

Eleven things quilters can do to help make the industry more sustainable

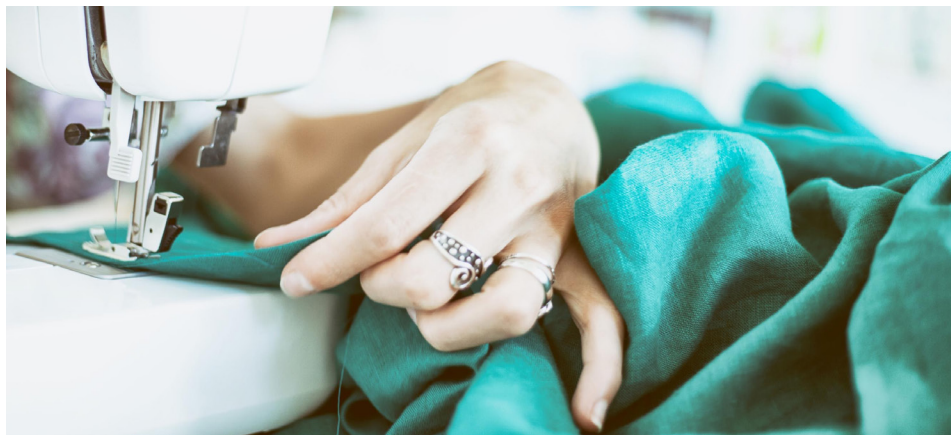
1 Stop using spray adhesives for basting. There are harmful chemicals used in many spray adhesives, which can be bad for your health and impact greenhouse gases, and those same chemicals can reduce the longevity of your quilt. Switch to pin or stitch basting.

2 Mindful Quilting. Slow stitching movements are on the rise with hand work like embroidery, mending, Shibori and Shasiko stitching, for example. When we slow down and connect with the work, we are nurturing ourselves. These can be very important moments for our own well-being. Try making a project or two by hand to see if you like the slower process.

3 Make a donation quilt. Our community is one of the most important places to start with sustainability. How we connect with our past (veterans, cancer survivors, residential school survivors; for example), also impacts future generations and tells stories that need to be remembered. This is particularly important work for the social fabric of sustainability. Try using materials you already have in your stash, or upcycle clothing in your projects for a meaningful memory quilt.

4 Use what you have before you buy more. Our society and quilt culture is commodified, there's no getting around that. The next line of interesting and beautiful fabrics is just around the corner. But if we commit to doing even just one project a year that uses no new materials, we can reduce the consumer impact.

5 Save materials that are unusual. Have a look at things you already have in new ways, you can use waste like plastics or paper, clothing, or linens – challenge yourself in your creative endeavours.



6 Upcycle fabrics (sheets, clothing, tablecloths). Shop at thrift stores, auctions, or yard sales for interesting materials to use in your projects.

7 Learn about certifications and labels. There are third party certifications that producers can use to show us the accountable actions they are taking to make their products sustainable. Look for them and ask for them when buying supplies.

8 Buy organic for one project. You don't have to change to only buying organic, build your organic stash one project at a time.

9 Raise awareness. Create an art quilt of issues you care about like endangered species, social issues, habitat loss, etc. Sharing these stories helps spread awareness, you never know who you will impact with your art.

10 Read about sustainable issues. Knowledge is power. Have a look into the textile industry, listen to podcasts, read blogs, follow activists and artist that are sharing the message on social media.

11 Support companies and artists. Buy materials or even take classes from companies and artists that are leading the way with sustainability.

I hope you are as excited about the change that can come from small actions as I am. I'll be back with some more sustainability insights. In the next article we will look at "The Cotton Trail," where I'll show you some of the environmental, social, and economic impacts of the cotton industry; we will learn about sustainable certifications and labeling, and some of the companies that are using them; and we will get a better understanding of "greenwashing". ✨



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