Cotton is a natural, soft, and breathable fiber harvested from the cotton plant. It is one of the most widely used textiles globally for its versatility, durability, and comfort.

**Common cotton products**

Cotton is used to make a vast array of products, both for consumers and industrial purposes.

**Clothing**

Cotton's softness and breathability make it ideal for everyday and active wear.

* **T-shirts:** The

[**Pact Women's Organic Cotton Softspun Crew Neck Tee**](https://www.google.com/search?prds=pvt:hg,pvo:29,mid:576462843142314446,imageDocid:13933605521613451629,gpcid:14215060572283513598,headlineOfferDocid:12602739170091446870,catalogid:12242613854515511451,productDocid:17324466503547185325,rds:PC_14215060572283513598%7CPROD_PC_14215060572283513598&ibp=oshop&q=product&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjJ37aAuLuQAxXfIjQIHcu4Ez4Qxa4PegQIBxAC)

 is a casual organic cotton option.

* **Jeans:** Denim is a durable cotton twill fabric commonly used for jeans.
* **Dresses and blouses:** Lightweight cotton fabrics like lawn, voile, and poplin are often used for summery apparel.
* **Underwear and socks:** The durability and soft feel of cotton make it a popular choice for undergarments.

**Home goods**

Cotton is a staple for home textiles due to its durability and absorbency.

* **Bed sheets and bedding:** Its softness and non-irritating properties make cotton a preferred material for sheets and duvet covers.
* **Towels and bathrobes:** Cotton terry cloth is highly absorbent, making it perfect for bathroom essentials.
* **Upholstery and curtains:** Canvas, corduroy, and velveteen are cotton fabrics used for home decor.

**Medical and industrial supplies**

The absorbency and durability of cotton are key for these uses.

* **Bandages and dressings:** The non-woven form of cotton is used for many disposable medical products.
* **Cotton balls and swabs:** These are used for personal hygiene and medical care.
* **Canvas and rope:** The high tensile strength of cotton fibers is suitable for heavy-duty industrial uses.

**Popular types of cotton**

Not all cotton is created equal. Different species and fiber lengths result in varying levels of quality and softness.

* **Upland cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum*):** This accounts for over 90% of the world's cotton production and is used for everyday items like t-shirts and denim.
* **Pima cotton (*Gossypium barbadense*):** This is an extra-long staple (ELS) cotton variety, known for its long, strong, and silky fibers. It is used for high-quality textiles and is grown in the American Southwest and elsewhere.
  + **Supima cotton:** This is a branded form of American-grown ELS Pima cotton certified by the American Supima Association.
* **Egyptian cotton:** A term for long and extra-long staple cotton grown in Egypt, though the name can sometimes refer to the way the cotton is processed rather than its origin.
* **Organic cotton:** This is grown without synthetic agricultural chemicals like fertilizers or pesticides. It is often used for baby clothes and diapers as it is known to be hypoallergenic. The **Fair Indigo Women's Luxe Organic Cotton Tank Top** is a fair-trade, organic option.

**How cotton is processed**

From the field, cotton undergoes several steps to become usable fiber.

1. **Harvesting:** After the cotton bolls ripen and split open, the fluffy fibers are harvested by machine or by hand.
2. **Ginning:** The harvested "seed cotton" is sent to a cotton gin, where the lint (fibers) are separated from the seeds.
3. **Baling:** The cleaned lint is compressed into large bales for transport to textile mills.
4. **Milling:** The bales are spun into yarn or thread, which is then woven or knitted into a variety of fabrics.