills and take decades to degrade**. We can address this through the fabrics we choose to wear though!

HOW DO WE DECIPHER WHICH FABRICS ARE SUSTAINABLE THOUGH?

There isn't just one fabric that can solve all our problems because every fabric requires some sort of production. That is why we have to **get familiar with labels!**

Here are a few textiles that are more sustainable options and may align with your needs and values...

More sustainable fabric options are often made from natural or recycled materials.

They aim to reduce harm either through the production process, fibre properties, or overall environmental impact! It is important to note that many of these sustainable options are doing different things to get the title sustainable but there will never be an entirely sustainable option. Creating something new always have an environmental footprint.

The best choice for our planet, and for you, will be the one which allows you to **waste less, purchase less, and have them the longest.**

HEMP

Hemp is a specific type of cannabis plant. It is a fast-growing plant that doesn't exhaust the soil, nor does it need pesticides. Hemp crops are also producing significantly more fibre per acre than either cotton or flax!

Pros/Cons:

Hemp fabric is a very durable textile that in some ways can act like a cotton because of how versatile and resistant it is. It is also very insulating, absorbent and becomes softer with wearing and washing.

It is usually a more expensive textile, making it less accessible.

What to Look For:

True hemp doesn't require a certification and is already organic, but you can verify with a brand that their garments are 100% hemp.



Linen

Linen is made from flax and can be grown without pesticides. Linen is also very cool, absorbent and an extremely strong fibre.

Pros/Cons:

What makes linen sustainable is the fact that it is a natural fibre that likes to grow in areas where a lot of other plants don't like to grow and flax can also be used in its entirety (seeds, oil, and crop), meaning there's no waste in the plant.

Linen is also biodegradable just as long as harsh chemicals are left out of the process. The downside to linen is that it can be expensive because of laborious manual processes.

What to Look For:

Linen usually needs less pesticides than other crops, but again look for the GOTS certification because organic linen also goes by the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS), and look for 100% linen over blends.



Bamboo

Bamboo is a fast-growing, regenerative crop that regrows from their roots and doesn't require fertilization.

Pros/Cons:

It is incredibly absorbent, comfortable, and soft making it very desirable for sustainable brands.

There are concerns about land clearing and harvesting methods as over the years there has been a high-demand for bamboo, which is negatively impacting ecosystems.

What to Look For:

We suggest doing more research around the brand's bamboo manufacturing and harvesting methods.



Wool

Wool is a protein which grows from sheep, goats, alpacas and other similar animals. Wool also refers to a textile that is sheared, spun, and woven into cloth. The animal's fleeces regrow after shearing therefore wool is a natural, renewable fibre source, making it one of the most sustainable sources for textiles.

Pros/Cons:

Wool's unique fibre structure makes it a "**hygroscopic**" fibre. This means it reacts to the wearer's body temperature, some would call it the first smart textile. It is important to consider that wool comes from domesticated animals that have a significant impact on the environment.

What to Look For:

When deterring the viability of a material as sustainable, one should look at the entire process from the growth to the processing of the material. The ZQ certification is one that has a framework to produce ethical and sustainable wool.



Recycled

Textiles

Recycled fabric refers to old fabric or fabric that is shredded and re-spun and woven into a new textile. It is made from textile waste from manufacturers and consumers which would otherwise be tossed.

Pros/Cons:

By using recycled textiles, makers are keeping the textiles out of landfills and closing the loop of the fashion industry and working towards a circular economy.

Synthetic fibres can also be recycled for example PET textiles. Natural fibres like cotton, silk, wool, etc. also are made with resources that need to be conserved. Recycled fabrics will help in reducing the speed of their depletion. These fibres need less energy to make the textiles.

What To Look For:

It is important that a brand that is using recycled fibres/textiles has transparent supply chain and look out for the Global Recycled Standard.



Organic Cotton



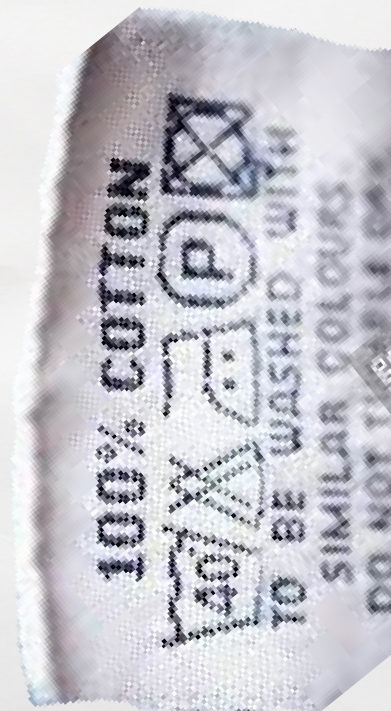
Organic cotton is cotton that has been grown without the use of toxic pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, or genetically modified seeds (GMOs) for at least three years.

Pros/Cons:

There are many sustainable farming practices used to grow organic cotton. Organic cotton feels softer, smells cleaner, and is less likely to trigger allergies than regular cotton.

What to Look For:

In Canada there are no certifications for organic fibres/fabric but there are other global/national standards that govern what is considered to be organic. The most commonly used certification is



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