

# 24 REASONS WHY ORGANIC COTTON IS BETTER THAN NORMAL COTTON

## 1. ORGANIC COTTON IS MORE SUSTAINABLE THAN NORMAL COTTON

Organic cotton is better than normal cotton because it is much more sustainable. It uses no chemicals, fertilizers or pesticides to produce, protecting local habitats and the farmers which grow it. It also uses less water, preserves soil quality, and limits soil erosion.

## 2. ORGANIC COTTON USES LESS ENERGY AND RELEASES LESS CO<sub>2</sub>

Organic cotton has been found to use [62% less energy](#) to grow and produce compared to normal cotton, largely the result of less inputs required such as the production of fertilizers, regular spraying, irrigation and tractor operations. The net result, organic cotton releases up to [46% less CO<sub>2</sub>](#) vs. regular cotton.

## 3. ORGANIC COTTON USES LESS WATER THAN NORMAL COTTON

Another reason organic cotton is better than conventional cotton is because it is less thirsty. Organic cotton uses as much as 91% less water than regular cotton, a fact that cannot be overlooked when considering cotton accounts for [69% of the water footprint](#) of the entire textile industry whilst only producing 21% of the clothes we wear today! A kilogram of cotton takes between 10,000-20,000 litres of water to produce, and a cotton shirt takes around 2,700 litres of water to make. Sadly most normal cotton is grown in drought prone areas, adding enormous water stress to already vulnerable regions.

## 4. ORGANIC COTTON USES NO PESTICIDES OR CHEMICAL FERTILIZERS

One of the key reasons organic cotton is better than conventional cotton is because organic cotton does not use pesticides or chemical fertilizers to grow. In contrast, regular cotton is sprayed with huge quantities of pesticides to encourage growth. Regular cotton uses [5.7% of all global pesticides](#) and

16.1% of insecticides, despite occupying just 2.4% of agricultural land. This is more than any other single major crop. Many of these chemicals are poisonous to humans and harm those who grow normal cotton.

## 5. ORGANIC COTTON PROMOTES WILDLIFE

Organic cotton helps promote a more diverse ecosystem as the chemical pesticides don't cause harm to other species.

## 6. ORGANIC COTTON PROMOTES SOIL QUALITY

Organic cotton improves soil fertility, raising nutrient levels and preventing soil erosion. Better soil quality promotes a healthier plant, and also helps [absorb more CO2](#) from the atmosphere.

## 7. ORGANIC COTTON IS GMO FREE

A staggering 80% of normal cotton is [genetically modified](#). This figure is closer to 95% in China, India and the US. [GM crops](#) can lead to all sorts of problems, including the creation of accidental 'superweeds' resistant to sprays, health issues for native species that might eat these GM crops, and reduced natural diversity. GM crops were designed to be resistant to existing pests. Unfortunately this has given rise to new and previously un concerning pests, [increasing the amount of herbicides](#) sprayed on fields.

## 8. ORGANIC COTTON IS MORE PEST RESISTANT

Organic cotton has been shown to be more resistant to pests than normal cotton. By working with rather than against nature, pesticide usage could [drop by 98%](#) if all farmers employed organic farming techniques to look after their land.

## 9. WHAT PESTICIDES ARE USED ON COTTON? TOXIC PESTICIDES

Knowing what pesticides are used on cotton might make you think twice before buying a regular cotton t-shirt or dress. The [Environmental Protection Agency](#) in the United States lists 7 of the 15 commonly used pesticides as "possible", "likely", "probably" or "known" to cause cancer.

Some of the [most widely used pesticides](#) include:

- Glyphosate, which likely causes carcinogens
- Methyl parathion, listed under the Rotterdam Convention as fatal if inhaled
- Fluometuron, causes reproductive problems
- Acetamiprid and Chlorpyrifos, toxic for bees

Do we need many more arguments than this to prove organic cotton is better than normal cotton?

## 10. COTTON CAN BE TOXIC - SO WHAT CHEMICALS ARE IN COTTON?

Knowing that regular cotton clothes are grown using intense chemical pesticides, you might be worried that your cotton is toxic. The truth is that cotton clothes often contain toxic chemicals left over from the manufacturing of the material. These include:

- Roundup & other toxic pesticides: contains glyphosate, which are linked to causing cancer and often remain in the fabric after manufacturing
- Chlorine bleach: used to whiten the fabric and remove stains, causes asthma and respiratory problems
- Formaldehyde: Applied to fabric to help prevent wrinkles, reduce shrinkage, and as a carrier for dyes and ink. Can cause cancer
- VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds) and other solvents that release gasses during the manufacturing process can lead to respiratory problems, reproductive issues and some can cause cancer
- PFCs (Perfluorinated Chemicals): added to create water resistance and repel stains. It bio-accumulates in the environment in toxic concentrations, can cause cancer
- Ammonia: Applied to prevent shrinkage, can damage lungs, eyes, and respiratory organs
- Heavy metals such as lead, chromium, cadmium, antimony, applied to finished fabrics such as leather or synthetics. Can cause DNA mutation,

reproductive issues, kidney or liver damage



Some chemicals do come off after washing your clothes, releasing them into the environment. However many chemicals remain [embedded in the fibre](#). As organic cotton contains no pesticides, it's a clear reason why organic cotton is better than normal cotton.

Worried that cotton is toxic? Even organic cotton can be processed and dyed with toxic chemicals. For that reason, look for the [Oeko-Tex Standard 100](#) label or [GOTS](#). These certifications guarantee that the fabrics you buy are free from toxic chemicals. So it's another reason to buy 100% organic cotton.

## 11. ORGANIC COTTON IS MUCH BETTER FOR YOUR SKIN

Organic cotton clothing is much better for sensitive skin because it isn't treated with the harsh chemicals needed to grow and produce regular cotton. There are up to [8,000 synthetic chemicals](#) used to make cotton, most of which are not found in organic cotton clothes. Make sure to look out for the [Oeko-Tex Standard 100](#) label, confirming the fabric has no trace chemicals. Similarly [GOTS](#) ensures sustainable and ethical processes from field to garment, meaning you can feel assured your clothes don't contain anything they shouldn't. Certified organic cotton clothes are therefore much better for your skin, and are also perfect for small children or babies.

## 12. ORGANIC COTTON CLOTHES ARE MORE ETHICAL THAN NORMAL COTTON

Organic cotton is far more ethical than non-organic cotton and a key reason it is better. It pays farmers a fair wage, prevents [forced](#) or [child labour](#), and ensures ethical working conditions. It also helps reduce the debt spiral that smallholder cotton farmers can become trapped in when forced to buy expensive chemical fertilizers, pesticides and GMO seeds. Read more about [ethical organic cotton here](#).

## 13. ORGANIC COTTON HELPS PROTECT THE HEALTH OF FARMERS

Almost [1,000 people die every day](#) from pesticide poisoning, not including the long term health consequences of being exposed to these toxic chemicals such as cancers, neurological diseases, infertility and birth defects. Chemicals sprayed onto fields often end up in local waterways which provide the drinking water for towns. Case studies in [Benin, Ethiopia and Senegal](#) show that 42% of farmers had suffered from signs of acute pesticide poisoning over the course of a year, with 21% of the farmers experiencing severe symptoms losing a minimum 2-5 days work.

## 14. ORGANIC COTTON IS BETTER QUALITY THAN NORMAL COTTON

Organic cotton is almost always better quality than regular cotton, made with high quality fibres and put together with care and attention. Better quality clothes not only feel and look better, they also last longer, the key to a [sustainable wardrobe](#). Regular cotton clothes made by fast fashion giants are often poor quality and won't last long. Check the seams and stitching of fast fashion clothes, you should not see daylight through the joints.

## 15. ORGANIC COTTON IS VERY DURABLE

Organic cotton is often more durable than conventional cotton clothes. Not only is it built with more care and attention, the fabric itself is often stronger. This is because regular cotton fibres can be damaged by the chemicals added during harvest and processing. The result is that organic cotton fibres are

longer with stronger and smoother connections to one another.



## 16. WHAT IS THE LIFESPAN OF COTTON?

The lifespan of cotton is typically between 2 to 5 years, however this depends how carefully you look after your clothes and the quality of the garment in the first place. Organic cotton clothing is typically better made and will last longer than cheaper cotton alternatives. The longer your clothes last, the more sustainable your wardrobe. Here are tips to [make your clothes last longer](#).

## 17. YES, ORGANIC COTTON IS SOFTER THAN REGULAR COTTON

Organic cotton is often softer and more comfortable to wear than cheaper regular cotton. This is because organic cotton has longer fibres that are not damaged during the production processes by harsh chemicals. The cotton is also hand picked rather than machine picked, which ensures fibres don't weaken, break or fracture, resulting in a softer more durable fibre.

How does organic cotton feel different? Organic cotton feels similar to cotton, but is slightly softer, more gentle and smoother to the touch. It feels thicker due to the quality of the fabric, whilst also being more breathable and light.

## 18. ORGANIC COTTON DOES NOT PILL

Unlike synthetic materials, cotton does not pill easily. Pills are those annoying little round balls that form on the surface of your clothes, caused by the friction

in the fabric as it rubs together. Organic cotton is not prone to pilling because it is a 100% natural fabric. Pilling that does form on cotton usually falls off in the wash, unlike synthetics like nylon or polyester where pills remain visible once formed.

## 19. ORGANIC COTTON IS MORE BREATHABLE

Pesticide free organic cotton feels softer on your skin, giving a quality feel that's more breathable than regular cotton. It allows air to pass through the fibre, keeping you cool and allowing moisture to evaporate when the temperature rises.

## 20. ORGANIC COTTON DOES NOT SHRINK

In general, you do not need to worry about your organic cotton clothes shrinking. However both regular cotton and organic cotton will shrink if drying on high heat by up to 10%, so avoid tumble driers if possible.

## 21. ORGANIC COTTON IS NORMALLY MORE EXPENSIVE THAN REGULAR COTTON

Why is organic cotton so expensive? Well, in comparison to regular cotton farmers, those who grow organic cotton are paid a fair wage that provides more than enough to meet their basic living standards. Organic cotton also avoids forced or child labour, looks after the environment through sustainable farming techniques and protects the rights of those who produce it. As a result, organic cotton is almost always more expensive. However, there are affordable organic cotton brands out there, check out our range of [inexpensive organic cotton](#) T-Shirts, they might be cheaper than you were expecting.

## 22. IS 100% COTTON STRETCHY?

Yes, if the garment is knitted, 100% cotton and 100% organic cotton are as stretchy as a normal cotton T-shirt. If the fabric is woven, there will be almost no stretch for both organic and regular cotton.

## 23. WHICH WILL LAST LONGER, ORGANIC COTTON CLOTHES OR REGULAR COTTON?

Organic cotton is a strong fabric which will last longer than regular cotton. This is because organic cotton fibres aren't damaged by processing with harsh chemicals and the cotton is often picked by hand rather than by machine, making the fibres stronger and more durable. Organic clothes are also made with more care and attention, meaning they will last longer if you [maintain your clothes correctly](#). To make your clothes last longer, follow basic rules like washing on a lower heat, washing less frequently, ironing less, and giving them the love and attention they need. We've listed [26 super easy tips to make your clothes last longer here](#).

## 24. 100% COTTON TAKES UNDER 5 MONTHS TO BIODEGRADE

100% pure organic cotton will biodegrade in around [5 months](#) if the conditions are right, however regular cotton which has been heavily treated with chemicals may well take longer and as it does degrade will release chemicals into the ground. Another reason organic cotton is better than conventional cotton.



What to read next?

This article has no doubt given you reasons to think twice before buying your next normal cotton T-shirt. It's clear that there are many benefits to buying organic, and there are also many brands selling organic cotton clothes.

- If you are looking to buy something [affordable and organic then take a look here](#)



- Looking to make your clothes last longer, we've [listed our top tips](#)
- Starting out on your journey to dress more sustainable? [Read our beginners guide](#)