

## Planetary Wellbeing

### Cut Pollution & Toxicity

- Cleaning & Laundry
- Green Carwash
- Low-Toxin Manufacturing
- Natural Garden & Lawn Care
- Organic & Sustainable Agriculture
- Pest Control
- Plant-Based Eating
- Zero Emissions
- Zero Toxin Parenting

Ensure Animal Wellness

Guard Water Resources

Ocean Awareness

Protect Biodiversity

**Reduce Resource Consumption**

Save Energy & Climate

## Pretty in Pastels



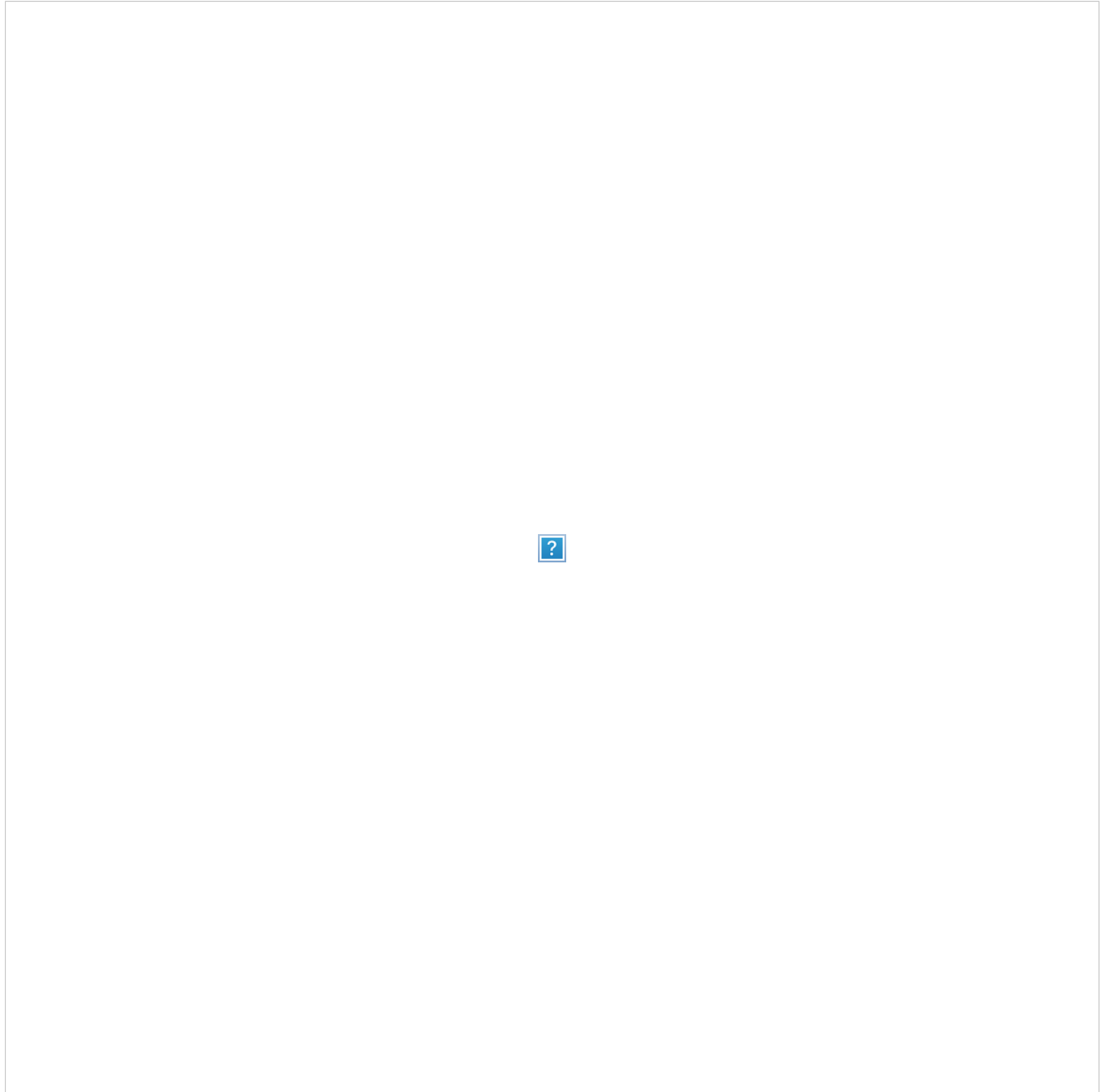
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## Surprisingly Compostable Textiles

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Each year Americans throw out nearly 11 million tons of **clothing and fabric** – approximately 70 pounds per American!<sup>[i]</sup> Not only does this seriously contribute to the growing waste crisis in America, it is a true waste considering nearly 99% of textiles are recyclable.<sup>[ii]</sup> This waste causes massive amounts of pollution and wastes resources like water and fibers.



Luckily, there are many things we can all do as individuals to help curb the waste. Most of our clothes are biodegradable and can easily be composted, or at least disposed of at a textile recycling bin. At Hearts, we love to upcycle textiles before we recycle, but sometimes there's nothing to be done but sending secondhand fashion to the compost pile. Our guide to how to compost fabrics makes it super simple!

## Quick Guide: Composting Different Textiles

- **What are compostable textiles?** Since most textiles are made from natural materials, most can be composted and returned to the earth as resources. Biodegradation simply means that the textile can be broken down naturally by bacteria.
- **Types of biodegradable fabrics:** Natural textiles that can easily break down include cotton, silk, wool, cashmere, and hemp.
- **Types of non-biodegradable clothes:** Manufactured synthetic textiles include polyester, spandex, nylon, and rayon. Though these eventually break down, it may take between 20 to 200 years to fully biodegrade these textiles.<sup>[iii]</sup>
- **Compostable textile labels:** In order for eco fashion to be labeled “compostable” it must meet ASTM D-6400, ASTM D6868, and EN13432 standards: 60% to 90% of the product must break down into C02 within 180 days in a commercial composting facility; 90% of the product must break down into 2mm or smaller pieces (called disintegration); Must break down into humus; Cannot deposit heavy metals into the soil.

## Quick Guide 2: Biodegradable Textiles and Fabrics



- **Cotton:** Cotton is one of the most biodegradable fabrics you can have, especially if it is 100% cotton. In a compost, cotton may biodegrade within as little as a week but usually takes about 5 months.<sup>[iv]</sup>
- **Linen:** This very fine material can decompose in as little as two weeks if it is all natural.<sup>[v]</sup> It is recommended that you cut fabric into small pieces to allow it to decompose better and faster.
- **Wool:** Wool (including our cruelty-free alpaca wool) clothing will decompose in about one year but can take as long as five depending on the blend.<sup>[vi]</sup>
- **Bamboo:** Bamboo clothing is becoming more and more popular and is similar to wool in that it takes one year and sometimes longer to biodegrade.<sup>[vii]</sup>
- **Hemp:** Since hemp is derived from plants and is not processed excessively, it is highly biodegradable, breaking down in a short period of time.
- **Silk:** This textile is created from the cocoons of silk worms and is also very biodegradable.
- **Other biodegradable fashion materials:** Textiles such as jute, leaf fibers, and abaca fiber, as well as cork, seeds, shells, nuts, and wood are all compostable. And yes, clothes made with dyes are okay to compost.

## Take Action! Start Composting Your Clothes!

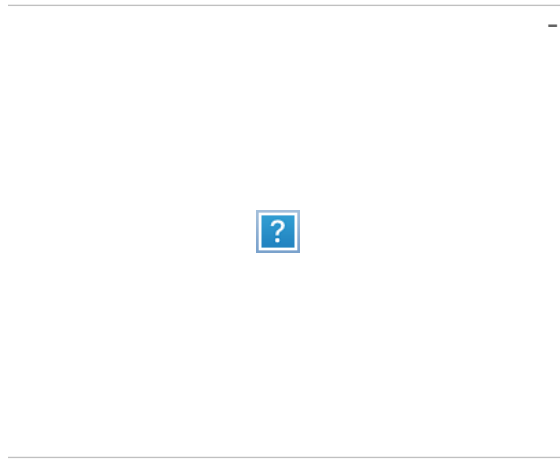
1. **Shred your clothes first:** According to the [Texas Office of Agriculture](#), it is important to cut your clothes into smaller pieces, especially heavier fabrics like wool, to allow them to compost better.
2. **Remove non-biodegradable materials:** Ensure that you remove any plastic or metal buttons and zippers before composting since those items are not biodegradable.
3. **Use a hot compost for faster results:** Typical composts just sit there, hot composting is a more involved way to speed up the process. Creating a hot compost takes some thought and effort. You need to mix your compost ingredients and layer them properly in a bin to create the necessary conditions. You will also need to occasionally turn your compost pile for the process to work. Learn how to make your own hot compost at [Composting101](#).
4. **Add earthworms to your compost:** Researchers have found that vermicompost, the process of composting using earthworms and animal manure, can be a highly effective way to better compost fabrics and other textile waste. Earthworms are known to produce the best fertilizer on planet and are great at efficiently processing organic waste. Learn more about composting with earthworms at [Earth911](#).
5. **When eco shopping, seek out compostable clothes:** A great way to start composting your clothes is to think about it at the store, long before you have started actually doing it. Buy 100% compostable fabrics like those detailed above. If you can avoid fashion made with dyes, bleaches, and chemicals, all the better for your compost!
6. **Recycle what you can't compost:** If you can't or you would rather not compost, recycle your unwanted clothes at textile recycling bins located outside of many stores, and support businesses that have these bins. Better yet, let your political representatives know that you want [more support for municipal textile recycling](#) – the greater the [textile recycling](#) bins in a community, the higher the textile recycling rate!

## Dig Deeper: Biodegradable Clothes

- Discover how much pollution and waste non-recycled fabrics cause from this [Ecosalon infographic](#).
- Learn more about [100% biodegradable clothes](#).
- Learn more about new technology designed to increase large-scale compost efficiency like the [Gore Cover](#).
- Pick up a book on composting like [Let it Rot!: The Gardeners Guide to Composting](#) from Storey's Down-to-Earth Guides or [Composting For Dummies](#).

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