



AVOID  
THE SIX SINS OF  
GREENWASHING



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### Sin of the Hidden Trade Off:

Does the product focus only on one or two environmental issues while ignoring others that may also be important? Every product has multiple environmental impacts and truly greener products try to address them all.

**Sin of No Proof:** Does the product offer evidence of its claim, either on the package or on the company website? Company websites and respected certifications can provide proof.

**Sin of Vagueness:** When you really think about it, what does the claim ("environmentally-friendly", for example) really mean? Does it provide details for all environmental impacts of the product like the amount of packaging used, the manufacturing process and how the product is disposed?

**Sin of Irrelevance:** Are the green claims true of all products in the category? Remember lots of things are "recyclable", and CFCs (which cause ozone depletion) were banned 30 years ago.

**Sin of Fibbing:** Can the manufacturer back up certified organic or green claims? Can they prove their certification (ie. by being listed on the certification body's website)?

### Sin of Lesser of Two Evils:

Is the claim trying to make you feel "green" about a product category that is basically "ungreen"? Is organic tobacco, for example, really a green product?