

SUSTAINABLE FABRICS TO TRANSFORM THE FASHION INDUSTRY FOR GOOD

*Textile Value Chain
Editorial Team*

While the fashion industry is flourishing, more attention is being drawn to the industry's extensive list of adverse environmental effects. People are attempting to make textiles and fashion more sustainable and environment-friendly since they grow more conscious of the significance of conserving the planet for future generations.

Shopping for sustainably created garments is one approach to assure a more thoughtful purchase in the world of conscious fashion. Because fast fashion is produced at such a rapid speed to satisfy demand, producers must rely on virgin synthetic materials, which are both inexpensive and quick to make. But it is not only time to slow-down but also to pay attention to our clothing labels.

Now-a-days, several biodegradable materials are being used to transform the global fashion industry. These eco-friendly materials and textiles are created with cutting-edge technology that eliminates the necessity of pesticides in the clothing industry, also lowering total wastage of water, eliminating toxic dyes and processing chemicals, and up-cycling previously discarded fabrics.

To understand more about sustainable fabrics let's look at the definition of 'Sustainable Fabric'.

What is Sustainable Fabric?

Sustainable fabrics refers to the fabrics that are created from natural or recycled resources, such as sustainably cultivated fibre crops or recycled materials, with the goal of minimising damage caused by the manufacturing process, fibre qualities, or ultimate effect on the environment. Such fabrics can also help with waste minimization,

conservation of water, carbon reduction, and soil restoration, as previously stated, no fabric is completely sustainable.

Key Points

- Shopping for sustainably created garments is one approach to assure a more thoughtful purchase in the world of conscious fashion
- Hemp produces a long-lasting fabric that does not cause irritation to the skin and has a wide range of applications.
- Organic cotton production utilises 62 percent less energy and 88 percent less water than traditional cotton farming.
- Lenzing, the firm that invented TENCEL™, uses eucalyptus wood, which grows without the use of hazardous chemicals or insecticides.

With limited resources and fibres such as acrylic, polyester, spandex and nylon having adverse effect on the nature, it is high time for the fashion industry to take a glance at the sustainable solutions and prove that textile and apparel manufacturing is not going to harm the environment from now on.

Even though there are numerous ecologically sustainable materials which are revolutionising the fashion industry, the following are some of the most widely used fabrics in sustainable fashion.

Hemp

Hemp is a type of cannabis plant that is used for a variety of purposes. It grows quickly, doesn't degrade the soil, uses a lot less water, and doesn't need pesticides. Hemp produces a long-lasting

fabric that does not cause irritation to the skin and has a wide range of applications. It's frequently substituted for cotton and regarded as a carbon-negative raw material. Since this fabric has a lot of benefits such as being naturally UV resistant and antimicrobial, it is usually more expensive and less accessible to everyone.



Organic Cotton

Cotton farming uses a lot of harsh pesticides, chemicals and significant amount water only to make one cleaning item. There are nevertheless, more environmentally friendly methods of creating the fabric that consider the larger ecology and natural habitats.

Organic cotton is one of such environmentally sustainable fabrics available. Organic cotton production utilises 62 percent less energy and 88 percent less water than traditional cotton farming. Organic cotton is grown without using hazardous pesticides, synthetic fertiliser



ers, or seeds that have been genetically modified (GMOs).

Linen

Linen is a plant-based natural fibre which has been used in the production of clothing for centuries. The grass-like fibres need to be grown, treated, and processed for months before they are soft and supple enough to be weaved into garments. When discarded, Linen will biodegrade, offering a more environment-friendly alternative. It is a super soft and breathable textile derived from flax plant and is frequently blended with cotton. Linen is regarded one of the most sustainable fabrics used presently in the production of clothing and bedding.

Bamboo

Bamboo is one of the fastest-growing, regenerative plant which doesn't need fertilisation and is frequently promoted as a sustainable fabric. Micro holes and tiny gaps are there in the fibre, allowing for better moisture absorption and ventilation than other fibres. Sustainable brands prefer bamboo fabric since it is extremely comfortable and absorbent. Just like Hemp.

Bamboo too absorbs more CO₂ than some trees. It doesn't need a lot of resources and can survive just on rainwater.

Tencel

TENCEL™ is one of the most innovative fibres in the market today. Lenzing, the firm that invented TENCEL™, uses eucalyptus wood, which grows without the use of hazardous chemicals or insecticides.

TENCEL™ is one of today's most advanced fibres. Eucalyptus trees use relatively require less land than cotton to produce the same amount of textile.



Source: Luxiders.com

TENCEL™ yarn is also made using 100% renewable energy and consumes 80% less water than conventional yarn.

Piñatex

Although it may seem impossible, pineapple leaves can be used as a vegan substitute for leather. Ananas Anam, a London-based company, has created Piñatex, an organic, non-woven leather substitute created from cellulose derived from pineapple leaves that looks and feels like leather. Pineapple leaf fibres, a by-product of the Philippines' pineapple harvest, are used to create the revolutionary pineapple fabric.

Its manufacturing process is far more eco-friendly and cruelty-free than traditional leather. It uses less water and does not include any dangerous chemicals that are damaging to wildlife in the environment. The remaining leaf waste is composted or utilised as fertiliser.

Modal

Another semi-synthetic fabric noted for its superior comfort and breathability is modal. It's a cutting-edge fabric created from spinning cellulose from the beechwood tree. As beechwood trees regenerate on their own, they're regarded as a long-term raw material for making the revolutionary modal fabric.

The fabric is also 50% more absorbent

when compared to cotton has a silky, smooth texture, thus making it a suitable option for sports and underwear manufacturers.

Modal's manufacturer, Lenzing, has also developed non-toxic and ecologically friendly techniques which allow it to recover up to 95 percent of the materials utilised in its production, lowering the textile's overall carbon emissions.

Final Thoughts?

Poor fabric selection is a major contributor to unsustainable fashion.

Many of the elements that end up in our clothes are harmful to humans or animals (sometimes both). In addition to the toxic chemicals and micro-plastics that they discharge into the environment for years.

By stocking your closets with most of the sustainable textiles featured here, you can contribute to make the world a better place by purchasing eco-friendly and organic garments.

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