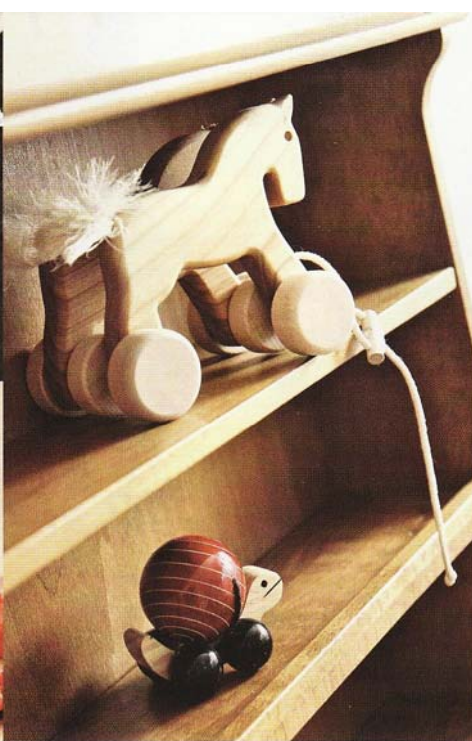




Paint-your-own dinosaurs and natural modelling clay are a big hit



Organic cotton clothes are greeted with smiles

an 'Eco Ball': a plastic ball filled with pellets which is supposed to ionise the water, thus drawing off the dirt. That's the theory. In practice, I have no idea if it works, as when I get the washing out, it doesn't smell of anything, which is the way I normally check if clothes are clean.

Still, I persevere and put my clothes in the tumble dryer - yes, I should line-dry, but you couldn't swing a hamster in my garden - adding some spiky rubber 'Dryer Balls'. The theory behind these is that they raise the pile of your clothes, making them feel soft without the need for fabric conditioner. They work!

Sunday Baby carrier time.

Now, we've all seen those earth mothers who have a bit of fabric wound round themselves a hundred times, with a baby peeking out. I've never attempted it, convinced my own tot would fall out. Thankfully, I have the organic Ergo New Generation baby carrier instead - a far less complex backpack. Even so, it comes with an instructional DVD.

Deciding to wing it, I lie the baby down in the carrier on the bed, lower myself onto and into it, and hoist the baby up. I feel comfortable. She doesn't. She's used to seeing my face. I walk around a bit but she's really screaming now, so I have to take it off. Maybe if I'd started her on it earlier, we'd have been fine.

Only when I dab various lotions on her - I have loads to try - does she calm down. My favourites are the shampoos and body washes by Green People. And my boys love their mandarin-flavoured toothpaste. I also like Spiezia Organics' matt glass packaging.

The verdict

Being a fully paid-up yummy eco-mummy can take time, but it doesn't have to. The organic convenience food was an absolute boon and the wooden baby toys a revelation. All the lotions and potions were great quality, as was

the clothing, although I think you have to pick your organic kids' clothes carefully, to avoid the poor things being bullied at school.

The difficult areas were washing and nappies. I like my clothes to smell of something when they've finished their cycle, so I won't be sticking with the washing ball. I also lost confidence in the cloth nappies, but the eco-disposables were a good compromise.

Going eco does come at a price - everything was that little bit more expensive than normal. However, if you're buying less, and keeping things for longer - a key green aim - I imagine it would even out in the long-term. Given time, I might just become a enviromum yet.' □

Chemical-free baby lotions



HERE'S WHAT LOWRI TRIED...

- Tushies Nappies, £8.75; Green Baby Snug To Fit Nappies, £32 for four; Superfit Pant, £8.99, all from www.greenbaby.co.uk.
- Eco Balls, £34.99; and Dryer Balls, £9.99, both from www.greenbaby.co.uk.
- Chopper T-shirt; Drum and Trace T-shirt, both £17.50, Green Eyed Monster from www.greentulip.co.uk.
- Wooden fair-trade Bibbo Stacking Clown, £12.50; Pullalong Horses, £15; Herbivore Dinosaur kit, £10, all from www.greentulip.co.uk.
- Organic Children Lavender Bath & Shower Gel, £6.49; Organic Children Lavender Shampoo, £6.49; Organic Babies Baby Wash Chamomile, £5.99; Organic Children Mandarin Toothpaste, £3.25, all from www.greenpeople.co.uk.
- Organic Nappy Salve, £12.50; Organic Baby Massage Oil, £19.50; Baby Room Fragrance, £16.50; Organic Arnica ointment, £15.75, all from www.spieziaorganics.com.
- Organic cotton romper suit, £13.50; beanie hat, £6, both BoBelle, www.bobelle.co.uk.
- Hand-woven trousers, £14; organic jeans, £24.95; bamboo fleece hoody, £22; Movement kit, £40, all from www.tattybumpkin.com. Tatty Bumpkin is also available from www.adili.com.
- Family organic box; £23.50; organic baby box, £10.95; Plum Baby food range, from £1.99, all from www.abelandcole.co.uk.
- *Planet Organic: Baby And Toddler Cookbook* by Lizzie Vann (Dorling Kindersley, £9.99); *The Fairtrade Everyday Cookbook* by Sophie Grigson (Dorling Kindersley, £16.99), both from www.amazon.co.uk.
- Gingerbread Men, £1.49; Moon Biscuits, £1.49; Rice Cakes, 95p, all Organix, available in supermarkets and from www.organix.com.
- Organic Ergo New Generation baby carrier, £85.99, from www.naturalnursery.co.uk.