

## CHOOSE QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

In Germany, people are buying more and more clothes every year – and throwing them out at an increasing rate, too. One out of every four items of clothing we own is worn rarely or never at all. This growing mentality of “fast fashion” equally increases the burden on people and the planet, thereby constituting a major problem. And yet, it’s easy to dress well without fast fashion: All it takes is a few timeless, stylish shirts, pants, sweaters, dresses and jackets. Garments that you don’t feel comfortable in or that you’ve rarely – or never – worn over the past few months should go to a second-hand store. Make sure to buy good quality items. If you wear the same few items often, they need to be durable. This approach improves your clothing’s environmental footprint.

## SAY NO TO FUR

Don’t buy or wear clothes with fur trimming. Real fur, however, is often not declared or not declared in a clear way. Over 80 percent of fur comes from fur farms where the animals are not raised in a species-appropriate manner. Real fur can be identified by its natural look and leather base. Artificial fur is synthetic and more rigid, has a woven textile structure at its base with hairs that are of uniform length and thickness.

## WEAR ORGANIC COTTON

Conventional cotton farming entails major hazards to human health and the environment – particularly in the countries where it is cultivated. Clothing made of organic cotton is a sustainable alternative. Organic cotton is grown without the use of toxic fertilizers or pesticides, which protects the environment and the health of the plantation workers in the regions where it’s produced. Organic farming prohibits the use of genetically modified seeds, a practice which is widespread in conventional farming.



# The sustainable shopping basket

Check out [www.nachhaltiger-warenkorb.de](http://www.nachhaltiger-warenkorb.de) for important information about sustainable consumption as well as independent information about the various seals and product labels. You’ll find information about food, travel and mobility, living and building, housekeeping and electronics, as well as fashion and cosmetics.

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# Clothing and fashion

**The sustainable shopping basket:**  
Guide to environmentally conscious  
and social consumption





# Only the best for your second skin

By the time pants, t-shirts, etc. reach our closet, they've usually already traveled a long way – at the expense of the environment. Global textile consumption has doubled over the last 15 years, and so has the environmental impact of textile manufacturing and trade. Many of the chemicals used in fabric production are harmful both to nature and the health of textile workers. In addition, huge amounts of water are used for such things as growing and processing cotton. As consumers, we can do something about this!



## PFC-FREE OUTDOOR WEAR

When buying sustainable outdoor wear, opt for PFC-free products. If the manufacturer hasn't provided any information regarding the presence of PFC, you can test your garments for particularly toxic chemicals with the Scan4Chem app of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment. When you scan the product's bar code, an automatic inquiry is sent to the vendors or manufacturers. They, in turn, have a disclosure obligation should "Substances of Very High Concern" (SVHC) as defined by the EU chemicals regulation REACH, be contained in the garment.

## FAIRLY PRODUCED FASHION

Most textiles imported to Germany are manufactured in low-wage countries. In these countries, such things as a living wage, sufficient work safety and bans on child labor are not always guaranteed. For many workers, it's normal to work extra hours without extra pay and to be denied the right to form or join trade unions. And yet, clothing can be manufactured fairly – even for the medium-price segment.

## TOXIN-FREE AND CHEMICAL-FREE FASHION

Whether a fabric is made of natural or artificial fibers, its processing alone can have a considerable impact on human health and the environment. Chemicals are used during nearly every step in the clothing production process. Harmful substances also tend to remain within the finished item. Since we typically wear these items directly on our skin, we can't avoid coming into contact with these chemicals. Outdoor clothing, such as waterproof rain jackets, contain hazardous substances such as perfluorinated and polyfluorinated chemicals (PFC).

## GO SECOND HAND

Buying second-hand clothing is the sustainable option, as various factors in the manufacturing of new clothes put a major strain on the environment: Pesticides and fertilizers, high water consumption, the pollution of waterways with production waste

containing dye residue, as well as the use of dyes and microplastic particles in the laundry. Which is why it's better to make good use of second-hand stores and clothing exchange networks.

## FAIR CLOTHES DISPOSAL

Some one million tons of used clothes are collected in Germany every year. Clothes that are still good to wear should be put in the old clothes collection. Around half of these textiles are recycled, passed on, sold at home or abroad, or turned into cleaning cloths. If you want to be sure of the future journey of your used clothes, take them to charity shops or clothing banks.

## SEALS OF GOOD FASHION

The **Global Organic Textile Standard Label (GOTS)** stands for strictly ecological and social guidelines.



The **Fair Wear Foundation** defines social stipulations for production processes.



**NATURTEXTIL IVN certified BEST (IVN BEST)** identifies environmentally friendly and socially acceptable natural fibers.



The **EU Ecolabel** identifies products with a low environmental impact compared to conventional products.



**OEKO-TEX Made in Green** identifies non-toxic textile products that have been manufactured sustainably and under socially acceptable working conditions.

