

# Is there hidden plastic in your bedding?

Submitted by: Scooms

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There are so many choices to make when you buy new bedding and your main considerations are probably: will it help you sleep better and is it value for money? How often do we stop to think about the amount of plastic in our bedding and the impact that it might have on the environment before and after use?

With some bedding stuffed with microplastic pollutants we thought we'd put together this guide to help you make informed decisions on how much plastic you want in your bedding.

Founded by Emily and Jonathan Attwood, sleep specialists scooms set out not only to offer the best bedding on the market with a simplified product offering, but also placed this question at the centre of all their product development. Taking the time to rigorously research every element from materials and manufacturing methods to packaging and end-of-life disposal, with the aim of creating a natural range that is free of plastics, toxins and chemicals.

Emily and Jonathan Attwood comment: "Whether it's duvets, pillows, mattresses or even bed linen, most people are unaware of how much plastic is present in the bedding industry. And with a never-ending list of options, it has become more and more confusing to buy the right sleep essentials whilst ensuring you're doing your part for the environment. The three main sources of plastic in the bedding industry lie in the synthetic fibres used to make the products, the plastics used to package them and memory foam."

The most common plastic in bedding is polyester. There are many different types of polyester, but the most common used in bedding is Polyethylene Terephthalate or PET, and this is made from a series of chemical processes using substances extracted from oil and coal. Both very fine, synthetic fibres that are made from this, microfibre and hollow fibre (often referred to as 'soft as down') were created as a man-made equivalent to natural down. With threads finer than one denier (that's about 1/5 the diameter of a human hair), both are cheap to mass produce in vast quantities.

As well as polluting the environment during the manufacturing process by using lots of energy, high temperatures and chemical catalysts, these microfibres like other microplastics, can enter the rivers, oceans and land food chains, as well as being present in the very air we breathe.

Similarly, memory foam, typically a type of polyurethane, is produced by an exothermic reaction between two petroleum or plant-based oils, polyols, isocyanates and reacting agents. Other additives such as flame retardants and formaldehyde-based adhesives can also be used, which may be hazardous to the environment.

What's more, it's not uncommon to notice a chemical off-gas smell when unpacking memory foam products. Caused by VOCs, these can cause respiratory conditions and memory foam products can continue to emit gasses even after gassing off.

The main concerns lie in the effects that these can all have on our health and the environment with nearly 70 million barrels of oil being used to each year to make polyester globally. They're a non-renewable, carbon-intensive resource that has a huge environmental impact and there are few recycling

options, with them typically ending up in landfill or the sea.

"It's with this extensive research that we developed the scooms range to ensure that only the finest quality, ethically sourced natural materials are used to produce our perfect Hungarian goose down duvet and pillow. We aim to make sure that no toxins or chemicals are used in our production in order to give you the best night's sleep in natural bedding, that will outlast any synthetic equivalents, whilst making our range biodegradable too. What's more, you'll find no unnecessary single use plastics in our packaging - we deliver our products in reusable fabric bags and recyclable cardboard boxes."

#### scooms Top Tips for Plastic-free Sleep:

- 1) Opt for duvets and pillows made from natural materials such as goose down and wool - they are biodegradable and use less energy in production.
- 2) Buy well and buy once. Invest in the best quality natural duvet and pillow and avoid bedding that is wrapped in single-use plastics.
- 3) When your natural duvet or pillow comes to the end of its life cycle, you can put the feathers and wool out for nesting birds.
- 4) If synthetic bedding is a must, then opt for recycled microfibre which is made from waste plastic PET bottles, using less energy to produce and reducing landfill.
- 5) If you're considering memory foam pillows/mattresses, then take a closer look at what they are made of to avoid any chemical nasties such as VOCs.
- 6) Reduce the number of times you wash a synthetic pillow or duvet to avoid it potentially shedding microfibres and introducing these into the water system.
- 7) Avoid disposing of your synthetic mattress in landfill. If it's in good condition, donate it to a charity who will reuse it. Many local authorities do not recycle old duvets, so the best advice is to put it out of the way in your loft - it may even add a little insulation.

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#### About scooms

scooms was founded by husband and wife team Jonathan and Emily Attwood with the aim to radically change duvet and pillow buying by creating the perfect duvet and pillow, combined with a great shopping experience and plastic free packaging.

Leave the nightmare of duvet buying behind - In search of a better night's sleep, busy mum of two Emily tried to buy the perfect duvet. With mind-boggling descriptions, claims, options and prices, shopping for bedding began giving her nightmares rather than a better night's sleep!

Faced with this frustration, Emily and husband Jonathan decided to launch a different type of bedding

brand, scooms.com, getting rid of unnecessary choices by offering just one perfect duvet and one perfect pillow using the best quality Hungarian goose down. Plus, one range of perfect bed linen made from 100% authentic Egyptian cotton.

After rigorously researching materials, exploring construction techniques and examining sleeping preferences, we identified the 7 key elements that we believe make up the perfect duvet: ethically sourced natural materials, temperature regulation, moisture control, body contouring, clever construction, allergen resistance and all-season comfort.