



## LESSON 8: "VEGAN 101"

The line between “vegan” and “plant-based” is often a blurry one when it comes to people’s understanding of the concept of veganism. Many people believe that veganism is only about the food we eat and it is therefore not uncommon to hear people say that they are vegan, when in fact they are eating vegan food, but are not living a vegan lifestyle. To make this line a little less blurry, today’s lesson is about the vegan lifestyle as a whole. So we’ll have a look at all aspects of veganism, not just food.

## **VEGAN - a short definition**

The word "vegan" refers to a lifestyle that rejects all animal products, that is to say all "foods" coming from animals as well as all products that are the result of animal exploitation. Even though veganism is becoming more and more common, many are still unfamiliar with the concept and have only heard of vegetarianism or in some cases a plant-based diet. While vegetarians don't eat any animal flesh (which, by the way, includes fish contrary to what many believe – people who still eat fish are referred to as "pescetarians"), those who follow a plant-based diet don't eat any animal products at all, which means no meat, no dairy, no eggs, no honey. Vegans, in addition to that, do not wear wool, silk, fur and leather. They don't use cosmetics tested on animals or containing animal by-products and they don't go to the zoo, aquarium and circus.

Here's the list of things to avoid when following a vegan lifestyle:

## **FOOD**

Meat: The flesh of all animals (beef, pork, chicken, fish, all sea food and every other living being...).

Animal by-products:

– Dairy: milk (from a cow, a goat or any other animal), cheese, yoghurt, cream, ice cream, butter...

What to look out for: hidden dairy products. Nowadays a lot of processed foods contain milk, some you probably never would have guessed, like most chips brands, vegetarian “meats” (some brands contain dairy and eggs) and even some dark chocolates. Other more obvious foods that contain dairy are cakes, muffins and some smoothies...

Check the ingredient list and look for anything resembling "milk" or "lactose"/"lact-".

Many foods, even though they don't list milk in their ingredient list, state that they "may contain traces" of it. That merely means that the factory that made them also makes foods that contain milk. They mention it for legal reasons in case of allergies, but generally speaking there is no need to worry and practically all vegans consume these foods.

- Eggs: This one's a bit annoying because there are many dairy free products that still contain some eggs, but you quickly get used to spotting these. The most important one is pasta, but if the product contains them there's usually a picture of eggs on the package. If you eat out, just ask the waiter or chef if there are any eggs in the pasta.

- Honey: this might be surprising to some, but honey is not considered vegan. Veganism avoids all products that result from the exploitation of animals, no matter how small. Some people who go vegan for health reasons still consume raw honey if they can find some that was produced in a way that doesn't harm the bees. I personally don't miss or crave honey at all, so I choose not to eat it. (if you love honey, try brown rice syrup or other vegan honey alternatives)

## CLOTHES

This one was a shocker for me when I went vegan, not because it came as a surprise, but because it made me realize just how many of my clothes came from animals. Vegans don't wear leather, wool, fur, cashmere, silk or any other type of animal skin or by-product. Although I've never worn fur and was always opposed to it, I had plenty of leather bags, shoes, woolen sweaters and silk blouses.

Anything you bought before going vegan is OK to keep, even though I personally don't feel comfortable wearing these clothes anymore, so I gave mine away. You could also donate your clothes to an animal shelter. They sometimes use donated fur coats and wool items to keep rescued animals warm during the winter.

## COSMETICS

There are cosmetic products that contain animal products and cosmetic products that have been tested on animals. Neither are vegan, but it is important to make the distinction simply because some companies like to blur the line and take pride in and even advertise the fact that they don't test on animals, yet their products contain animal by-products.

We live in a world where there is absolutely no need to test cosmetics on animals, but companies constantly strive to come out with the newest most exclusive ingredients and many countries unfortunately demand that these be tested on animals.

Anyone who's ever tried making sense of an ingredient list on a shampoo bottle will know that these are extremely confusing and not very comprehensive. It's therefore best to research vegan companies on the internet beforehand. Fortunately, more and more organic companies make the process a lot easier by labeling their products as VEGAN.

# VEGANRESET *vegan lifestyle*

Also look for these labels:



Some other personal hygiene and household products that may not be vegan are condoms (they often contain casein, which is derived from cow's milk) and candles (often made out of bee's wax). Also note that there are many vegan brands in different parts of the world, so check if you can find any that are close to where you live. That way you can support local businesses and, if you order online, save a lot on shipping costs.

Other helpful tools are Peta's cruelty free database (<http://features.peta2.com/shopcrueltyfree/>) and smart phone apps like "Is it Vegan?" that can help you when you're not sure whether a product is vegan or not.

## **HOUSEHOLD/CLEANING PRODUCTS**

As with cosmetics, cleaning products should neither contain animal products nor have been tested on animals in order to be vegan. This is where terms like "cruelty free" may be confusing, since they don't always exclude ingredients that come from animals but primarily refer to animal testing. I've listed a few vegan cleaning product brands on the list at the end of this lesson. If you want to keep it simple, you can also learn how to make your own eco-friendly and affordable cleaning products at home (vinegar works great!).

## **ENTERTAINMENT**

Since vegans are against every form of animal exploitation, this includes the use of animals for our entertainment, i.e. in zoos, rodeos and circuses. Some of my earliest childhood memories include watching exotic animals perform tricks in circuses, but I was never aware of the harsh reality these animals face. Wild animals are not supposed to be held in captivity and their suffering is immense. One of the biggest misconceptions is that people who aren't vegan are bad people. I think that they are just terribly unaware and misinformed, as was I for many, many years.

Once you become aware though, you can make the conscious decision to help end these animals' suffering by refusing to actively participate in it. One of the most educational documentaries that reveals the truth behind the entertainment industry is *Earthlings* (you can watch it for free on YouTube and many other websites by searching for “earthlings” or “earthlings documentary”).

*“When people say, “But zoos save endangered animals,” the truth is, “99 percent of all the animals at the zoo are UNENDANGERED. If zoos were only saving endangered animals, no one would complain. But zoos are a business. In fact, zoos are usually the #1 tourist attraction in every state.”*

*“It is impossible to use positive reinforcement with purely wild animals like elephants, lions, bears and tigers. Violence is the only way to make wild animals perform unnatural tricks. Training sessions are comprised of beatings in order to establish superiority. Blackjacks, hooks, iron bars, whips and sticks are used to beat the pride out of animals. That's why all circus trainers carry weapons like elephant hooks—which are pick-axe like devices—and whips for the lions, bears and tigers.”*

*“In the wilds of Africa and Asia, elephants walk 20 to 50 miles a day and take mud and dust baths as part of their natural behavior. However, elephants in the circus have their front, left legs and back, right legs chained up at all times when they are not on stage doing idiotic tricks. Not only can they not walk 20 to 50 miles a day, they can't even take one step. For image reasons, some circuses have started keeping elephants behind electrical fences. But these areas are unsuitable for two pound toy poodles let alone 5,000 pound elephants.”*

-Gary Yourofsky, animal rights activist [www.adaptt.org](http://www.adaptt.org)

**List of resources:**

Cosmetics/Makeup:

a.dorn ([www.adornnails.com](http://www.adornnails.com) and [www.adorncosmetics.com.au](http://www.adorncosmetics.com.au)) A Girl's Gotta Spa ([www.agirlsgottaspa.com](http://www.agirlsgottaspa.com))

ABBA ([www.pureabba.com](http://www.pureabba.com))

ALLA Cosmetics ([www.aillacosmetics.com](http://www.aillacosmetics.com))

Aromi ([www.aromibeauty.com](http://www.aromibeauty.com))

Au Naturele Cosmetics ([www.aunaturaleglow.com](http://www.aunaturaleglow.com))

Beautisol ([www.beautisol.com](http://www.beautisol.com))

Beauty Blender ([www.beautyblender.net](http://www.beautyblender.net))

Beauty Without Cruelty BWC ([www.beautywithoutcruelty.com](http://www.beautywithoutcruelty.com)) Biokleen ([www.biokleen.com](http://www.biokleen.com))

Blissoma ([www.blissoma.com](http://www.blissoma.com))

Box Naturals ([www.boxnaturals.com](http://www.boxnaturals.com))

Bronze Buffer ([www.bronzebuffer.com](http://www.bronzebuffer.com))

Bye Bye Parabens ([www.byebyeparabens.com](http://www.byebyeparabens.com))

Cocoon Apothecary ([www.cocoonapothecary.com](http://www.cocoonapothecary.com)) ColorProof ([www.colorproof.com](http://www.colorproof.com))

CoverFX ([www.coverfx.com](http://www.coverfx.com))

Cozette ([www.roquecozette.com](http://www.roquecozette.com))

Crazy Rumors ([www.crazyrumors.com](http://www.crazyrumors.com))

Crystal Body Deodorant ([www.thecrystal.com](http://www.thecrystal.com))

Dahlia ([www.dahlia.com](http://www.dahlia.com))

DermOrganic ([www.dermorganic.com](http://www.dermorganic.com))

DeVita Natural Skin Care ([www.devitaskincare.com](http://www.devitaskincare.com))

Dolma ([www.dolma-perfumes.co.uk](http://www.dolma-perfumes.co.uk))

Earthly Body ([www.facebook.com/EarthlyBodyInc](http://www.facebook.com/EarthlyBodyInc))

Eco Tools ([www.ecotools.com](http://www.ecotools.com))

Elysian Nail Lacquer ([www.elysiannailacquer.com](http://www.elysiannailacquer.com))

Ellovi ([www.ellovi.com](http://www.ellovi.com))

Emani ([www.emani.com](http://www.emani.com))

Everyday Minerals ([www.everydayminerals.com](http://www.everydayminerals.com))

EVOLVh Luxury Organic Hair Products ([www.evolvh.com](http://www.evolvh.com))  
FLO + THEO ([www.floandtheo.com](http://www.floandtheo.com))  
Forager Botanicals ([www.foragerbotanicals.com](http://www.foragerbotanicals.com))  
Furless ([www.furlesscosmetics.com.au](http://www.furlesscosmetics.com.au))  
Georgie Beauty ([www.georgiebeauty.com](http://www.georgiebeauty.com))  
Glam Natural ([www.glamnatural.com](http://www.glamnatural.com))  
Green Tidings ([www.facebook.com/GreenTidings](https://www.facebook.com/GreenTidings))  
Harvey Prince ([www.harveyprince.com](http://www.harveyprince.com))  
Hempz ([www.hempzbodycare.com](http://www.hempzbodycare.com))  
Hugo Naturals ([www.hugonaturals.com](http://www.hugonaturals.com))  
Hurraw! Balm ([www.hurrawbalm.com](http://www.hurrawbalm.com))  
Kaeng Raeng ([www.kaengraeng.com](http://www.kaengraeng.com))  
Kelley Quan New York ([www.kelleyquan.com](http://www.kelleyquan.com))  
Kester Black ([www.kesterblack.com](http://www.kesterblack.com))  
Kosia Naturals ([www.kosianaturals.com](http://www.kosianaturals.com))  
La Fresh Eco Beauty ([www.lafreshgroup.com/eco-beauty](http://www.lafreshgroup.com/eco-beauty))  
Laughing Devil Designs LLC ([www.laughingdevilbathandbeauty.com](http://www.laughingdevilbathandbeauty.com))  
Light Mountain Natural Hair Color & Conditioner ([www.light-mountain-hair-color.com](http://www.light-mountain-hair-color.com))  
Lime Crime ([www.limecrime.com](http://www.limecrime.com))  
Lina Hanson ([www.linahanson.com](http://www.linahanson.com))  
Lip Glosserie ([www.lipglosserie.com](http://www.lipglosserie.com))  
LVX ([www.shoplvx.com](http://www.shoplvx.com))  
Mad Hippie ([www.madhippie.com](http://www.madhippie.com))  
Mei Yin Naturopathics/ Skin Care ([www.meiyinskincare.com](http://www.meiyinskincare.com))  
Meow Meow Tweet ([www.meowmeowtweet.myshopify.com](http://www.meowmeowtweet.myshopify.com))  
Metamour Skin Care ([www.metamourskincare.com](http://www.metamourskincare.com))  
Modern Minerals ([www.modernmineralsmakeup.com](http://www.modernmineralsmakeup.com))  
Mr Bean Body Care ([www.mrbeanbodycare.com](http://www.mrbeanbodycare.com))  
MUN ([www.munskin.com](http://www.munskin.com))  
My Beauty Bunny ([www.mybeautybunny.com](http://www.mybeautybunny.com))  
My Konjac Sponge ([www.mykonjac sponge.com](http://www.mykonjac sponge.com))  
Nature's Gate ([www.natures-gate.com](http://www.natures-gate.com))  
nCLA ([www.shopncla.com](http://www.shopncla.com))  
North Coast Organics ([www.north-coast-organics.com](http://www.north-coast-organics.com))  
not.a.sponge\* ([www.notasponge.com](http://www.notasponge.com))

Obsessive Compulsive Cosmetics ([www.occmakeup.com](http://www.occmakeup.com)) OFRA Cosmetics ([www.ofracosmetics.com](http://www.ofracosmetics.com))  
O.R.G. SKINCARE ([www.orgskincare.com](http://www.orgskincare.com))  
Pacifica ([www.pacificabeauty.com](http://www.pacificabeauty.com))  
Pelle Beauty ([www.pellebeauty.com](http://www.pellebeauty.com))  
Phyrra ([www.phyrra.net](http://www.phyrra.net))  
piCture pOlish ([www.picturepolish.com.au](http://www.picturepolish.com.au))  
Preserve ([www.preserveproducts.com](http://www.preserveproducts.com))  
Priti NYC ([www.pritinyc.com](http://www.pritinyc.com))  
Relogy ([www.relogynow.com](http://www.relogynow.com))  
Replere ([www.replere.com](http://www.replere.com))  
Root Science ([www.shoprootscience.com](http://www.shoprootscience.com))  
Sappo Hill Soapworks ([www.sappohill.com](http://www.sappohill.com))  
Schmidt's Deodorant ([www.schmidtsdeodorant.com](http://www.schmidtsdeodorant.com)) Scotch Naturals ([www.scotchnaturals.com](http://www.scotchnaturals.com))  
Skintea Ochaya ([www.facebook.com/SkinteaOchaya](http://www.facebook.com/SkinteaOchaya)) ShiKai ([www.shikai.com](http://www.shikai.com))  
Soulstice Spa ([www.soulsticespa.com](http://www.soulsticespa.com))  
SpaRitual ([www.spiritual.com](http://www.spiritual.com))  
Swagger Cosmetics ([www.swaggercosmetics.com](http://www.swaggercosmetics.com))  
The All Natural Face ([www.theallnaturalface.com](http://www.theallnaturalface.com))  
The Fanciful Fox ([www.fancifulfox.bigcartel.com](http://www.fancifulfox.bigcartel.com))  
Tiki Bar Soap ([www.tikibarsoap.com](http://www.tikibarsoap.com))  
Trust Fund Beauty ([www.trustfundbeauty.com](http://www.trustfundbeauty.com))  
Condoms:  
B Condoms ([www.bcondoms.com](http://www.bcondoms.com))  
French Letter ([www.frenchlettercondoms.co.uk](http://www.frenchlettercondoms.co.uk))  
Glyde ([www.glydeamerica.com](http://www.glydeamerica.com) and [www.glyde-condoms.com](http://www.glyde-condoms.com))  
L Condoms ([www.thisisl.com](http://www.thisisl.com))  
RFSU ([www.store.veganessentials.com/rfsu-vegan-condoms-p2733.aspx](http://www.store.veganessentials.com/rfsu-vegan-condoms-p2733.aspx)) Sir  
Richard's ([www.sirrichards.com](http://www.sirrichards.com))  
Unique ([www.uniquecondom.com](http://www.uniquecondom.com))  
Candles:  
A Scent of Scandal ([www.ascentofscandal.com](http://www.ascentofscandal.com))  
Intoxicated Zodiac ([www.intoxicatedzodiac.com/candles\\_main.php](http://www.intoxicatedzodiac.com/candles_main.php))  
Pacifica Natural Soy Candles ([www.pacificabeauty.com/home-accents/soy-candles](http://www.pacificabeauty.com/home-accents/soy-candles))  
Purbliss Candle Co ([www.purbliss.com](http://www.purbliss.com))

Household/Cleaning products:

Allen's Naturally ([www.allensnaturally.com](http://www.allensnaturally.com)) Bi-o-kleen ([www.biokleenhome.com](http://www.biokleenhome.com))  
Bio-Pac Cleaning Products ([www.bio-pac.com](http://www.bio-pac.com)) Charlie's Soap  
([www.charliesoap.com](http://www.charliesoap.com)) Citra-Solv ([www.citrasolv.com](http://www.citrasolv.com))  
Clean Well ([www.cleanwelltoday.com](http://www.cleanwelltoday.com)) Country Save ([www.countrysave.com](http://www.countrysave.com)) Earth  
Friendly Products ([www.ecos.com](http://www.ecos.com)) Eco Nuts ([www.econutssoap.com](http://www.econutssoap.com))  
Grab Green ([www.grabgreenhome.com](http://www.grabgreenhome.com))  
Method Cleaning Products ([www.methodhome.com](http://www.methodhome.com)) Mia Rose ([www.miarose.com](http://www.miarose.com))  
Mrs. Meyers ([www.mrsmeyers.com](http://www.mrsmeyers.com))  
Nature Clean ([www.naturecleanliving.com](http://www.naturecleanliving.com))  
New Leaf Clean ([www.newleafclean.com](http://www.newleafclean.com))  
Sound Earth ([www.soundearth.com](http://www.soundearth.com))  
Sun and Earth ([www.sunandearth.com](http://www.sunandearth.com))

Shoes:

Beyond Skin ([www.beyondskin.com](http://www.beyondskin.com))  
Neuaura ([www.neuaurashoes.com](http://www.neuaurashoes.com))  
Olsenhaus ([www.olsenhaus.com](http://www.olsenhaus.com))  
Vegetarian Shoes ([www.vegetarian-shoes.co.uk](http://www.vegetarian-shoes.co.uk)) Zoe & Zac ([www.zoeandzac.net](http://www.zoeandzac.net))  
Vegan Apparel:

Blood Tight Apparel ([www.bloodtightapparel.com](http://www.bloodtightapparel.com)) Herbivore Clothing  
([www.herbivoreclothing.com](http://www.herbivoreclothing.com)) Vaute Couture ([www.vautecouture.com](http://www.vautecouture.com))  
V Apparel ([www.vapparelus.com](http://www.vapparelus.com))

And some online stores that sell vegan cosmetics and other vegan products:

Pangea -The Vegan Store ([www.veganstore.com](http://www.veganstore.com)) Shop Vegan  
([www.shopvegan.co.uk](http://www.shopvegan.co.uk))  
Vegan Cuts ([www.vegancuts.com](http://www.vegancuts.com))  
Vegan Essentials ([www.veganessentials.com](http://www.veganessentials.com)) Vegan Perfection  
([www.veganperfection.com.au](http://www.veganperfection.com.au))  
Denise Roobol (vegan handbags – [www.deniseroobol.com](http://www.deniseroobol.com))  
Matt&Nat ([www.mattandnat.com](http://www.mattandnat.com))