

Why Cotton Is Essential to an Eco-friendly Salon

You want to be eco-friendly in your practice but you have to use single-use disposables.

This may seem like a predicament, but in reality, it's not! So throw away those foam toe separators, grab a [Toe Rope](#), and let's talk about the green alternative.

At Intrinsic, cotton is queen. Not only is cotton biodegradable, but it is also renewable and sustainable. Not to mention [its performance](#) is far superior to other fibers, especially synthetic ones.



Intrinsic Cotton Swabs

Biodegradability

Biodegradable: possibly our favorite word. **Biodegradability** refers to the chemical dissolution of materials by bacteria or other biological means. Since cotton is made by nature, it can be degraded by nature. In case you're wondering, synthetic fibers are **not** biodegradable, since they are man-made. These oil-based fibers are polyester, polypropylene, nylon, and polyethylene. Yep, the same artificial fibers that make up your feminine hygiene pads, wipes, and clothing. Gross.

How Long Will It Take?

It depends. Cotton is biodegradable both **anaerobically** and **aerobically**. Modern landfills are sealed to keep out water and oxygen, making them anaerobic. Cotton will degrade under these conditions, but more slowly than in aerobic conditions (or in a compost heap).

While the speed that cotton degrades depends on the environmental conditions and the construction of the fabric, at least we know it will degrade over time, and not remain the waste stream.



Renewability and Sustainability

There's no denying that cotton is **sustainable**. A cotton plant has an eight-to-nine month renewable life cycle. Rayon, on the other hand, comes from mature trees that take 15-20 years to grow. While those trees targeted for rayon are growing, a decade and a half of cotton crops (at minimum) have been harvested.

Farming practices have evolved to be more efficient over the last few decades. Did you know in the last 20 years, water usage, soil loss, and energy used for production have all steadily declined? Most of the US cotton crops are now irrigated exclusively from rain. Roughly 1.6lbs of other useful products are created in the harvesting process, like cottonseed oil, dairy feed, and mulch.



Intrinsics Cotton Ovals

Why Use Cotton in Your Practice?

In the services you provide, using disposable products is not much of a choice. So make the *right choice*. Our cotton products are made of medical grade cotton, making it the most sanitary option. Intrinsics' cotton is durable. No more running through tons of generic cotton pads in a single treatment because they just don't stand up to the job. Most of all, our cotton is soft and comfortable. It attests to the quality of your establishment. Your clients will thank you.

Want to learn more about the many beneficial components of cotton? Our friends at [Barnhardt](#) have tons of useful material and research available to the public, including this neat [Cotton Library](#).