

Quick Buying Guide for Consumers









You're about to buy something – STOP and THINK

Use this guide to decide how sustainable your purchase is and remember every choice you make matters.

This information is normally available on the label, or you may need to ask the manufacturer or business owner.

Labels can be confusing and misleading so always trust your judgement and consider doing your own research if in doubt.

As consumers we have rights to know what we are consuming and whether it is good for our health and the environment.

Questions to ask and visual labels on products				
Q1 Do you really NEED this item? - Is it essential? - Will it provide you with long-term joy? - Avoid Impulse buying				
Q2 Could you avoid buying 'brand new' - Could you borrow this item - Get it second hand - Rent it - Make do or mend / repair what you've already got				
Q3 Is it natural? - What raw materials have been used? - Natural is better than man-made e.g. plastic / polyester				
				
Microbead Free	Plastic free	Minimise plastic		
Q4 Is the product 'organic'? - Will be labelled - Ask land owner / staff if sourced straight from land, e.g. farmers markets				
				

Biodynamic	GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard)	Natruce Certified Products	Organic	Organic - EcoCert	Organic - Soil Association Certified
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Q5 Is it made from recycled fibres?
 - Recycled plastic/wood/metal etc.

Q6 Where was it made / sourced from?
 - Knowing the exact source is better for health and eco reasons. Locally better than imported overseas. E.g. local fruit and veg from a farmers market rather than imported (larger carbon emission from transportation)



UK Made

Q7 Has the product been imported?
 - Avoid this where possible, most fast fashion labels will have 'made in China' which indicates it has been mass produced with little consideration of environmental or human welfare







Q8 If made abroad, has it been fairly traded? Does it have a fair trade symbol?

Certified B Corporation	Fair Trade	Fair Wear Foundation	WRAP certified	Fairtrade Labelled	Fair Trade - BAFTS	Fair Trade - WFTO (IFAT)

Q9 is it 'Eco friendly'
 - Biodegradable, recyclable, made using minimal environmental impact

Alternative energy	Biodegradable	Carbon neutral	Cradle to cradle	Eco-friendly	Energy Efficient	Nordic swan Eco label

Q10 is it sustainable?
 - Are the farming methods minimizing resource depletion, e.g. sustainable palm oil, tree removal / planting / sustainable farming

					
FSC Certified	MSC certified	One percent for the planet	Sustainable	Sustainable palm oil	Palm oil free









Q11 is the product animal welfare friendly?

- vegan, bee friendly, cruelty free, no animal testing, supports wildlife

					
Vegan	Vegetarian	Bee friendly	Supports wildlife	No animal testing	Certified cruelty free

Q12 is it healthy for you and therefore the environment?






- chemical free, fertiliser / pesticide free, BPA free

					
OEKO-TEX Standard 100	Suitable for septic tanks	BPA free	Non-GMO Project Verified	Allergy UK certified	Healthy Living
					
Paraben Free	Phthalate Free				

Q13 Is it made intensively?

- How was the product made?
- Handmade/reared / factory/ intensively produced

Q14 Does the company use recycled packaging or minimal plastic packaging?

			
Minimise waste	Recycle / Reuse	Recycled	Recycled or recyclable packaging
Q15 Has the product been made using renewal energy? May be specified on label or ask business			
			
Solar powered			