

FIX YOUR
FASHION

Laura Strutt

HOW TO
CREATE
AN ETHICAL
WARDROBE

Change your mindset without compromising your style

FIX YOUR FASHION

To Ethan Wolf and Elkie Raven – fiercely and forever.

A STUDIO PRESS BOOK

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FIX YOUR FASHION

I see you, looking into your wardrobe thinking, 'What shall I wear today?'

Well, I'm here to tell you that ethical fashion looks great on you! Maybe that wasn't exactly what you were expecting to hear. But what if I told you that a few easy changes could transform the global impact of your wardrobe without you having to wave goodbye to style? This is your opportunity to discover how a positive mindset shift can spark an incredible change.

There is simply no denying that I have a long-standing love affair with clothes and that isn't changing any time soon. Like so many of us, I am no stranger to coming home with bags fit to bursting with new clothes, full of excitement. After all, what we wear is so much a part of who we are. But recently, I have been learning there is a lot more to what we wear than meets the eye.

Like a worn-out sweater, the world of fast fashion is unravelling. There is much we need to learn about the environmental and human impact of our clothes, and what our shopping habits and clothing purchases really mean for the planet and humankind. This book will help you to untangle the concept of fast fashion: what it means, who is responsible and the very real impacts that it has. You will also discover that, thankfully, options for change are everywhere.

While the outfit we choose to step out in will have us looking and feeling our best, we can also use it as a means to push for change. The truth about how our clothes were made and the impact they have on the environment can make for difficult

reading. This book will empower you with lots of off-the-peg ideas that will make a real difference to your impact.

As if you're meeting with a personal stylist, browsing through these pages you will find tips, tricks and insider how-tos for creating an ethical wardrobe in a way that fits with your style, shopping habits and personality.

I'm just a girl standing in front of her wardrobe, asking you to join me. Together, we can make a difference!



CHAPTER 1

WHAT'S WRONG WITH FASHION?



WHAT IS FAST FASHION?

We all want to look our best without breaking the bank. But, at the same time, we don't want to support an industry that doesn't respect our planet or its workforce.

'Fast fashion' is now the most common way people buy clothes. So most of us are already playing a part in supporting practices that we would rather not be encouraging. But we aren't here to play the shame game. The concept that evolved into today's fast fashion business model has been around for decades. It redefined the industry to such an extent that it is now difficult to avoid.

We can trace the roots of fast fashion back to the launch of a number of household brands, which introduced collections of limited availability to keep the production costs down. Shoppers were encouraged to snap up clothes as they came in store and to pop back more frequently to check for new items. To keep up with this fast turnaround, brands often took control of the entire supply chain, from overseeing the sewing to running the shop floor. New designs were hitting the racks as often as every two weeks. Many brands started to offer the latest trends at lightning speed and, importantly, at purse-friendly prices. This quick-response style of making and selling clothes took off and soon became the norm.

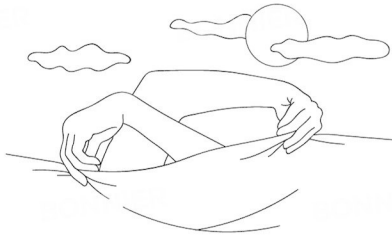
Before this, clothing was made in a very different way and the entire process was much slower. It could take months to create a design, source the fabrics and produce the finished piece. The fast fashion business model sources cheap materials and uses low-cost labour to turn high-end style into inexpensive garments in record times.

With new collections being promoted more frequently, consumers were encouraged to shop for clothing more often, making purchases based solely on trends rather than our needs. We have been told to 'shop til we drop' from an ever-changing selection of affordable collections. And of course when you look great, you feel great, so it's no wonder that the phenomenon caught on and changed our shopping habits.

If it has crossed your mind that having affordable new clothes each month sounds too good to be true, then you are right. According to United Nations News, the fashion industry is the second most polluting industry in the world and is a supporter of unsafe working practices. Fashion consumption has changed rapidly in recent years but by making an effort to change our habits, we can make a positive impact on the fashion industry.

SPEEDY SERVICE

In December 2019, the Financial Times noted that Zara's super-fast supply chain could take products from design to sale in just four to six weeks, developing a whopping 24,000 products a year.



PLANET PROBLEMS

Looking at your favourite pair of jeans, it can seem strange to think that the trousers that never fail to make you feel fabulous might be having a negative impact on the planet. Figures reported in 2018 showed that the fashion industry was responsible for emitting an estimated 1.2 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e) per year. This is more carbon than is produced by all international flights and maritime shipping combined. As reported by the UN Environment Programme, the fashion industry is responsible for a staggering 8 percent of global carbon emissions.

The key to solving the entire climate crisis may not be stuffed inside our closets, but one look at our bulging collections might act as a catalyst to bring about positive change. Glossy magazines and catwalk shows give us a sense of wall-to-wall glamour, showcasing perfectly coiffed models and collections that inspire, excite and ignite our senses. So it's no wonder we are practically picking our jaws off the floor when told that this is one of the most polluting industries, with the fast fashion sector being a primary contributor.

DID YOU KNOW?

It takes around 7500 litres of water to make a single pair of jeans. That equates to the average amount of water we drink over seven years.

So why are our clothes such big culprits when it comes to climate change? The production process impacts the environment at every stage. Most garments require vast quantities of water to produce and many fabrics use harmful chemicals in the production process. There are also huge amounts of energy and resources needed for garment production, transportation into stores and, ultimately, the disposal of clothing at the end of its short lifespan. It's true that almost everything we do has an environmental impact of some sort, but the big problem here is the rate at which the production process has been growing.

Activists have been challenging us to think in a new way with 'circular fashion' in mind. Circular fashion means designing and producing clothes in an ethical and sustainable way, using them for as long as possible, before disposing of them without harming the planet. Some fashion designers and brands are now following suit, thinking of innovative ways they can become more sustainable.

PEOPLE MATTER

As well as having an impact on the planet, fast fashion affects people, too. The fashion industry is one of the most labour-intensive sectors and the statistics are mind blowing. There are more than 40 million people working in garment factories worldwide. Some 85 percent of those workers are women and the lowest reported wages are just \$3 a day. With eye-opening statistics coming to light in recent years, it's no wonder people are coming together to make a change.

No matter what your style is, you will be familiar with the term 'sweatshops', which refers to garment factories that are cramped to the point of overcrowding and pay workers a tiny wage. Fast-paced schedules and barebones budgets call for

teams that can produce garments at speed, where safety is often of little concern. Those working in unsafe conditions are risking their lives to make our clothes. These workers are part of communities who often find themselves locked in a cycle of poverty, as they need to earn money but have very few options other than the 'opportunities' presented by global fashion labels.

Sweatshops are most common in South East Asia, China, India and parts of Central and South America, but they also exist in Europe and the UK.

In garment factories in the UK, there have been reports of workers earning hourly rates well under the National Minimum Wage, as well as non-COVID-19 safe environments. Allegations of this type show that we shouldn't confuse a label that says 'Made in the UK' with ethical production methods.

Now is the time to ask the question, 'Who made my clothes?'

Tragic Timeline

In the last decade alone, there have been several disasters that have rocked garment workers.



WHAT'S YOUR FASHION FOOTPRINT?

Just like footprints on a sandy beach, everything we buy and wear leaves a mark of some description on the planet.

Fashion is the face that we show to the world. Our clothes reflect our personalities, professions, hobbies and leisure choices. But our clothes also tell another story; they reveal the impact that we have on the planet.

Read each question and circle the answer that best describes you. Count up the results to discover your fashion footprint.

Did you know?

You can calculate your fashion footprint using the website [thredUP's](https://www.thredUP.com) online calculator. This tool provides an indication of your CO₂ emissions, plus loads of tips for reducing them.

1 *HOW OFTEN DO YOU GO SHOPPING FOR CLOTHES?*

- A It would be easier to ask when I'm not shopping!
- B Weekly. My favourite shop knows me by my name.
- C It's a monthly treat with my friends.
- D I'm guided by the change in seasons throughout the year.
- E If it's more than once a year the stars have truly aligned.

2 *DO YOU RE-SELL OUTFITS YOU'VE FALLEN OUT OF LOVE WITH?*

- A No, clothes get pushed to the back of the wardrobe by new items.
- B I run out of steam when clearing out my closet and rarely sell anything.
- C Every now and then I sell some items, usually to fund a new dress.
- D I like to top up my clothing budget so I sell several items a year.
- E I'm so good at this it's basically my job - want to add me on Depop?

3 *YOUR GO-TO JACKET HAS A LOOSE BUTTON, DO YOU...*

- A Throw it out. It's dead to me.
- B Hang it at the back of the closet and hope it miraculously repairs itself.
- C Ship it off to a friend who is nifty with a needle.
- D Put it on the mending pile until there are a few things that need TLC.
- E I run a tight ship. No buttons stay loose on my watch.

4 *HOW OFTEN DO YOU BUY PRE-LOVED CLOTHES?*

- A I don't think I've ever worn anything that isn't new.
- B I only buy second-hand when it seems new and rarely find anything in charity shops.
- C I like to mix and match new and second-hand clothes.
- D I have a loyalty card at the vintage store.
- E You can't look this unique by shopping on the high street.

5 *HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT REPEATING YOUR OUTFITS?*

- A I would never repeat an outfit, so my wardrobe changes a lot.
- B I have so many clothes that repeating outfits has never been an issue.
- C I'm happy to re-wear things as long as I think no one will notice.
- D I mix and match to keep my look fresh and make repeats less obvious.
- E If I love an outfit, and it makes me feel fabulous, I'll happily wear it time and again.

6 *WOULD YOU SHOP WITH ETHICAL BRANDS?*

- A They sound a bit too 'hippy' for me.
- B I can't keep up with who are the good guys and the bad guys.
- C I've started looking for ethical brands and like what I've found so far.
- D I have several new pieces ready to 'add to cart'.
- E I have them bookmarked as my go-to brands.

What's the score?

Mostly As: Fast Fashionista
Shopping and style are top priorities for you, but you are ready to learn about the impacts of fast fashion and make positive changes. You'll be best dressed in the fashion revolution!

Mostly Bs: Savvy Stylist
You love to keep up with trends and want to stand out in a crowd. You are ready to bring your A-game and discover how to remain stylish while being more considerate to the planet.

Mostly Cs: Blended Beauty
You are a beautiful blend of ultra-stylish and eco-friendly. You are ready to level-up by learning more about ethical purchases and embracing more sustainable options in your daily life.

Mostly Ds: Magnificent Mindset
Understanding how our choices make a difference to the planet and the people around us is important to you. Your goal is to bring your strong sense of personal style in line with circular fashion ideas.

Mostly Es: Conscious Consumer
Making sustainability cool is your priority. You are keen to make ethical choices with purchases and garment care while learning more about how you can have a positive impact.

BREAKING THE CYCLE

The facts of fast fashion make for uncomfortable reading. But don't let it bring you down, there is a silver lining. You are not alone in wanting to make a change, or to turn the world of fast fashion on its head. This is the perfect time to join an ever-growing group of stylish people blazing a trail for the fashion revolution.

The current fast fashion cycle of overproduction and overconsumption is a business model that has been carefully constructed. It's so much the norm, it's hard to think of a high street store that doesn't boast about new styles every week.

But don't panic! You don't have to pledge to never set foot in another high street store or throw away everything you own that isn't from an ethical brand. There are lots of ways that you can tweak your shopping habits to move towards a more sustainable, circular fashion model.

The Pyramid to
Fix Your Fashion



MAKE A CHANGE

SHOP SMART

Where we shop is just as important as what we shop for. Try to support ethical and sustainable brands if you buy new. Many eco-savvy fashion fans also look to vintage and second-hand stores, online marketplaces and rental agencies to keep their look fresh.

Try today...

Ask a friend if there is anything in your collection they have their eye on and arrange an outfit swap.

BE FIBRE AWARE

Most new purchases are for their aesthetic, but the materials that make up your clothes could be polluting the environment. Many man-made materials are produced with harmful chemicals and can shed microplastics when they're washed.

Try today...

Look for items made from natural materials, such as cotton and linen. Or try environmentally friendly options, lyocell or tencel.

LOVE AND RE-WEAR

Stick to quality over quantity when it comes to purchases and only buy items you truly love. If your closet is bursting at the seams, this might be the time to assess what you really need.

Try today...

Challenge yourself to style a single garment into a whole week of different looks using only what you have in your closet.

CARE AND REPAIR

It is no surprise that the better we care for our possessions, the longer they last. Take the time to launder, store and repair your garments, shoes and accessories to prolong their life.

Try today...

Rescue items that have a dropped hem or loose button. Have a go at repairing them yourself (see chapter 8) or take to a tailor or dry cleaners for some TLC.



CHAPTER 2

YOUR FASHION MINDSET

MINDSET TEST

By identifying your fashion mindset you can spot your danger zones and the areas where you can start to make a positive change. Read the descriptions to find your fashion mindset.

■ Fashion is your lifeblood and shopping is an artform. Don't be surprised if your friends hit you up as their personal stylist. With your excellent eye for creating stand-out looks, your wardrobe is brimming with an enviable collection of high street, designer and pre-loved pieces.

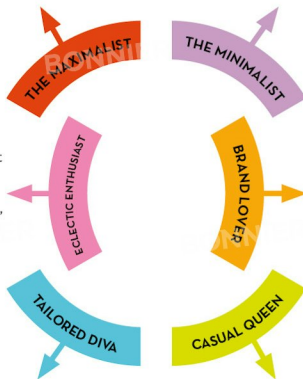
■ While none of your friends could pinpoint your style, they would agree that you are renowned for creating statement looks. With pieces from charity shops, online auctions and rummage sales, will you arrive looking like Rihanna or channelling Stevie Nicks?

■ Sleek lines and classic silhouettes are your raison d'être. Your closet is a shrine to the careful work of skilled stitchers. With so many pieces to mix and match, you can whip up a fresh tailored style in no time.

■ Your wardrobe looks like something from a documentary on home organisation. You know what you like and you have unflinching confidence in how to put together outfits using your carefully curated capsule collection.

■ Your love affair with labels is undeniable. You have your favourite stores and brands and you look so good in them they should have you on the payroll. Having your finger on the pulse helps you spot a catwalk dupe on the high street from twenty paces.

■ Nobody makes blue jeans and a slouchy sweatshirt look as good as you. Your mastery of the French tuck and ability to elevate loungewear makes you the envy of those who dream of pulling off laid-back looks.



THE MINDSET	THE DANGER ZONE	THE POSITIVE CHANGE
THE MAXIMALIST	Overstuffed wardrobes are often full of poor quality items.	Invest in fewer, quality pieces you will cherish for years to come.
THE MINIMALIST	The desire to create the perfect capsule collection can be overwhelming, leading to overbuying.	Take your time to find the right pieces. Refining your style into key items won't happen overnight.
BRAND LOVER	Having go-to stores and designers can mean you keep returning to unethical brands to shop for your distinctive style.	Research your top brands and see how they stack up ethically, then shop around for alternatives.
CASUAL QUEEN	Comfortable, casual-wear fabrics often feature man-made fibres, such as polyester, which shed during the wash and pollute our waterways.	Check the fabric composition before you buy, opting for organic and natural fibres where possible.
TAILORED DIVA	Crisp collections of tailored clothing may mean you're on first-name terms with the local dry cleaner.	Check if your local dry cleaner uses green cleaning products and air clothing as much as possible.
ECLECTIC ENTHUSIAST	Buying pre-loved clothing can be a gamble, especially when purchased online. Bad fits, old stains or rips can mean you never wear certain items.	Build your skills with a needle and thread. Try your hand at altering and adapting clothes to suit your needs.

GET THEM ON

Who doesn't love the endorphin rush of buying a new dress? Whether it's new, pre-loved, bang-on-trend or designer, it's no wonder that as a nation our wardrobe is bulging.

If it feels so good, how can it be so bad? The truth is, buying isn't all bad. If we're making conscious choices by wearing our clothes more and mending them as needed, then really, what's the harm?

But have you ever thought about how much and how often you buy? This is often a closely guarded secret, kept between a shopper and their bank account. According to Greenpeace's findings in 2017, we are buying far more than ever before. The average person buys a whopping 60 percent more items of clothing than 15 years previously, and people are keeping their clothes for half as long.

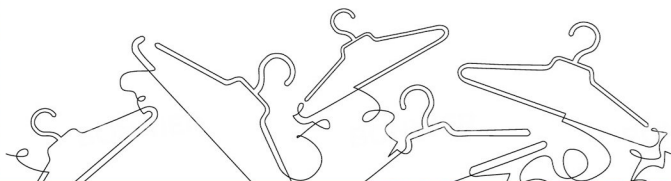
In the UK, the closets in our homes are packed with clothes worth more than £4000 per person. Look at the clothes you have hanging up. If I told you that you had a few thousand pounds to invest in your wardrobe, do you think you would be looking at the same collection of clothes that you have now?

It is startling to think that each item is only worn an average of seven times before being discarded, according to a study in 2015 by the charity Barnardo's. So, if we're only wearing each item for, effectively, one week before dumping it, how is it that we still have an abundance of clothing?

The 'more is more' approach to clothes shopping needn't be a problem in itself, but check that you are wearing the clothes you own. That may sound silly, but are there pieces hanging in your wardrobe waiting to be worn, or that you are simply hanging on to for the sake of it? Ask yourself, are those pieces really serving you? Or have you been buying for the sake of buying?

FLIP IT

Do you want to see which items in your wardrobe you actually wear? Flip the hangers so that they are facing the 'wrong' way in your closet. Each time you wear something, replace it on a hanger facing the correct way. By the end of the month, you will get a clear picture of what you have and haven't worn.



MIND GAMES

Nothing good comes from sitting in front of your wardrobe lamenting your spending habits. It's not always easy to change, but setting yourself a challenge can give you the boost you need to stick to new behaviours. So shrug off the blues and switch your mindset.

There are two distinct types of mindset: a growth mindset or a fixed mindset. When we want to give things a shake up, it's time to head over to the growth side. Read the 10 steps below and start the journey to challenge your thinking!

1

Ditch the guilt

Buyer's remorse is real and it's hard to shake off the feeling of guilt that comes with unworn items hanging in your closet. But be kind to yourself. Allow yourself to feel the emotion and use it as a positive going forward. Focus on ways you can reduce your shopping habits or clear out your closet.

2

Celebrate the re-wear

Ditch last season's concept that outfit repeating is a fashion faux pas. Challenge yourself to use your unique fashion sense to find ways to re-wear and re-style your favourite pieces into a week's worth of outfits.

3

Treasured items

Rather than simply thinking of your clothes as things hanging in your wardrobe, reframe them as something special or memorable. The suit you wore when you nailed that interview. The little black dress that never fails you at elegant events. It's time to treasure them all.

4

Take your time

There's no doubting the rush of endorphins we get when we shop for something new. But if you carefully consider each new purchase in the same way you would a luxury item, it will give you time to pause and reflect. Enjoy the process of curating your clothing over time.

5

Live in the moment

For we FOMO sapiens, it can be hard to stop our minds from drifting to the next best thing. Rather than saving items for special occasions, wear your favourite pieces all the time to keep you focused on what you already own.

6

Want the wow

When you're clearing out your closet you will likely discover items that simply no longer wow you. Don't hold on to them for the sake of it: give yourself permission to pass them on to someone who will love them. Either donate or sell to share the love.

7

The perfect fit

Everyone is guilty of holding on to clothes that don't fit their bodies or lifestyle anymore. If you still love the item, think about getting it altered to fit, or get crafty and re-work the piece into something new. If in doubt, pass it along.

8

Capsule style

Be your own stylist. Keep photos or notes of items that speak to you and fit with your style - colours that make you happy, cuts and fabrics that flatter. Build on these basics to help create your perfect wardrobe.

9

Set targets

List your goals, aims and values when it comes to your current wardrobe and new purchases. It has been proven that if we write down our goals, we feel more committed to making them a reality, so this will help you stick to your guns when you spot a to-die-for item on sale.

10

Don't sweat it

Don't get hung up on the occasions you fall short of your new goals; creating new habits takes practice. For every time you feel like you don't hit the mark, you will no doubt find ten times you have excelled. Keep at it!

THE WANT FACTOR

Sustainability advocates recommend trying to understand the difference between when you truly need something and when you just want something. There is no inherent harm in wanting something because it's lovely. The problem is when you want multiple things, frequently!

Nobody wants you to ditch shopping for good and live out the rest of your days sporting a sack. But almost all of us have closets that focus on quantity over quality. Taking a moment to make conscious decisions will make a huge difference to your impact, without you needing to go cold turkey.

Reality Check

Run this quick check on your closet to identify the elements that work with your lifestyle.

- Do your clothes fit your lifestyle?
- Ignore the label, are they a good fit?
- Do you have a minimal number of duplicates?
- Do you have a selection of everyday basics?
- If you were shopping right now, would you buy this item again?

CHANGE IT UP

Your wardrobe is likely to change a few times in your life as your body shape, circumstances, jobs, favourite leisure activities and more change. A collection of clothing that works for you is a ticket to feeling fabulous!

The next time you're clicking 'add to cart' with wild abandon, try running your potential purchases through this handy chart.



THE PERFECT EDIT

When we think of a capsule collection, one of two images is likely to spring to mind: either a stoic who has renounced their worldly possessions, or a Parisian fashionista who always looks unachievably chic. But a capsule wardrobe is simply your personal style edit.

Building a capsule wardrobe is an exercise in getting to know your body, style and needs. It's a way of bringing together a collection that contains your favourite items: clothes that suit you, that fit your lifestyle and body shape at this moment and this season. And by season we mean weather, not fashion!

Consider packing items away each season - that way you can revisit them later in the year and feel like you've got a whole new collection. Then, shop less often and with more intention. Work with the pieces you regularly wear to curate a selection of garments that you can restyle into different outfits. Pieces that you can mix and match are always a good buy.

Create your collection

When building your capsule wardrobe, you need to think of several different elements that work together. Using the chart, start at Level One and work your way down to Level Four. The amount you need for each level will be down to lifestyle and personal choice.

START HERE

LEVEL ONE: THE FOUNDATIONS

This is the base of your collection and will comprise of trousers, skirts, dresses and tops. A mix of darker colours in black or navy can be paired with a selection of neutrals in white, cream, grey or camel. And yes, leopard is a neutral!

LEVEL TWO: THE COLOUR POP

Select your colour palette. This can be one accent shade, a couple of your favourite colours or a trio of complementary or clashing colours, depending on your style. These pieces will bring your style and personality to the capsule.

LEVEL THREE: THE TOP UPS

Layers are a great addition to any wardrobe: think jackets and jumpers. They work in prints, florals, stripes or plain. Tie these into your colour pop palette or opt for foundation shades.

LEVEL FOUR: THE FINAL FRONTIER

Add shoes and accessories in any of the colours from your foundation or colour pop palettes. This is a great place to add some individuality to outfits - think of these as the cherry on top of the cake!

FASHION RESOLUTION: START RIGHT NOW

Now you've learned the basics, hopefully you are ready to dive in and begin making changes. There is a lot to learn and plenty you can change. But where to start? It might feel like you're standing at the bottom of a mountain, but here are a few ideas to get you started on that climb. Refer back to your fashion mindset from pages 22-23 to get tailored tips for your style.

THE MAXIMALIST

No Shopping Month

Dare yourself to go on a shopping freeze. That's right, challenge yourself not to buy a single piece of new clothing. How long do you think you can brave it? A week, a month? Hold out for as long as you can. You will discover that fortune really does favour the brave!

THE MINIMALIST

Ditch the Dryer

The tumble dryer is an undeniable saviour on those days when you're running late. And fluffy, spa-esque towels are a luxury that you might not be ready to ditch. So, try challenging yourself to a month without using the tumble drier. Slip dresses and tops onto hangers as soon as you whip them from the washer or peg them on the line for tumble-free drying.

THE BRAND LOVER

Sell, Sell, Sell

If you love it but never wear it, now might be the time to set it free. Or, rather, cash in on those pieces that never seem to get an outing, but that will be desirable to someone else.

Set aside a bundle of clothes and list them for sale. Experiment with different sites and apps to see which works best for you... and voila, you will have a cash pot ready for your next must-have investment!

THE CASUAL QUEEN

Embrace your Personal Style

Fixing your fashion is about starting from within, whether you're already confident in your own style, enjoy experimenting or are still on a journey to discover what lights you up.

Focus on what looks good on you and what you enjoy wearing. Think about your personal style over trends. Keep these thoughts close to your heart when you're shopping, swapping or culling your closet.

THE TAILORED DIVA

The Great Re-wear

Let's cancel the idea that re-wearing clothes is a faux pas. There is a new sheriff in town, and this one is the master of reworking an outfit! Challenge yourself to restyle your favourite items for one week. Flex your inner stylist and see how many days you can reinvent an outfit before you have to repeat.

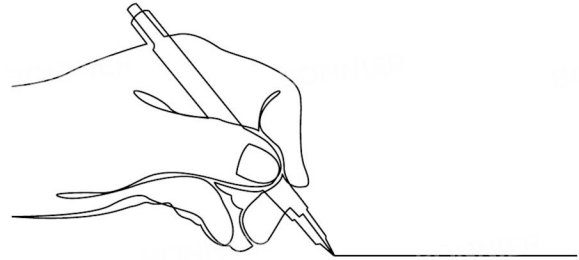
THE ECLECTIC ENTHUSIAST

Swap it Up

How often does something that someone else is wearing catch your eye? This could be the perfect time to raid your style sister's closet and have a swap session. Not only will you get the chance to experiment with different outfits, but you will get that buzz of having something new.

Rethink, Refashion, Upcycle

Go big or go home. Why not shorten the hem on that skirt that doesn't sit quite right? Or replace the buttons on the shirt you love, but never wear? If you weren't wearing it anyway, you have nothing to lose and might just gain a new favourite piece that is completely unique! See chapters eight and nine for DIY tips.



WRITE IT DOWN

It can take time to build a new, positive habit. Try keeping a journal of your progress to refer back to if you start losing focus.

Time to Donate

Real talk: not everything that is lurking at the back of your drawers is going to bring in the big bucks at auction. Look at what might still have some life in it and donate it to your local charity or community group. Or, if it's past its best, send it off for textile recycling. See chapter three for more on this.



CHAPTER 3

CLEARING OUT YOUR CLOSET



THE GREAT UNWORN

Could it be that your clothes are a collection of ornaments wedged into drawers and swinging from hangers? A survey carried out by WeightWatchers in 2017 discovered that 55 percent of us have clothes that we have never worn. This is because one in ten people surveyed refused to throw away clothes that didn't fit them or were of no use to them.

The irony is not lost on us... so many of us stand in front of bulging wardrobes every day lamenting that we have nothing to wear. So why are we hoarding clothing that doesn't work for us, yet still hitting our favourite stores to load up on more? The same WeightWatchers survey revealed that UK shoppers own £10 billion worth of clothes they do not wear. A quarter of those asked said that clothes remained unworn while they waited to lose weight to fit into them. A further 10 percent of people were waiting for those items to come back into style before re-wearing them.

If things are ringing true, you can rest easy knowing that you aren't alone! And the solution isn't going to come as much of a shocker. It's time we rolled up our sleeves and cleaned out those clothes.

BACK OF THE CLOSET

Statistics show that, on average, over half of the clothes in our wardrobe have never even been worn!

How many new-with-tags items do you own?

Before we open the wardrobe doors and drawers, the first thing we will need to ditch is the guilt. We have so many emotions woven into the fabric of our clothes. It can trigger big feelings when we acknowledge that we didn't lose the weight we'd planned to for those jeans, or that the dream holiday we bought that dress for was cancelled. Now isn't the time for beating yourself up over things in the past - it's time for action!

FLIP THE PAGE FOR OUR NO-FAIL STRATEGY TO HELP YOU ACTION YOUR CLOSET CLEAR-OUT TODAY!

OPERATION OVERHAUL

Sorting through our clothes is a polarising activity. There may be one hundred things you'd rather be doing than wading through swaths of cottons, silks and chiffons, but it's wise to remember that detoxing your closet is an excellent form of self-care. Get ready to see how invigorated you will feel on the other side!

If you're a regular at the closet overhaul, taking advantage of seasonal changes to filter out the best pieces and wave goodbye to those that no longer work, this challenge will be a breeze for you. However, most of us have been putting this off for some time. Here are a few tips to get you on the road to success.

The Slow Burn

Track what you wear over a month. Try turning the hangers around and when you've worn something, turn the hanger back (see page 25). Doing this will give you an honest view of the clothes you are wearing.

The All Or Nothing

Pull everything out, no matter how much you have in your collection. This is always a big job and is rarely finished by the time we want to go to bed, so have an exit strategy so that you're not crawling under a mountain of clothes to get to sleep.

GET CLEARING!

Just like our favourite clothes, there is no one-size-fits-all method that is going to work for the closet clear out. The chart opposite will help you sort through your wardrobe!



DONATION STATION

One of the reasons that it's so hard to part with our clothes is that we love them. The way they look, the way they feel, the memories that they bring back. But, if something is hanging in your closet unworn, taking up precious real estate, or it isn't the perfect fit for your body shape and lifestyle, maybe it's time to wave a fond farewell.

Donating is often an excellent way to get rid of unused and unwanted clothing to free up space in our wardrobes. It also removes some of the guilt we can feel when we truly thought we would wear something but we just, for whatever reason, haven't managed it.

As with all things, donating clothing is only good in moderation. If we bear in mind the aims of the circular fashion industry, the end of a garment's life is just as important as the way it was made. Charity shops sort through their donations and, according to a report in the *Guardian*, only 10-30 percent of donated clothes are resold in the UK.

So, where do the rest of them go? Any that are soiled or damaged will be passed on for recycling or will head to landfill. The remainder are often shipped off to developing countries around the world. Sadly, lots of items are simply dumped as was seen in shocking images from Chile's Atacama Desert, which now holds at least 39,000 tons of unwanted clothes.

ASK TOUGH QUESTIONS

If donating is your go-to method of managing your clothing consumption, take the time to research the places you take your clothes. The more transparent the system, the easier it will be to make choices that you are confident will fit in with your personal values.

It is a common misconception that these are distributed for free to support communities. While this can be the case, clothes are often sold on to used clothing traders, who go on to sell them again. This creates a multi-faceted situation where there are both positives and negatives. Better quality clothing for developing communities is a good thing. But a dependency can form that may not help the countries escape poverty.

BREAK UP WITH THE DUMP

When you throw something away, it's likely you don't give it a second thought. But when you realise that there is no such thing as 'away' when it comes to rubbish, it is a real game changer.

For most rubbish, 'away' is an actual place and it goes by the name of Landfill. A landfill site is a place where our unwanted items are disposed of in holes deep in the ground. There are over 500 landfill sites in the UK and, believe it or not, they are not a bottomless resource. According to a waste report by Tolvik Consulting in 2017, England has fewer than seven years of non-hazardous landfill capacity if we continue to fill up these spaces at the current rate.

So, there has never been a more critical time to ditch the dump. But what does that mean in real life?



RECYCLE REFLEX

For nearly two decades, we've been mastering the art of home recycling, identifying and separating materials and diverting tons of waste from landfill. When we think of recyclables, it's usually papers, plastic, glass and metal. But let's not forget that textiles are prime candidates for recycling programmes.

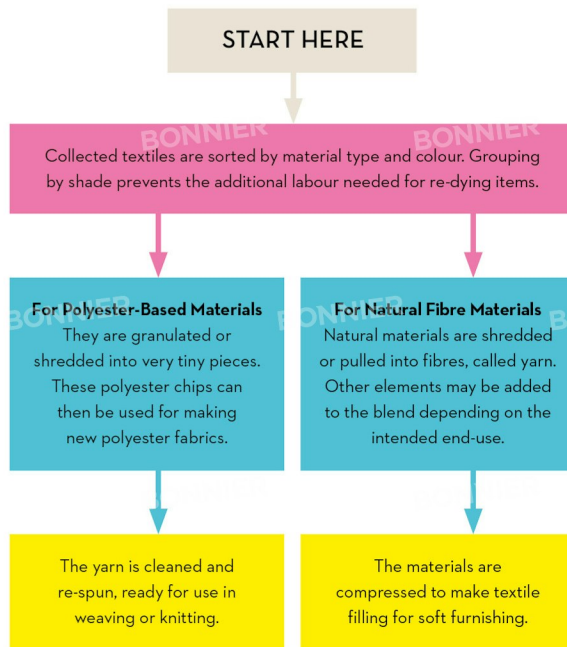
Figures from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation indicate that globally, just 12 percent of the material used for clothing ends up being recycled. This is a great start, but when you think that almost 100 percent of textiles can be recycled, we see there is more work to be done!

Around 92 million tons of textile waste is created each year worldwide. The equivalent to a rubbish truck full of clothes ends up on landfill sites each second. With artificial fibres, such as polyester, believed to take hundreds of years to decompose in landfill, it's time we got better acquainted with textile recycling.

WISH-CYCLING

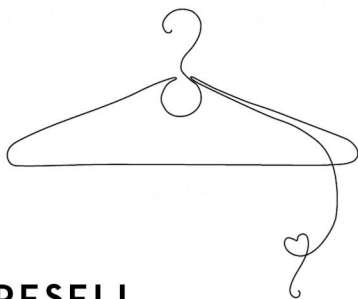
Wish-cycling is when we put something a bit iffy into a recycling bin hoping that it might be recyclable. This applies to all recyclables, from textiles and papers to plastic and glass. This contamination can see the whole load rejected for recycling.

The Process of Textile Recycling



Ask for Action

If your favourite brand isn't transparent on their pre-consumer textile recycling, why not use our email template (see page 84) to hold them to account for their practices and find out more?



KISS AND RESELL

The second-hand clothing market has exploded over the last few years due to the growing awareness of the impact of fast fashion, and the restrictions faced in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Fashion fans have been shopping in other ways, collecting items from others, or via auction sites, sales apps and social media.

By selling on your unwanted clothing, you are not only cashing in for your next purchase, you are giving another person an alternative to buying new. According to *Cosmopolitan UK*, the global auction site eBay has noted that since 2017, there has been a 31 percent increase in the number of pre-loved fashion items listed on the site.

If you're keen to get some extra cash into your purse, look at what is hanging forgotten in your wardrobe. You could have a stash of untapped reserves ready to cash in! There are several ways to sell clothes - the most common is online. Through speciality websites and apps, you are automatically reaching an audience of shoppers ready to snap up some pre-loved bargains.

THE HOW

Photos

Pictures are what sells your clothes - we often buy with our eyes alone. So aim for clear photos in natural light. Take a selection of photos from different views, showing any unique details and any flaws. Include a snap of the label to give precise information about the brand, size, fabrics and care instructions. Give garments their best chance by ensuring that they are clean and free from wrinkles.

Listing

Give as much information in the description as you can: the style, colour, fabric and design. Be honest when explaining any flaws. Give the piece some context - if you wore it to a wedding, let people know that as it might tempt someone into a purchase.

Pricing

Take some time to research the prices of similar items. Decide if you'd prefer to have the outfit sell at auction or with a set price. While you don't want to price yourself out of the game, equally, you will be kicking yourself if you undersell.

Shipping

Buyers have come to love prompt shipping. Of course, you aren't likely to offer next-day delivery like a global retail giant. However, be clear about your shipping timeframes and pricing, as this will give your buyer confidence. Forward any shipping notifications or tracking numbers to the buyer and you may find you build a few regular customers.

THE WHERE

There are a few go-to platforms for reselling clothes. Depending on what you are selling, and your personal style, you may find some a better fit for you than others.

eBay

This site has become synonymous with home selling. With a user-friendly site and app, you can find uploading and selling items a stress-free process. You can list items for auction, accept offers or set a flat fee.

Fees of approximately 10 percent of the final transaction value are payable to eBay. There is a fee to list your items for auction, however there are often offers allowing you to list items for a set £1 fee.

Depop

If eBay and Instagram had a lovechild, it would be Depop. Sellers that have fun modelling their outfits usually get a great response on this site. Plus, you can use hashtags to give your listing visibility. Fees of approximately 10 percent of the final sale price are payable to Depop.

Facebook Marketplace

If you're planning on getting rid of bundles of clothes at a time, or you're parting with things at rock-bottom prices, Facebook Marketplace is a great way to find homes for unwanted items. This often comes with the bonus of having items collected directly from you, which saves a trip to the Post Office. There are no fees, but time-wasters are a risk.

Vestiaire Collective

If you are parting with premium items, then this should be your first port of call. This leading online marketplace is the go-to site for pre-owned luxury fashion. The site accepts authenticated items from a list of around 5000 designer brands. Like most exclusive venues, if your name isn't down, you're not coming in: you have to sign up to buy and sell.

Fees are payable based on a commission structure around the sale price. For additional peace of mind for high ticket items, buyers can benefit from an authentication process where goods are first shipped off to be assessed. They are then sent to the buyer once they have been approved.

ONLINE SAFETY

Always keep communications within the app to safeguard your transactions and payment information. Don't give out personal details and if someone is coming to collect items, it's best to have other people at home with you, or consider meeting in a public place.



CHAPTER 4

GARMENT CARE

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS

One of the things you can do right now that won't cost a penny is to think about how you care for your clothes. Do you remember that feeling of first bringing home a new blazer? In the beginning, we shake it out before hanging it back in the wardrobe neatly. But before long, it makes its way onto the back of a chair, the end of the bed, over the door... or in the floorrobe.

FLOORROBE

/ 'flɔːdrəʊb/ Noun

An untidy, usually ever-growing, jumbled heap of discarded clothes on the floor.

The simple act of storing clothes so that everything has its place will not only give you a feeling of zen, it will also mean you can see exactly what you have. You'll be able to plan out different looks and see where your wardrobe is lacking. Then, on your next shopping trip, you can buy what you need, instead of another accidental duplicate.

Different types of clothes and fabric need to be stored in varying ways to keep them looking their best and lasting for as long as possible. When it comes to the question of whether to choose a wardrobe or chest of drawers, the following information will help.

HANG

- Smart, tailored clothes
- Wrinkle-prone linen
- Floaty fabrics, such as silk and chiffon
- Sweatshirts that are bulky and won't lose their shape
- Formalwear
- Coats and jackets
- Blouses

FOLD

- Jeans
- Activewear
- Heavy knitwear
- Socks
- Lingerie
- Leggings
- T-shirts

THAT'S JUST HOW I ROLL...

Organisers and minimalist fashion fanatics have popularised the technique of rolling (rather than folding) clothes, borrowed from the military. But what are the pros and cons?

PROS

- Easy to stack, can be more space-efficient
- Can help you see what you have
- Better for stretch fabrics, as it prevents the elastic from being stretched out

CONS

- Time-consuming technique, especially when dealing with items of different bulks and sizes
- May create extra wrinkles if not rolled carefully
- Can encourage over-shopping as clothing is harder to see

Still not sure? Experiment with a few different styles until you find what works for you!



CHANGE IN SEASONS

Keeping our clothes tidy in the closet is a great way to see what we have, and it helps to keep our favourites looking on point. But it only takes a couple of winter woollies and coats to make our wardrobes burst at the seams. The solution? Seasonal rotation.

One way to keep on top of the clothes that you have for all weathers and temperatures is to store seasonal items or special occasion wear. Safely stowing them away will help to preserve them, so that sequin-adorned evening gown will live to see another wedding. Another boon is that you'll have more space to dedicate to the clothes you want to wear right now.

There are a few ways to store your clothes and it will depend on whether you are packing them to the top of the wardrobe or moving them further afield, such as in an attic or a garage. Here are a few pointers to help you get packed up in style.

Fresh Start

Begin by making sure the garment is clean. You will be mad at yourself on the first day of winter if you realise that your beautiful woollen coat is still mud-splattered from its last foray before spring.

First Aid for Fabrics

Make any repairs that you can - or call in the big guns and take a trip to a local dry cleaners or tailors. While damage won't get any worse in storage, it won't magically get fixed, either.

VIP Treatment

If you are packing away precious items - think expensive pieces, formalwear or anything with sentimental value - consider wrapping them in protective tissue before placing them in a waterproof box. It may sound like overkill, but it's better safe than sorry.

Pack in Groups

Seasonal clothes, from winter sweaters to summer bikinis, can be stashed away when not needed. The main priority is to keep them dry and dust-free. Sealed boxes and bags work well. Pack similar items together and label them clearly, for easy identification later.

Not your Nana's Mothballs

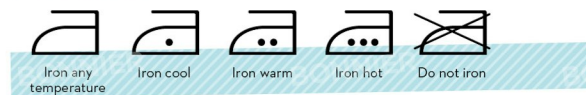
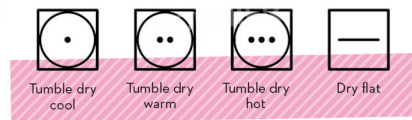
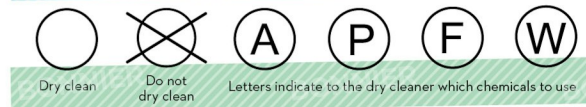
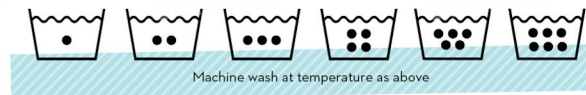
Moths are notorious for chomping their way through a prized cashmere cardigan, even if you only take your eyes off it for a second. Rather than adding mothballs to your boxes (it's doubtful you want that as your signature scent next season), try sachets of fragrant lavender or natural cedar wood balls. These are nature's best defences against bug invaders.

CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Show us someone who doesn't have a laundry day horror story of destroying a garment by not reading the label! Those tags secured on to the back or side seams are the precious care labels. They hold valuable information about your new item: where it was made, what materials it is made from and the crucial details about how to wash and care for it. Use it right and bobbly T-shirts and shrunken sweaters will be a thing of the past, saving you stress, time and money.

WASHING 101

Want to keep darks looking intensely dark for longer? Turn them inside out when washing to help prevent pilling (or bobbling), which gives the fabric a dull appearance. Preserve the pigment of the dye by using a cool wash cycle.



LOW-IMPACT LAUNDRY

It isn't rocket science: the better we treat our clothes, the better they look for longer. But sometimes, life gets in the way and we just don't have time to refold that scrunched up T-shirt in the back of the drawer, or to work on a minor repair before it rips out of control. Bad habits can be hard to shake. But what if the biggest flex is treating each of our clothes as if they are our all-time favourites?

Turn Down the Heat

Just like skipping the blow-dry and straighteners on our hair once in a while, our clothes respond better to lower temperatures. If you wash your garments on a cooler cycle, ditch the tumble dryer and iron on a lower setting (if you can't face dumping the iron altogether, see page 64). This will give the delicate fibres a rest and increase longevity.

Keep Them Separate

Most of us take the time to separate clothes before putting them into the wash, but laundry bags are great for protecting delicates from taking a bashing in the washing machine cycle.

Breath of Fresh Air

Line drying has heaps of benefits. It's free, leaving more money for fabulous (ethical) fashion purchases and air drying is less damaging to the environment than tumble drying. Plus, exposing your lights and whites to the sunshine is a natural way to keep them looking bright!

PRO TIP

When an item is not quite dirty enough for a wash, but not clean enough for the closet, hang it on the clothesline for a good airing. Think of this as dry shampoo for clothes, allowing you to go longer between washes.

Maintenance is Key

Try to stay on top of any minor repairs. Catching them early can make them much easier to deal with. Keep on top of maintenance tasks, too. Treat your vintage leather bag to a conditioning rub down and polish your shoes and boots.

Refit buttons as they start to feel loose. Get garments tailored and take shoes or boots to be reheelled and resoled before they pass the point of no return.

Dirty Talk

Stains are unavoidable. If you catch them in action, dab away the excess and blot with a clean cloth or tissue to clear the surface. There are no hard-and-fast rules for removing stains, but cold water is best for blood, food, drink and makeup, whereas hot water is excellent for sweat stains. If you don't spot a stain until you put the item in the wash, pre-soak your garment in water with a bit of detergent or stain remover.

HANDLE WITH CARE

There are some garments that we can tell from twenty paces away will be high maintenance in the laundry department. We're looking at you, cashmere cardigan and silk camisole. Some items wouldn't survive the rigour of a washing machine cycle, no matter what the settings on the dial suggest.

Handwashing is as laborious as it sounds. A pro tip is to check the care label before making your next purchase to prevent any later surprises. If you can't handle the commitment of getting elbow-deep in the basin, then return that item to the rack! Many machines have a handwash cycle, which is much like a delicate cycle using less agitation and a less vigorous spin. While this can be a great option, it won't always be as gentle as washing by hand, so for items that look as though they will stretch, sag or become misshapen, it's best to keep this to a minimum.

There aren't many of us who would enjoy the extra workload of handwashing all our clothes day in, day out. But getting to grips with gentle handwashing is valuable clothing know-how. Handwashing items on holiday is a great way to minimise the amount you need to pack, and it's useful when you don't have a full load for the machine but need something cleaned.

A whistle-stop, quick-start guide to handwashing

- Fill a basin with water at room temperature: not too hot, not too cold.
- Mix in a delicate detergent. Be sure to use the correct dosage for the volume of water you're using. Swirl the water until the detergent is fully dissolved.
- Place the garment into the water and agitate, making sure it is fully submerged. Swish around, gently rubbing any stains.
- Leave to soak for up to 30 minutes: the perfect amount of time to relax with a book.
- Drain the water and rinse, rinse, rinse. Then rinse again. Suds are harder to remove than they look!
- Press out the water but avoid wringing out the garment. You don't want to stretch it out of shape at the final hour!
- Lay it to dry flat. Placing a clothes airer flat over the bath works a treat for catching drips.

SMOOTH OPERATOR

Show of hands: do you love ironing, or would you rather watch nail polish dry? For some people, ironing feels like a necessity. If you're into a sharp, tailored look, then no doubt you will be well-versed at pressing out wrinkles. The real question is, do many of us iron clothing simply because we think we should?

Mark Gersava, climate change advocate, noted in a now-viral Facebook post, that every person emits 190 kilograms of CO₂ equivalent in greenhouse gases each year by ironing clothes. Using this figure, he calculated that if 7 billion people stopped ironing clothes, CO₂ would be decreased by 13 million metric tons annually, which is a colossal contribution to reducing the effects of climate change. This might be all the convincing you need to ditch the iron, or at least to minimise its use.

Need another reason? An iron uses an average of 1100 watts when on the highest setting, making it one of the most energy-consuming appliances in the home. If you're ready to go iron-free you may find that storing clothes carefully and airing them on a line is enough to keep them wrinkle-free.

There are, of course, positives to ironing. Using high heat is excellent for killing germs and bacteria and can also work wonders on shifting lingering odours.

So, what about when you do need to iron? Here's the low down...

-  Keep the clothes very slightly damp. This will help lift out the creases.
-  Check the temperature. Make sure that you have the iron on the correct setting for the fabric.
-  Keep the plate of the iron clean. Marks can transfer to your fabric when the iron is hot.
-  Work in long sweeping strokes. Moving around the iron in short, erratic movements can cause you to iron in wrinkles.
-  Avoid running the iron over embellishments. Either work around them or cover them with a clean tea towel to prevent damage to the trimmings or iron plate.
-  Iron items inside out where possible. This helps avoid that shiny effect caused by an overly hot iron, which happens when the fibres start to melt.
-  If your garment looks good when it has been ironed only on one side, leave it at that. The heat and pressure are often enough to work both sides of the fabric.
-  Get things onto hangers straight away to preserve that freshly ironed look for longer.



THE PROFESSIONALS

It might blow your mind to know that dry cleaning isn't actually dry. The term only means 'dry' in the sense that it doesn't use standard water and laundry detergent like we do at home. Instead, a chemical is used to soak the fabrics so they do get wet! The speedy evaporation of these solvents removes the dirt and stains.

The second we start talking about solvents and chemical processes, we ask ourselves, is this eco-friendly? The short answer is no, but thankfully, the industry is making moves towards more environmentally aware processes.

From the 1930s, a chlorinated solvent called perchloroethylene (or Perc to its friends) became the go-to product for dry cleaning. We now know this chemical is hazardous to those using it, as well as the environment, and that it lingers on clothing. Chemicals aside, clothes also come home from the dry cleaners wrapped in single-use plastic.

THE VIP LIST

Checking the label is the best way to see if an item needs dry cleaning. But you can expect to visit the dry cleaner for clothes made from suede, rayon, leather and sometimes linen and wool.

Enter the green dry cleaners. You can find stores that offer an organic or green dry-cleaning service which usually means they ditch the Perc. One alternative to Perc is to clean with water and specialist detergents that are far milder than domestic products. Another option is to use liquid carbon dioxide - that's the same non-toxic gas that adds the bubbles to fizzy drinks. Washing the clothes in carbon dioxide is the most eco-friendly way to clean clothing.

Unless you can ditch the dry cleaning once and for all, ask your dry cleaner about eco-friendly options. Be sure to point out any stains and what might have caused them to help the cleaning process and give you a better finish.



CHAPTER 5

**SHOPPING
SMART**

YOU DO YOU

One of the great things about fashion is that it means something different to all of us. From how we shop to what we feel good in, the whole experience of discovering our own personal style is a wonderfully colourful journey. Just because you're making a conscious effort to combat the impacts of fast fashion, it doesn't mean you have to stop enjoying the elements of fashion that make your heart sing! Use the prompts on the following page to celebrate fashion in the way you choose.

STYLE IS A JOURNEY

The fashion choices we make evolve as we do. Our tastes, needs and bodies are continually changing and our clothing comes with us on this journey. Flip back to this page next year and see how your answers have changed!

THIS OR THAT

- Online / In store
- Designer / High street
- Full price / Bargain
- Select pieces / Huge haul
- Planned purchase / Impulse buy
- Solo expedition / Group activity

THE LAST THING

- The last outfit I bought:
- The last shop I visited:
- The last website I visited:
- My last bargain:
- My most recent wish list addition:

PEOPLE THAT INSPIRE

- Everyday chic:
- Work wardrobe:
- Relaxed and casual:
- Full glam:
- Date night:

FASHION FIXES

- Favourite store:
- Everyday essential item:
- Signature perfume:
- Go-to brand:
- Pattern / Stripes
- Bold colours / Soft pastels
- Glam / Relaxed
- Chunky knits / Sleek sweaters
- Heels / Flats
- Crossbody bag / Clutch bag

THE SHOPPING FIX

When it comes to shopping, we all have different needs and experiences. One person's dream day of browsing high street racks will be the worst nightmare of someone who prefers to click through the carousels from the comfort of home.

The way we shop reveals a lot about our personalities. Some of us like to take time and prepare, while others prefer to dive straight in! The way we shop is something that we can take control of to make a quick impact on the world of fast fashion.

Do you identify with any of these shopping personalities?

The Bargain Hunter

You are the first to know when a store has a sale. You pre-load your cart ahead of Black Friday to avoid missing out on any deals. Voucher codes and discounts are your BFFs, and you have never let a gift card expire.

The Researcher

You like to thoroughly investigate your options before you buy something. Whether it's a large or small piece, you are happy to shop around either in-store or online, checking reviews and feedback. You will only make a purchase once you are fully satisfied.

ONLINE OR IN-STORE?

No matter your shopping personality, you also have the choice to shop in-store and online.

Neither is a guaranteed escape from a fast fashion purchase and they both have benefits.

Online shopping is ideal if you can't face the crowds, but in-store shopping is the winner when it comes to seeing fabrics and quality.

The Know-Your-Own-Mind

You usually shop with a specific item in mind. You know what you want and you rarely compromise. Like a predator stalking its prey, with an exacting eye for details, you check all angles before you find what your heart desires.

The Impulse Buyer

You are the enabler within your group of friends. You love to live in the moment and are always the first to agree to a shopping trip. You emit a rallying war cry of 'Treat yourself!' when shopping, as you pile up another bundle at the tills.

BRAND SAVVY

There tends to be more media coverage of the brands that are up to no good - those that are at the forefront of fast fashion - than coverage of those making a difference. While it is good to know what is going on behind the scenes, that doesn't help us to identify the brands we should be gravitating towards.

The two most common phrases we hear as we try to combat fast fashion are 'ethical fashion' and 'sustainable fashion'. But do these two phrases mean the same thing? While there is a lot of crossover between them, the two phrases are not interchangeable, as they do focus on slightly different aspects of improving the fashion industry.

Sustainability means focusing on the environmental impact of fashion on the planet, our waterways and on the climate crisis. In comparison, ethical fashion is rooted in social causes, taking into account workers' welfare at every stage of the manufacturing process.

These two practices are not entirely separate and there is a lot of crossover. Sustainability also considers the human impact of environmental issues, and ethical fashion considers the environmental issues. Neither is more important than the other. The real strength comes at the point where the two approaches meet. For clothing to be truly ethical, it needs to be sustainable, and vice versa.

Click Here

Here are a few noteworthy ethical shopping directories that are worth bookmarking ahead of your next shopping session.

projectcece.co.uk

This ethical clothing search engine allows you to filter through more than 150 brands for your next fashion purchase.

greenlivinguk.uk/brand-directory

Search through the selection of sustainable, ethical, eco-friendly and socially driven brands as selected by GreenLivingUK.

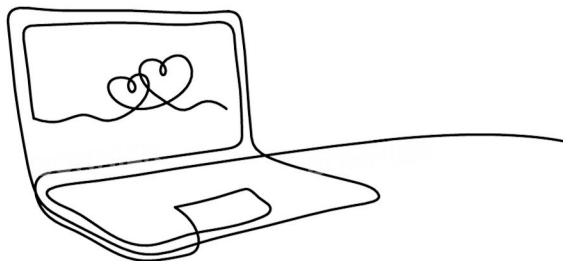
thegoodshoppingguide.com/ethical-fashion-directory

This is a UK-based platform that compares brands in easy-to-read formats. Plus, it has created its own system for applying ethical accreditation.

Buyer Beware!

Greenwashing can have many of us fooled. Greenwashing is the term given to something that appears to be eco-friendly, but on closer inspection, the claims don't hold up to scrutiny. A recent report by the European Commission found that a whopping 42 percent of green claims by companies were exaggerated, false or deceptive.

Discovering the ethics of a brand can be difficult. There are several platforms (see above for a starting point) that challenge the concept of fast fashion by offering a guide to ethical and sustainable brands. The main thing we, as consumers, need to push for is for transparency. The easier it is to find out about a company's policies on labour, material usage and textile waste treatment, the better. Many platforms give clear criteria for ethical and sustainable standards and are able to give tangible performance grades to brands. This makes it easier for consumers to see the truth behind companies' claims.



FINDING A MATCH

Transparency is a major player in how ethical a company really is. It would be great to think that if a company is sharing information about its ethical policies, then they are one of the good guys. Well, yes and no. Sometimes the information is there, but finding it - and interpreting it - can be tricky. Sometimes, companies can emphasise their green credentials in the hope that people don't delve in too closely.

With all of the negative publicity around fast fashion in recent years, it's likely that we can each name a stack of brands that we know don't pass muster. Yet we would have to rack our brains to name a genuinely ethical brand.

Never fear, help is at hand. It can take hours to fully research the elements that make up a supply chain, how workers are treated and how the company shapes up. You can make the most of websites that allow you to check on the ethical status of your favourite brands and search for alternatives. See page 75 for a selection of ethical shopping directories.

THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

Good On You also offers an easy-to-use app. Download it onto your phone to make sustainable shopping a breeze.

Good On You is the world's leading platform when it comes to ethical and sustainability ratings for fashion brands. The website gives each brand a score that is easy to understand. The ratings are based on several elements, including how the company treats people, animals and the planet.

Not only can you scroll through the directory or search by brand name, you can also read a wide range of sustainable fashion feature articles, tips and guides.

FACE VALUE

It's important not to be dazzled by good looks, and we know that we shouldn't judge a book by its cover. But it can be hard to know what's really going on behind the scenes when a company presents a seemingly ethical picture. Can you spot a fast fashion brand from ten paces away? Here are some tell-tale signs...

The Shop Floor

Often packed with hundreds, if not thousands, of tempting displays of fresh new looks and styles to covet. You might notice that the window displays are updated regularly. The branding will often highlight 'hot new trends' alongside seemingly endless 'reduced to clear' rails. This probably sounds like most of the clothes shops you visit which goes to show that the fast fashion model has saturated the industry.

Ready For Your Close-up?

If we take a closer look at the garments themselves, there are a few easy-to-spot signs that the manufacturing process wasn't afforded the time to make them properly. Item sizing will often be inconsistent. Pick up two pairs of trousers in the same size, but somehow one doesn't fit as well as the other.

A good sign of an ethical or sustainable brand is that multiple items in the same size will fit in the same way, showing the time and care that has gone into making the garment.

All in the Seams

Have you ever felt a garment stretch at the seams when you're trying it on? If the seams are weak they have usually been sewn at speed without due care or precision. These items normally won't last long with normal wear and tear.

Higher quality items use extra techniques to secure the seams, giving them additional strength. A seam that has the raw edge tucked inside with no fraying edges is called a French seam. It's perfect for holding tight, delicate fabrics, giving added strength.

I Can See Through That

Have you ever bought an item that leaves a lot less to the imagination than you hoped when worn in the sunlight? In order to save money, quality fabrics, which have a thicker and more luxurious finish, are often swapped for cheaper, lightweight fabrics.

Skipping the linings are another way brands save cash, but it leaves garments less opaque. Well-made jackets, dresses or skirts should have a layer of lining, giving an excellent drape and preserving modesty!

Mismatch Up

There is nothing more irritating than the stripes on your Breton top not quite aligning at the seams. This shows that the fabric cuts have been made quickly, often in bulk, where speed has been valued over consistency.

Patterned items that have been made with care will have the intricate designs and prints carefully aligned across the garment. Attention to detail is everything!



SHOP FOR FACTS

Passionate conversations, like the ones we're having about fast fashion, lead to strong feelings, so don't be surprised if you find yourself full of questions the next time you are browsing racks on the high street. Who made this? What were their working conditions like? How much water was used in the production of this? Were the chemicals kept out of waterways? Your mind might become a whirlwind.

Questions are great. They are one of the main drivers for expanding the conversation and progressing towards change. With all that passion bubbling under the surface, this might be the ideal time to share all this new information about fast fashion with your shopping pals.

Next time you're in a store, you might want to find out what the brand's policies are there and then. Depending on the store, you could ask the staff for information on where and

how the garments were made. Or, you could ask if they have any information on the company's ethical practices that you could take away with you.

You will probably be directed to customer services or the PR department. If you can scoop up a name or a personal email address, that will make contacting the brand a whole lot easier!

IT'S COOL TO BE KIND

If you ask store employees questions, do be aware that if the information isn't readily available to customers, they may not be party to it either. Perhaps the best you can hope for is getting an email address for the head office.

Sure, it is frustrating not to be given direct answers when you're feeling all fired up, but retail staff themselves are an important part of the ethical working network for fashion.

So, always choose to be kind - it's free!

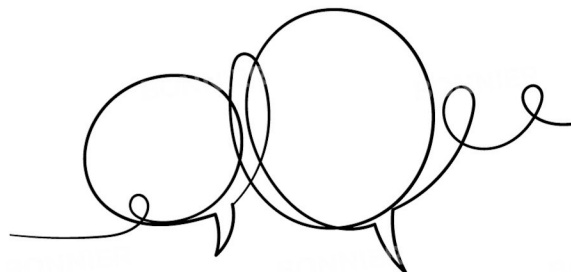
ASK FOR MORE

One of the things that campaigners against fast fashion are asking is that more people ask the tricky questions. The coming together of lots of voices makes the message for global change clear and resounding. You can help make a difference.

One way that we can push for change is by asking individual companies exactly where they stand on issues around the environment, their workers and the climate crisis. Contacting a brand directly shows that we want them to be accountable, and that we want them to be working towards the highest possible standards. One letter or email alone may not sound like much, but collective voices coming together can drive home the message.

So, if you've decided to contact your favourite brand, be cautious of sliding into their DMs. This may work for smaller companies, but for larger companies you run the risk of getting lost in a sea of messages. Instead, draft an email and send it to their customer relations or human resources contact, which you should be able to find online, if not in-store.

You may have a lot of topics to cover when contacting a brand, but make sure that your letter is clear and focused on the key points. We've written a basic template you could follow on the next page to get you started. It focuses on working conditions, but you could switch out the key points and ask about the integrity of the supply chain or the company's approach to reducing carbon emissions or textile waste.



There are a couple of things that will get you bonus points, and which might help you get the outcome you want – firstly, a response, and secondly, your issue to be taken seriously.

- See if you can find a name so you can address someone directly. Perhaps call one of the customer services listed online or in-store to find out. Personal emails always beat 'sir/madam' openers.
- Share a photograph of yourself wearing one of their garments, or perhaps a screenshot from your social media, showing that you are a genuine fan of their products. This could help to move your email to the top of the pile.

 **New message**



To info@myfavouritebrand.com

Subject Ethical Working Practices

Dear [full name], [job title],

I am a [insert a brief description of yourself here] and a fashion lover. I have become increasingly aware that the choices I make have a global impact.

I am a long-time fan of [insert brand name] and I regularly wear your clothing. Please see a photo attached of me in my all-time favourite piece!

[Outline the issue e.g.]

I have been looking at the care labels in the clothing that I have bought from [brand name] and I want to better understand the production methods, so that I can be sure that the items I buy are in keeping with my values.

[Share some research e.g.]

The majority of the clothing I have bought from [brand name] is made in [insert country here]. From my research, I have discovered that working conditions in [country] often do not meet ethical standards. Please could you share with me the company's policy on ensuring safe working conditions and fair wages for all workers?

I look forward to hearing from you with further information that will help me continue to support your brand knowing you support ethical and sustainable working practices.

Yours sincerely,

[Your name]

SEND



Use this space to make some notes of brands you might want to contact, as well as key issues that are important to you. Keep track of any research you come across that would support your questions around the manufacturing process.

CHAPTER 6

SHOPPING ALTERNATIVES



SWITCHING IT UP

In the quest to combat fast fashion, searching for more sustainable ways to shop is top of the priority list. There are several ways that you can get the euphoric buzz that comes from adding something to your closet without hitting the high street and buying something 'new-new'. Take this quiz to find out what shopping alternative best suits your style.



If you answered mostly As: Rental services

With designer ensembles available for hire, you can level up your party game with something that will absolutely 'wow' without the commitment.

If you answered mostly Bs: Subscription bundles

Keep your insatiable desire for fashion satisfied with a subscription service. Benefit from the well-trained eye of a stylist and only pay for what you keep.

If you answered mostly Cs: Pre-loved and vintage

Take some time to browse pre-loved selections and see what treasures you can find. There are loads of quality online sites to help you find something one of a kind.

If you answered mostly Ds: Swap meet

Take a trip to your local clothing swap or set up your own with friends. Discover your new look without spending a penny.



STYLE FOR HIRE

Have you always fancied being decked-out in Dior but never had the spending power? The number of options for hiring clothing, from everyday to formal wear, is growing. This could be just the thing for those who want to avoid fast fashion, yet have champagne tastes and lemonade budgets.

We're familiar with companies that hire out suits for weddings and formal events, but the concept of renting has become more refined. Now there are services that offer pay-as-you-wear or subscription services. Renting allows you to wear a selection of clothes, often high-end brands and designers, that you can simply return and then pick another item for the next occasion.

The concept of renting clothing is huge stateside and, thankfully, it is starting to make waves in the UK and Europe, too. The *Independent* noted that the market for renting clothing in the UK will reach a whopping £2.3 billion by 2029. Just the thought of getting our hands on some of the most desirable looks out there is enough to make hearts flutter. And it gets better. All of the mending, extra laundering and maintenance that comes with it are often taken care of by the service. What's not to love?

TRY THESE SERVICES ON FOR SIZE

OnLoan **onloan.co**

This is a monthly fashion subscription service. You select your size, browse the designer collections and pieces are shipped to you right away. Membership fees cover two or four items which you can keep for a month (or longer) before you return.

HURR Collective **hurrcollective.com**

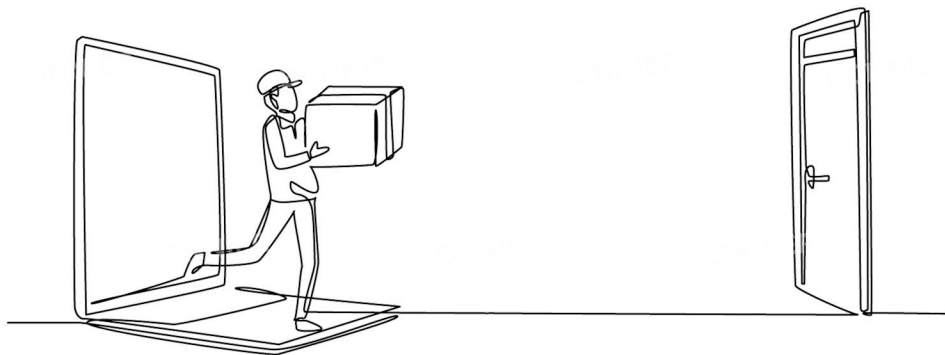
This is a peer-to-peer subscription service where you can browse clothing for hire and list your own pieces to rent. Not only does it allow you to wear beautiful garments at a fraction of the price, you can also cash in on some of the treasures hanging in your wardrobe. You can borrow a piece for 4-20 days, with costs varying by item.

My Wardrobe HQ **mywardrobehq.com**

If you're not big on commitment, this site allows you to hire from a selection of more than 500 designer brands. You can hire items for as little as four days with fees set by the renter.

By Rotation **By Rotation app**

Another peer-to-peer rental service offering a wide range of high street and designer items. Fees are charged on a per day basis and some luxury pieces have a minimum rental period.



HAPPY MAIL

Who doesn't love it when a big, fat package arrives in the post? Of course, this could be the sign of a recent 'add to cart' session. Or, it could be a fresh new delivery of clothing picked out especially for you on a monthly subscription bundle. If you love the clothes, you keep them, if not send them back!

Whether you consider this to be the ultimate style hack - no more trawling shops to get the looks you want - or you see it as a bold step away from fast fashion, it is undeniable that this is a fantastic service that can re-energise your closet.

The best way to start the process is to identify your style through a conversation with a stylist or by taking an online quiz or questionnaire on the company's website. There are then ways for you to update your preferences, lifestyle and sizing as needed. Depending on the company and the fee package you choose, you can be sent a series of coordinated pieces that make up a full look, including shoes and accessories. All you have to do is try it all on. If you don't love it, you can return it.

This service is a time-saving concept that delivers curated collections right to your door. The idea is that you can feel like you have your own personal stylist. Not only do they have your measurements on hand, thanks to a clever series of questionnaires, they also have a tailored insight into your lifestyle, go-to trends and must-wear items.

The ethical and sustainable credentials of these companies can be a little cloudy. Not all brands offering this bundle service hold high ratings for ethical practices and sustainability. But the returns policies are usually straightforward, meaning that you don't end up with a stack of unwanted items lingering in your wardrobe, which can happen when we shop online and can't face the hassle of returning. So it can be argued that less unwanted clothing will be headed for landfill.

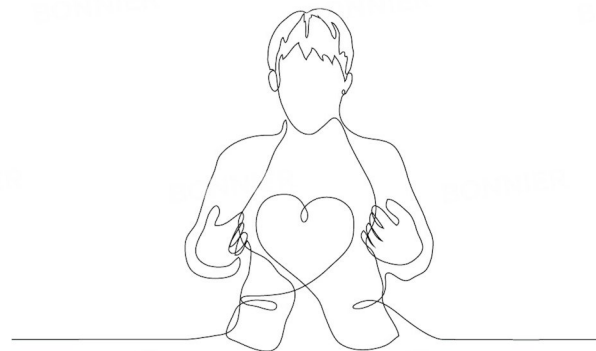
Depending on your shopping style, signing up to a subscription package rather than shopping with wild abandon may feel like a step in the right direction to reducing unwanted items.

PRAISE FOR PRE-LOVED

One of the greatest rebrands of all time has to be the collective change in perception when it comes to second-hand clothing. Gone are the days when confessing that you were wearing something from a charity shop was met with a cringe. Now we can't wait to share our pre-loved treasures, even more so when we have snapped them up for a bargain!

For most people, the most common way to shop for clothes is via high street mass-market brands. These shops are carefully laid out, grouping similar pieces together, ordered neatly by size and with mannequins peppered around the shop floor sporting style ideas. With all this attention to detail, guided suggestions and sheer ease of shopping, it is no wonder that walking into a second-hand store can be a bit of a shock to the senses.

Charity and second-hand clothes shops will each have their own way of presenting clothing; some organise their shelves by garment type, others opt for size order. When you walk into a pre-loved clothing shop, you just don't know what you'll find. Depending on whether you are an Eclectic Enthusiast or a Brand Lover (see pages 22–23), this will either fill you with utter joy or abject terror!



Fear not: navigating your way around the store and hunting out wardrobe gold is easier than you might think, and it's fun, too! This is the perfect opportunity to get the shopping euphoria without contributing to the fast fashion problem.

Vintage and second-hand shopping is an experience as well as a practical exercise in acquiring new clothes. One of the great things about pre-loved shops and markets is that there are so many different styles, designers, colours and even clothes from different eras all under one roof. You may discover a brand or cut that you've never seen before, and you can take time to appreciate clothing that you wouldn't ordinarily come across. There is a certain kind of magic to be found amongst the hotchpotch of styles that allows us to shake off our inhibitions and pick the things we like without the pressure or influence of trends. It gives us the chance to shop for clothes that suit our style and needs, which can feel liberating!

SECOND TIME AROUND

If you're not used to second-hand shopping, it can be overwhelming. One of the main differences to high street browsing is that you never know what you're going to find. If you're after something specific, it can be frustrating, but it makes the purchase even sweeter when you finally find that perfect vintage jacket! Here are some tips for getting the very best when shopping for pre-loved and vintage pieces.

Size Wise

The size on the tag is almost irrelevant. Of course, that number doesn't define us, but this is even more true with vintage clothes, as they were made for different body forms using different measurement than clothes today.

Most vintage retailers will share the measurements of the items, so it's a good idea to know your own body measurements. The key ones to check are full bust (around your back and over the fullest part of your bust), waist, hips and hem length. For more tailored garments, you can get closer to your perfect fit by getting to know your inside leg, shoulder width and sleeve length.

Take Your Time

Don't leave it until the last minute to look for the right vintage piece for a special occasion. This method of shopping is the opposite of fast fashion, so where you gain uniqueness, you may lose convenience (or the fallacy of it!). It might take longer to find something that fits your requirements, style and budget.

Customise and Tailor

Regular vintage clothing buyers get pieces altered so that they fit just right. Sizing can be hard to gauge, so you might want to size-up when buying vintage online. Not only does this avoid the disappointment of a top that doesn't fit, it also gives you the option of taking it in and getting it fitted. A well-fitted item will really steal the show.

You may want to learn a few tips for getting handy with a needle and thread if you aren't already. This is an excellent opportunity to learn how to take in seams, add darts and remove sleeves, unless skyscraper shoulder pads are your thing!

Be Budget Mindful

It can be all too easy when shopping online to get caught up in the moment and throw in a high bid just before an auction finishes, paying over the odds. Before getting trigger-happy on the bidding button, check the going prices for similar items and set your budget.

Affluent Areas

Pick the posh end of town when visiting charity shops. It might sound bizarre, but you often find that the quality of the garments that have been donated is quite high. You might even find some desirable labels in there!

Charity Click

Second-hand clothing isn't limited to auction sites. If you have a favourite charity shop, be sure to check out their online shop fronts. Familiar names like Oxfam, Cancer Research, The British Red Cross, Save The Children and the Royal Trinity Hospice can be found on ASOS Marketplace with 100 percent of the proceeds returning to the nominated charities.

SWAP SHOP



Clothing swaps do exactly what they say on the tin. You trade one piece for another and give unwanted garments a chance at a second life with a new person. These swap sessions can be as small or large as you can muster.

The basic principle is that one item can be exchanged directly for another. You can start small – you and your best friend may already have something informal going on, borrowing the perfect outfit to ‘wow’ on a first date. Or you borrow your cousin’s hiking boots because you’re not outdoorsy enough to own a pair, yet don’t want to pass up a weekend of glamping.

There are many like-minded people out there ready to trade their unneeded pieces for something new (to them). Community clothing exchanges and swapping groups are popping up all over the UK, and beyond. Search local community notice boards or Facebook groups to see if there is one in your area.

Can’t make it to an event? Don’t worry, there’s an app for that! Clothes swapping apps are a lot like dating apps. Once you match with something you fancy, you can swap clothes for other items, or for store credit and discount codes.

CAN'T FIND A SWAP NEAR YOU?

Turn the page to see just how easy it is to set one up.

Vinted **vinted.co.uk**

As well as giving you the ability to list your clothes for sale and buy items second-hand, Vinted also has a swap function. Users can indicate if they are happy to do a straight swap and set the value of their item to ensure values of swaps match. If two people have items they are happy to swap, they can arrange to trade. There are guidelines and support pages on the site to help you make safe swaps.

Swopped **swopped.co.uk**

This site encourages you to send in your unwanted items and pick ‘new to you’ pre-loved items. Create an account, upload a picture of your clothing and send it off. Once your items have been evaluated, you’ll receive credits to shop on the site. Easy as one, two, three!

ReGAIN app **regain-app.com**

This donation platform enables you to package up clothes that you no longer want and send them to charity as a donation. In return, you receive discount voucher codes for future online shopping with selected retail partners. A full list is available on the website and app.

SELF-STYLED SWAP

If there isn't a clothes swap event running in your area, that isn't to say that people won't be interested. You might be familiar with the saying, 'If you build it, they will come'. Why not be the person to lay down the foundations for clothes swapping in your community? This could be your calling in the fashion revolution!

Whether you are planning on arranging an event amongst your group of friends, with co-workers at the office or within your community, there are a few things you'll need in place to ensure that your swapping sessions are the place to be.

Set a Date

Getting a date in the diary is the first step. It is best to set this a few weeks down the line. People may need time to select the items that they want to swap and having the date sprung on them last minute may limit numbers.

Find a Location

Secure a venue for the event. Depending on the scale, you may be able to host it at someone's house or in a conference room during a work lunch break. Alternatively, there are community buildings, such as church halls and libraries, that may be able to offer space. It's a good idea to include a dedicated place for trying things on to ensure some privacy.

Send the Invites

When it comes to swaps, the more the merrier! If you're planning on inviting a group of friends, create a chat group to fill them in on the date, time, location and guidelines. You can encourage them to invite others, but be mindful of numbers if your venue has a limit. If you're hosting at your office or another public

venue, use noticeboards or group emails to spread the word. Operating an RSVP system is a great way to keep tabs on the amount of people that plan to participate.

Set the Rules

The clearer the swap guide, the more successful the event will be. People like to know exactly what they are getting into ahead of time. Decide if you want this to be a single-sex or a co-ed swap. Is the swap just for like-for-like trades, e.g. a jacket for jacket, or by item value? Or can people exchange any item for another? If you're working with a large group, set a time for the items to be dropped off and sorted before the swap starts. You may want to recruit friends to make the process easier.

The Set-up

To give people the greatest chance of finding something they love to take home, the best idea is to lay out the items on tables or to hang them on rails, if you have that option. Set up a simple system, for example arranging them by garment type. This means if someone is hunting for new jeans, they can see where to start. If you have the time, it's always helpful to group items by size and colour, too. You could also consider grouping items that can be swapped together for quick shopping.

On the Day

Confirm when and where the clothes are to be dropped off, and check that everyone is happy for any unpicked items to be donated to charity. Decide if you want to offer refreshments or keep it a food-and-drink-free event. Remember those friends you recruited for help? Set them to work at the end of the event to bag up any remaining items for charity. Don't forget to take part in the swap yourself. The most important thing is to have fun!



CHAPTER 7

**FABRIC
FOCUS**

FABRIC IN FOCUS

Our go-to looks can often give us an insight into the types of fabrics that are likely to appear in your wardrobe. Refer back to your fashion mindset (pages 22–23) to see how your fabric choices align with a typical outfit for each style.

THE MAXIMALIST

Patterned shirt: Silk

Tailored trousers: Wool

Mini bag: Leather

Statement earrings:

Costume gems and

antiqued silver

With a maverick style, the range of fabrics in your closet is as unpredictable as what you might wear tomorrow. Nothing is off limits!

THE MINIMALIST

Trench coat: Cotton and polyester blend

Plain T-shirt: Fairtrade cotton jersey

Black chino: Cotton and elastane blend

Loafers: Leather

With a pared-back style, your unfussy approach to fashion draws you towards natural fabrics with blends of man-made fibres for ease of care.

BRAND LOVER

Designer sweater: Wool and cashmere blend

Midi skirt: Silk

Structured bag: Leather and suede

Heeled boots: Leather

Your love of designer items means your wardrobe will contain a mix of luxury and natural fabrics.

CASUAL QUEEN

Boiler suit: Organic cotton

Puffer coat: Polyester blend

Trainers: Leather

Crossbody bag: Vegan

leather

Like your fashion choices, the fabrics that make up your closet are a mix of comfortable and easy-to-wear.

TAILORED DIVA

Fitted blazer: Wool

Straight-cut jeans: Cotton denim

Button-down shirt: Chambray

Stiletto heels: Leopard-print calf-hair

A focus on classics transcends style and extends to the fabrics that make up your clothing.

ECLECTIC ENTHUSIAST

Denim vest: Cotton denim

Shoulder bag: Nylon

Floral dress: Silk chiffon

Biker boots: Vintage leather

If your closet blends vintage and high-end, the fabrics featured are likely to cover a spectrum of fibres, from leather to chiffon.

Look closer

The look and feel of a garment can make or break our desire for it. Do you gravitate towards natural or man-made fibres? Blended materials or recycled? Being aware of our choices can help to identify more ethical and sustainable options for future purchases. Remember, if you already own it and love wearing it, there's no such thing as a bad fabric!

ALL IN THE FIBRES

Not all fabrics are created equal: some are natural and others are man made. Although this distinction is something of a misnomer as, in fact, we have to make all fabrics. The different terminology actually refers to the origin of the fibres. The production method is also key when it comes to identifying a fabric's environmental impact.

The ethical and sustainable nature of a fabric can generally be assessed using a few guidelines:

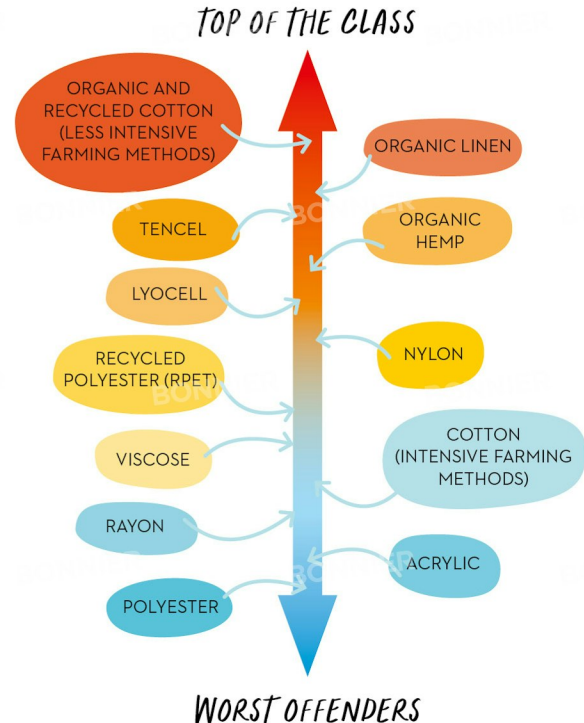
- The raw material should be gathered without causing damage to the environment.
- Any chemical treatments, processes or dyes should be low impact. They should avoid listed harmful chemicals and have a responsible process to ensure they aren't affecting surrounding waterways, land and nature.
- The fabric should be recyclable, or elements of it should be able to be processed for recycling.

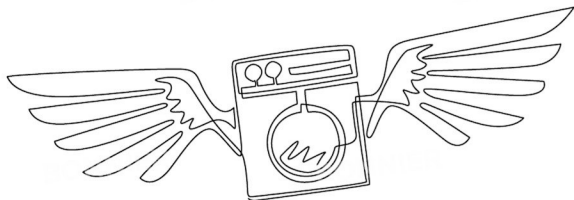
But as with all rules, there are a few exceptions. Take cotton, for example. This is our go-to natural material as it is lightweight, breathable and can be produced with minimal chemical treatment. When it has passed its best, it can easily be repurposed and recycled, and eventually, it biodegrades.

However, an unprecedented demand for cotton clothing, a direct result of the fast fashion business model, has caused a shift in farming methods. Some of these are so intense that whole bodies of water, as large as the Aral Sea in Central Asia, have dried up. It's enough to make your head spin.

This is a great example of why it can be difficult to be a conscious consumer. Something that, on the surface, looks good can still be harming the environment. Knowing more about the way brands source and process materials is an important part of the sustainable fashion world.

What's Hot and What's Not in the World of Fabrics





PLASTIC, NOT SO FANTASTIC

We've already come clean about how we can shape up our laundry habits, but there's more to consider than how often to chuck a load into the washing machine.

The materials that make up our clothes impact the environment when they are being produced, when they reach our homes and when we wash and wear them. Like the gift that keeps on giving, it is becoming apparent that we need to consider what we are putting into our washing machine, as this also goes into our waterways.

Do you remember when we ditched the body scrubs that contained those teeny-tiny beads designed to exfoliate our skin? Good riddance - those microscopic dots of plastic were swirling down the drain and straight into the marine food chain. But those aren't the only microplastics that we can prevent from reaching the seas.

IN THE FABRIC

Fabric choice and composition of garments are great examples of something you could write to your favourite brand about. See the email template on page 84 to help you get started.

Garments made from synthetic fabrics, such as polyester and acrylic, can also shed these harmful little fibres. They are so small that it is pretty much impossible to prevent sea creatures from ingesting them. Figures from a study, *Primary Microplastics in the Oceans*, by Boucher and Friot in 2017 show that the second-highest offender, responsible for just under 35 percent of plastics in the ocean, is the laundering of synthetic textiles.

How You Can Help Today

Dramatic figures like these make us want to jump straight into action, but what are the most realistic ways that we can start to make a difference? Laying off the laundry is one of the quickest fixes that we can act on right now. Microplastics are released every time we wash clothing that contains man-made fibres, polyester or acrylic. The less we launder, the fewer harmful particles we are releasing. So, if it isn't grubby, hold off from a wash!

Switching to natural fibres is also a great choice. Still, while cotton doesn't release microplastics, if cotton is intensively farmed, it also harms the environment. That's why it is worth checking the credentials of any brand thoroughly. If we continue to buy cotton at the same rate that we have been buying fast fashion, the environmental issues will simply shift from one problem to the next.

If you already own clothes made from synthetic fabrics, you can buy filters to add to your machine or to use in the washing drum. The filters help reduce the volume of microplastics that hit the waterways from 20-80 percent. While they don't completely solve the problem, they are a positive step in the right direction to deal with items in your wardrobe.

IT'LL COME OUT IN THE WASH

*Studies from The University
of Plymouth show around
700,000 microfibrils are released
from a single load of washing.*

COMING CLEAN

France recently introduced a law that will dramatically reduce pollution from washing. By 2025, every new washing machine will include a special filter that will catch the microplastics from clothes before they can become pollutants.

Why not write to your local politician to encourage your own country to follow suit? See page 155 for an email template.



KEEPING VINTAGE

Ensuring that one-of-a-kind pieces remain in good condition can seem like a big task, but the reward for your work is a one-of-a-kind treasure.

It's a fact that fabric can deteriorate with age, so taking care of an item is a first-class ticket to increasing its lifespan. Ageing isn't always a bad thing. Think of your favourite pair of jeans: no matter how many new pairs you buy, you find yourself stepping back into your old faithfuls time and time again.

In some ways, the fibres in our clothes take on an almost living quality. They move with our bodies, stretching and shaping around our contours. Over time, combined with washing and airing, the fabric softens.

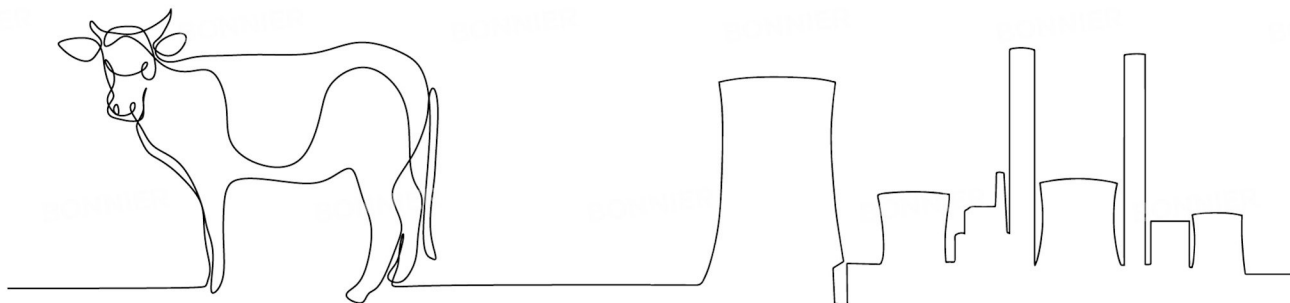
Caring for aged fabrics needn't be a hassle. The basic principle for delicate fabrics is to avoid harsh treatments.

- Dial down the chemical-laden laundry detergents and consider switching to a mild wash.
- Use the delicate settings on a machine wash.
- For garments from the 1960s and earlier, it's handwash only.
- Keep temperatures cool for both hand and machine washing.
- Ban these items from the tumble dryer and line-dry when possible.

Of course, standard-issue second-hand clothing isn't necessarily going to need the same five-star treatment that you will be lavishing on a one-off 1950s cocktail dress. Refer back to chapter four for more garment care tips.

DITCH THE CONDITIONER

Many vintage virtuosos recommend steering clear of fabric conditioner. The perfumes in these laundry additives aren't the only things left on the fabric after a wash. They often include fats and chemicals that, together, form a film that lies on the material's surface. This is what gives your towels that 'silky' texture, but it also creates a barrier, meaning the fabric is less breathable, more flammable in some cases, and can create a build-up of residue that makes the item harder to clean.



ANIMAL, MINERAL OR VEGETABLE?

All of this talk about fabric composition, which materials are ethical and sustainable, which are man made or natural and how intensely they are produced, can feel mind-boggling. Before we move on to something a little less complicated, we have one last order of business: leather vs. faux leather.

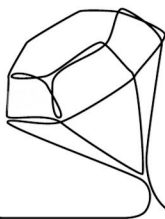
If ever there was a subject that seems cut and dry, it's this one. We know that leather is made from animals, so logically, the most ethical option would be to look for an alternative that doesn't harm animals.

Vegan leather sounds like a good, animal-friendly option. The name 'vegan leather', also known as faux leather or pleather, brings to mind visions of a plant-based product that has been transformed into a neat dupe for leather by magic. Sadly, that isn't the case. This is potentially one of the most successful instances of greenwashing there is.

Faux leather is plastic, so it ticks the box that this is not an animal product – that's a win for animals. But it's plastic, so we're back to looking at the environmental impact of production and at what happens when the item inevitably hits landfill. When it comes to faux fur, we're avoiding the animal cruelty but it is also made from synthetic fibres. However, eco experts Ce Delft have reported that five faux fur coats still have significantly less environmental impact than a single mink fur coat.

What Can You Do to Help?

Start with what you own. Love and care for the leather, and faux leather, that you already own to boost its life expectancy as much as you can. When shopping for new items, only buy what you love and need. Take time to check out the ethical and sustainability credentials of the brand to gauge how harmful the production methods of faux leather may be.



THE FINISHING TOUCH

No fashionista needs to be told that accessories finish a look. You wouldn't serve a martini without an olive, and I'll bet you don't head out without giving your accessories the final once-over, too!

Bags, hats, shoes, belts, scarfs, jewellery and more are the things that we sling onto the pile at the check-out to give our look a little *je ne sais quoi*. Accessories are far more than just a garnish: they give us a boost in confidence and help us to express ourselves. Unfortunately, they are also part of the fast fashion problem, so don't forget them when thinking about fixing your fashion footprint.

What is your first port of call? Have a cull. Flick back to pages 40–41 and run all your accessories through the handy chart. See what still holds value to you and what is past its best. Then create those neat bundles: sell, donate, ditch.

Most of us can split our jewellery collection between the real deal and costume pieces. There is no shame in not stepping out in Tiffany diamonds for every social event, especially when those shoulder-skimming earrings never fail to draw a compliment. Most of the inexpensive accessories we grab when buying a new outfit are made using similar production methods to clothes. It is a sad fact that while some jewellery will get a second life through swaps, donations and repurposing, a considerable chunk will end up in landfill.

So, here are few ideas for staying conscious about your costume jewellery consumption.

Start at Home

Keeping your accessories stowed away neatly will not only preserve their lives but will help you to keep track of them, saving you from buying unnecessary duplicates. Give your gold and silver a refresh with a jewellery cleaning cloth.

Swap It Up

Whether you opt for an informal or a more formal swapping method, try trading your accessories with a friend to refresh your style.

Customise

You don't need to be a master craftsman to have a go at reworking some of your pieces. Arm yourself with some jewellery pliers to change chain lengths or add brooch backs to repurpose oversized earrings without a mate. You can also buy replacement earring backs when they go missing, or style them as a mismatched pair.



CHAPTER 8

MENDING

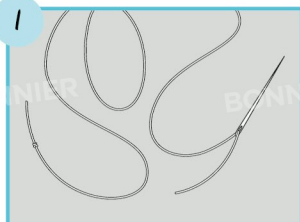
TLC FOR YOUR CLOTHES

Mastering a few repair and maintenance techniques is a great way to keep your favourite pieces in top condition, prolonging their life. Here are the four most common repair tasks that your clothing might need.

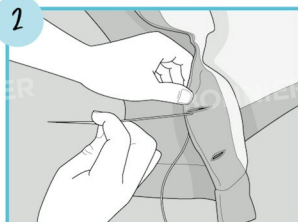
Treating Gappy Buttonholes

You will need:

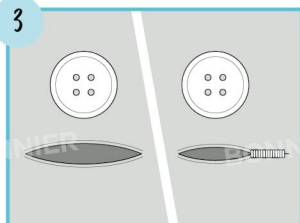
• Needle • Thread • Scissors



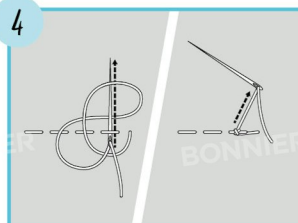
1 Thread the needle with thread that matches the colour of the garment and knot the end.



2 Starting at one end of the buttonhole, bring the needle through the fabric from the inside to the outside of the garment.



3 Work a couple of stitches horizontally at the end of the buttonhole, across the opening. This makes the buttonhole a snug fit again.

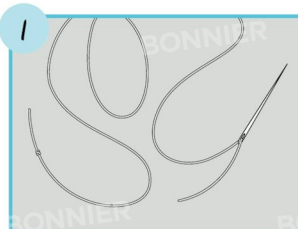


4 Fasten the thread with a secure knot on the inside of the garment. Repeat at the other end, if needed.

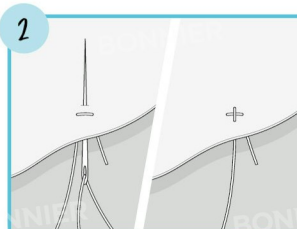
How to Sew on a Button

You will need:

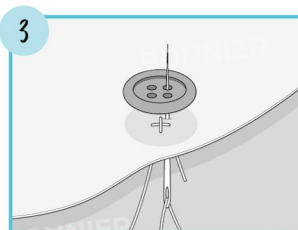
• Needle • Thread • Scissors
• Button (check for a spare on the care label)



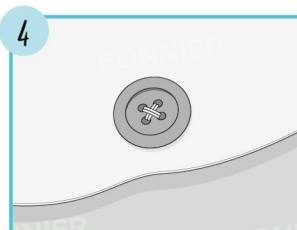
1 Thread the needle with a length of thread no longer than your arm. If it's too long, you'll be fighting tangles. Make a knot at the end.



2 Make a small 'X' stitch on the garment in the position the button needs to be. This will help with placement and acts as a foundation for the button.



3 Bring the needle from the inside to the outside of the fabric. Push the needle through a hole in the button before passing it back down through another hole in the button. Depending on the button, there will be two or four holes. You will either make an 'X' or two lines on the surface of the button.



4 Work a few stitches through the fabric and button, ensuring you stitch through each hole. When the button is secure, tie a knot in the thread on the inside of the garment.

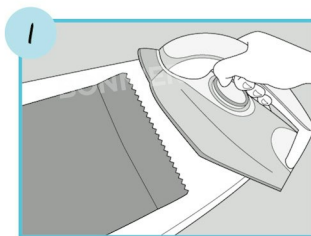
Fixing a Dropped Hem

A fallen hem can make clothes look untidy. But, fear not, it is a quick and easy fix to return items to their prime condition.

You will need:

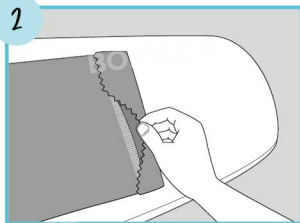
- The item of clothing
- Ironing board
- Iron
- Clean tea towel
- Hemming tape

(a fusible adhesive web activated by heat)



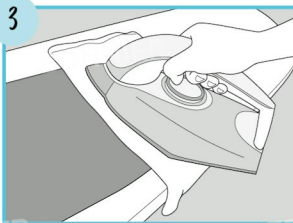
Place the garment on the ironing board and unfold the dropped hem to reveal the inside of the fabric. Press it with the iron to neaten.

2



With the garment inside out, align the dropped section so that it is level with the lower portion of secured hem on the rest of the garment. Place a length of hemming tape firmly into the fold.

3



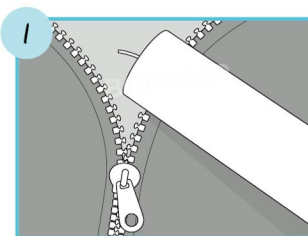
Cover with a clean tea towel and hold a warm iron over the hemming tape for a few seconds. Work along the whole dropped hem to bond the fabric with the glue. Allow it to cool fully before turning the right way out and wearing.

Tricky Zip

If the zip on your favourite pair of jeans or jacket is a bit temperamental, there are three quick fixes that you can try to save replacing the fastening.

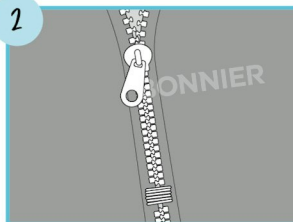
You will need:

- Candle
- Scissors
- Ribbon
- Needle
- Thread



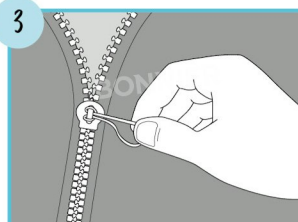
Run a candle against the zip's teeth. Like waxing up a surfboard, this will help the tab slide up the tracks a little easier when you are fastening and unfastening.

2



If the zip has come off the tracks on one side, cut off the teeth at the lowest point you can reach. Ease the zip back onto both tracks and work a couple of hand stitches across the teeth on both sides where the cut was made to hold in place.

3



If the tab has broken, thread a thin strip of ribbon through the hole and knot to make a DIY zipper pull tab.

THE ART OF MENDING

When something we love gets damaged or shows signs of wear and tear, it is hard not to be disappointed that it no longer looks new. This means that many treasured pieces are given up on because they might not look as good as they once did. Let's flip that idea on its head and make a feature of the mend!

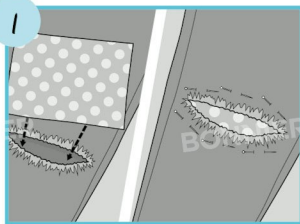
Patching Denim with Sashiko

Sashiko is a form of traditional stitching from Japan. The name translates to 'little stabs', which refers to working the needle back and forth to make a series of small straight stitches to create a repeated pattern. It sounds pretty punk rock for a bit of hand sewing!

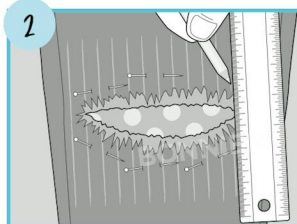
You can use this method to add decoration, giving new life to a garment, but it also works well for visible mending. If you have a hole in your jeans, this technique gives the fabric added support, covering the hole and increasing wearability. This method uses only a handful of supplies, making it beginner-friendly, too!

You will need:

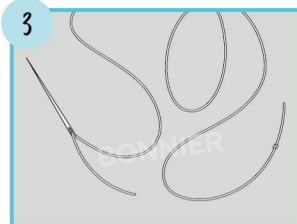
- A patch or fabric offcut
 - Pins
- Tailor's chalk or pencil
 - Ruler
 - Needle
- Sashiko thread or cotton embroidery thread
- Scissors



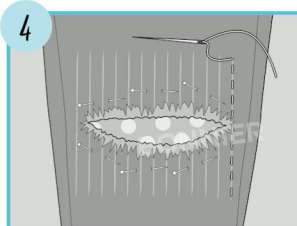
Place the patch of fabric underneath the hole or fray. You can match this to the jeans or go bold with a clashing colour. Pin it in place.



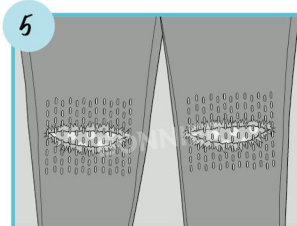
With chalk or pencil, mark out the lines you will stitch along. You can use a ruler to help you to stay neat and straight, but this is optional if you prefer a more organic look to your stitches.



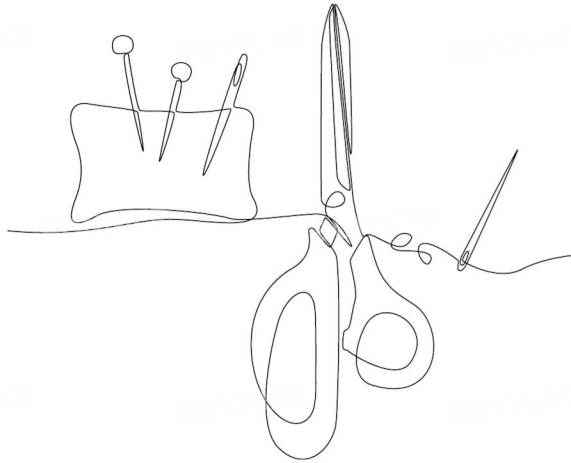
Thread a needle with Sashiko thread, which is a heavyweight cotton thread that comes in a wide range of colours. It is usually colourfast so that the colour won't bleed onto your clothes during washing, but if in doubt, handwash or wash with a colour catcher.



Work a series of even-length, straight running stitches along the desired section. Make sure you pass the needle through the jeans and the patch below.



Carry on stitching back and forth. You'll get into a lovely rhythm. It's up to you how many times you work the lines of stitching. You can either create your own pattern or stitch denser areas of colour by adding more stitches.



VISIBLE MENDING

As well as Sashiko, there are several other clever tips and tricks for turning a repair into a feature. You can sew on a patch or a fabric badge, add a button or create your own stitched design, combining ribbons, threads, yarns and even sequins and beads. The way we choose to repair an item depends on what needs fixing. You could team a dainty floral print with denim or sequins, and lace with a chunky knit. The choice is entirely up to you.

Boosting the longevity of our clothes is a genius way to reduce our fashion footprint. With the average person sending around eight items to the bin every year, by looking after and repairing your clothes, you could help combat the volume of textiles hitting landfill.

DON'T DITCH

According to a study by WRAP UK, if we wear a garment for an extra nine months, we can reduce its carbon footprint by 20-30 percent.

Getting Stuck In

Begin by collecting your supplies. If you're working with thread and yarn, you will need needles with a selection of different-sized eyes (the hole at the top) to suit the varying thickness of thread and yarn.

Interfacing is a dressmaking product that can be attached to an item to support holes or frays in material. You can buy lightweight interfacing that can be ironed in place. Using the iron to bond the interfacing to the back of the fabric, covering the rip or hole, will hold the fabric in place so you can sew into it with decorative stitches.

When it comes to stitching styles for free-form mending, there are no rules. Go wild! You can find lots of examples of stitches, how-to guides and inspiration in sewing books or on my website, www.madepeachy.com.

Pick a style of stitch or work in sections, blending colours and textures for a dramatic effect. Add any embellishments that take your fancy: beads, sequins, ribbons... the world is your haberdashery store!

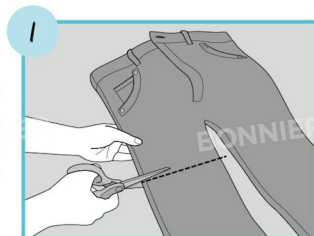
UPCYCLE REVOLUTION

Items can go in and out of fashion but rather than resigning them to the back of your closet or landfill, why not try some simple upcycling.

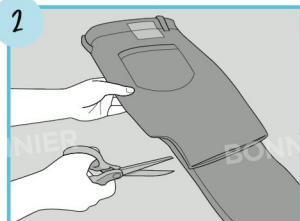
Cut Off Shorts

A timeless classic, all you need for this summer staple is a pair of old jeans and some scissors.

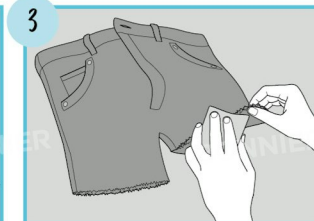
- You will need:**
- Old pair of jeans
 - Fabric scissors
 - Sandpaper (optional)



Try on the jeans and decide how short you want your shorts! Using a pair of fabric scissors, cut off one of the legs at that point.



Fold the jeans in half so the cut leg is on top of the other. Use this as the guide to cut the second leg.



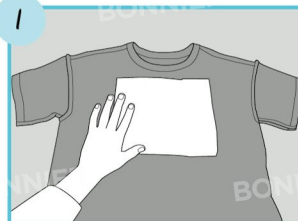
To make them look a bit more lived-in, pull down a few loose threads and use a piece of sandpaper to distress the edges.

Stitched Slogan T-shirt

Slogan T-shirts are a fun addition to your wardrobe and are surprisingly easy to make.

You will need:

- T-shirt
- Fusible interfacing
- Iron
- Tailor's chalk or pencil
- Needle
- Thread
- Scissors



Turn the T-shirt inside out and place a piece of fusible interfacing where you want your design. Iron over the interfacing and leave to cool.



On the front of the T-shirt, over your interfacing, write your slogan onto the fabric using tailor's chalk or a pencil. You could also print out a phrase and trace it onto the fabric.



Thread the needle and work over the letters using backstitch. This is a series of small, straight stitches with no space between them. Use one length of thread for cursive words, or cut and knot the thread between letters. Repeat as needed.

Sweater Patches

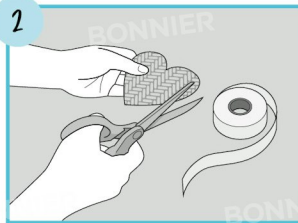
These used to be the staple for geography teachers the world over. Switching out leatherette patches for something a little more fun can give your sweater a preppy chic makeover.

You will need:

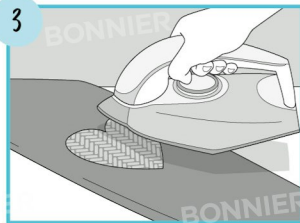
- Fabric
- Scissors
- Fusible glue or Bondaweb
- Sweater
- Iron



Select the fabric for your patch. Try a leopard print or a bold Harris Tweed for a striking finish.



Cut your chosen fabric and a piece of fusible glue or Bondaweb (heat-activated adhesive mesh). Try the classic oval shape or perhaps a bold love heart motif.



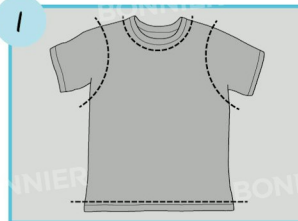
Put the fusible glue over the elbow on the sweater then place the fabric on top. Bond into place with a hot iron.

Racer Back Vest

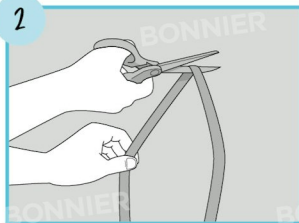
Give an old T-shirt a completely new look using only a pair of scissors.

You will need:

- Old T-shirt
- Fabric scissors



Use the scissors to cut off the sleeves, neckline and lower hem line.



Using the off cut from the lower hem, cut to create a single long strip.



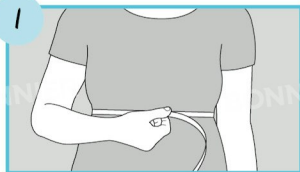
Wrap the strip around the upper back section where the shoulder blades will be. Draw in the strip to gather the fabric inwards and secure with a knot to create a racerback shape.

Simple Dress

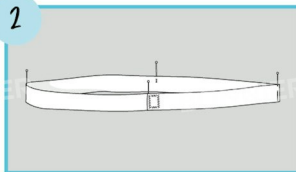
Transform an oversized T-shirt into a simple dress. Gathering the fabric of the T-shirt around your waist will give the new garment a more flattering shape.

You will need:

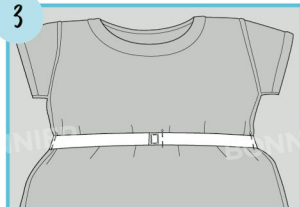
- Elastic • Oversized T-shirt
- Scissors • Needle • Thread • Pins



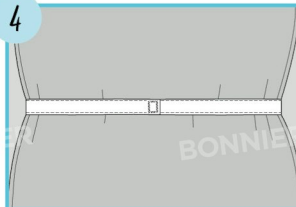
1 Measure a length of elastic around your waist where you want the material to gather. The elastic needs to be snug enough to hold around your waist, but stretchy enough to slip on over your head.



2 Overlap the ends of elastic by about 2-3 cm. Secure them with a zigzag stitch. Use pins to divide the circle of elastic into four.



3 With the T-shirt inside out, pin the elastic in place around the whole mid-section to make the waistband. The pins will be at the centre front, centre back and two sides.



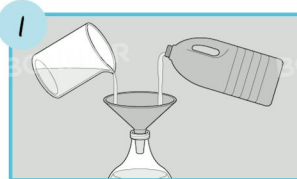
4 With a sewing machine, or using a needle and thread, work around the elastic with a straight or running stitch to secure the elastic waistband into place.

Bleach Out

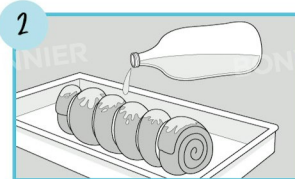
Tie-dye comes in and out of fashion but if a psychedelic style doesn't fit your current collection, try bleaching some designs onto old clothes. This works best with black or navy fabrics but will also lighten shades of rust and gold. You'll see the most successful results on cotton, linen, rayon and some polyesters.

You will need:

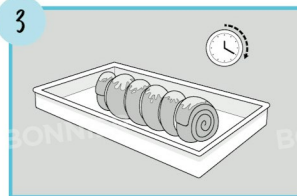
- Rubber gloves • Old sheet
- Bleach • Plastic jug • Old T-shirt
- Elastic bands • Plastic container



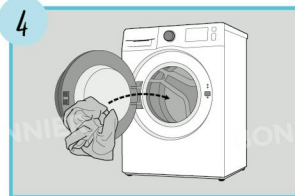
1 You can work with a neat bleach, or a mix of two parts bleach with one part water for a bleaching solution. Be sure to cover all surfaces and wear rubber gloves.



2 You can paint or carefully pour the bleach onto your item, or roll up your fabric into a tube, secure it with elastic bands and splatter it with the bleach.



3 Give your item a wide berth while you let the bleach take effect. Check it every five minutes, up to a maximum of 20 minutes, to protect your clothes from damage.



4 Wash the item in the washing machine. Afterwards, run the empty machine on a regular cycle to remove the bleach and stop the dyeing process.

CHAPTER 9

MAKING CLOTHES



SLOW FASHION

Much like home cooking, when you make clothes, you can pick the components and you are in charge of every stage of the process. This gives you absolute control over the finished piece and its fashion footprint. However, unless you are something of a superstar behind a sewing machine, or have lots of free time on your hands, you may not be stepping out in a brand-new outfit as often as you are used to.

If you decide that sewing your own clothes isn't for you, you can still take a moment to feel genuine appreciation for the labour that the often-underpaid garment workers the world over do every day. However, if you fancy making the odd piece, trying your hand at stitching or throwing caution to the wind and truly immersing yourself in slow fashion, here are a few things to consider.

Fabrics Finds

Try using materials that you have at home already. You can either upcycle garments, making something different, or take them apart and salvage the materials to create something entirely new. There is nothing to say that you can't use a pair of vintage curtains or a bed sheet as your fabric – look around and see what might enjoy a new life as a skirt!

SEWING SUPPLIES

Before you dive into buying lots of equipment, have a look in your local charity shop. It's a great way to try out a new skill without a huge financial commitment.

When heading to the craft store, look for natural organic materials. These are likely to have been manufactured in a more environmentally responsible manner. Salvage pretty scraps and keep them safe, as these are fantastic for making accessories or mending rips.

Sewing Patterns

There are a lot to choose from, and you can pick sewing patterns from large design houses or smaller indie designers. Shop around to find a brand that suits your style, body shape and ethical beliefs.

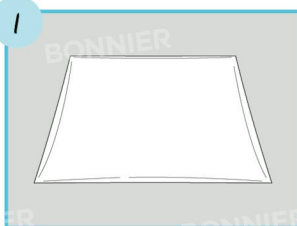
Sewing patterns, once cut, can be reused several times. Carefully fold them up and return them to the envelope. Many patterns come in multiple styles and sizes, and you can trace them onto a thin sheet of paper to keep the pattern intact. This will give you a duplicate that you can cut and customise as you like – perfect if you want to try a lot of styles and sizes from one pattern, or swap patterns with a crafty friend.

No-sew Wrap

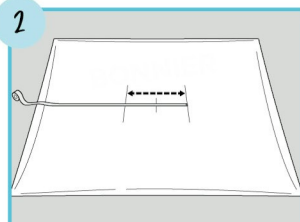
Just because you don't own a sewing machine doesn't mean you can't get in on the action. In fact, why not make something that doesn't require any sewing at all?

You will need:

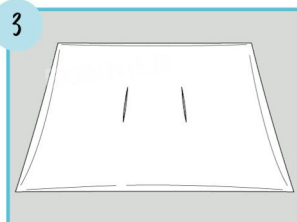
- Lightweight jersey fabric – enough to wrap around your body three times
- Ruler or tape measure
- Tailor's chalk or pencil
- Scissors



On a large, smooth surface, lay out your rectangle of jersey fabric, smoothing out all of the ripples and wrinkles.



With the fabric horizontal, use the ruler and chalk to mark out the centre. Then mark two parallel lines spaced equally from the centre, approximately 40-50 cm apart. These need to be positioned a third of the way down from the upper long edge, and these cuts need to be wider than the distance between your shoulder blades.



Use the scissors to make a neat cut down each of the two marked parallel lines. These will be the armholes. As this is made from a knitted fabric, the raw edges will roll under slightly and won't need any kind of finishing or hemming, unlike a woven fabric that would fray.

How to Wear your Wrap

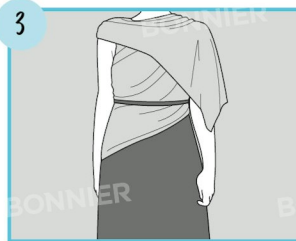
Layering is central to so many of our outfit choices, ticking boxes from style through to comfort when the seasons change. With minimal effort you've created a versatile wrap top that makes a cool cover-up for the summer, or a stylish layer for the cooler seasons.



Slip it on as you would a jacket, sliding your arms through the cuts to wear it as a waterfall front wrap.



Flip the fabric upside down so that the longer part below the armholes is at the top and slip it on like a jacket. The additional length can be wrapped around your neck like a shawl collar.



For a jacket style, cross over the two front panels in front of your body with the additional length pulled to the front. Secure it in place with a belt.

WHAT OTHER LOOKS CAN YOU CREATE?

TOO COOL FOR SCHOOL

Stitching is no longer the pastime of grannies and Girl Guides. Whether you have grand visions of creating your own fashion collection or you simply want to show those treasured pieces some TLC, sewing is an excellent skill that will help you to care for your clothes. It's time to thread up and get into action!

Sewing sessions can take any form. Maybe one of your mates is a whizz on a sewing machine? Fabulous - skill trading is 100 percent sustainable! Why not swap some of your cooking expertise or plant parent skills for a sewing lesson?

From real life lessons to YouTube sessions and online classes, there are loads of ways you can fit a sewing lesson into your schedule, whatever your skill level.

IRL Options

Look for beginner classes if you're just starting out. Some classes teach specific techniques which are great if you have some basic sewing knowledge, but you want to up your game, learn how to add a zip or to create buttonholes.

Workshops are great for getting the gang together for a weekend activity. Sessions will often walk you through an entire project, ensuring that you end up with a finished project to take home.

BOOKMARK THIS

If you're keen to start sewing, try these for starters:

- *The Sewing Directory* is a free resource that includes projects, features and technique guides.
- *Check out my stitching and craft tutorials on social media*
[@madepeachy](#)

Online Activities

YouTube is a font of knowledge. If you're looking for a refresher course, or some tips on a tricky technique, this is an excellent port of call. Many experienced stitchers swear by it. You can watch a video as you go and pause it while you work through the different stages.

One of the better things to come out of the COVID-19 pandemic is that the creative folk running independent sewing shops had to adapt their businesses to stay in the game. So, if you're inspired by a maker that lives halfway across the country - or the world - you may be able to connect with them for an online class.

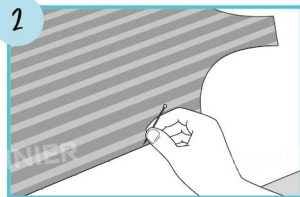
Clone-it-yourself

If you're confident on a sewing machine and you have a favourite top you wish you owned in every colour, try your hand at simple pattern drafting.

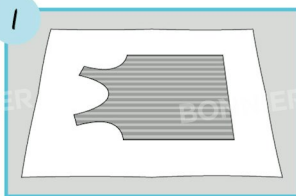
Count the elements that make up the item. For example, a long-sleeved top has a front, back and two arms so you will need to draft for each piece. The front and back pieces will be cut as direct copies of a flat pattern. The sleeves will need to be cut on the fold of the material so they open out to reveal the whole piece of fabric.

You will need:

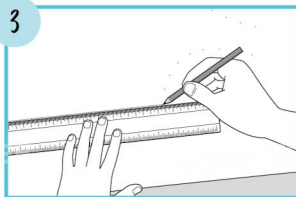
- Your favourite top
- A large sheet of paper
 - Pins
 - Pencil
 - Ruler
 - Fabric



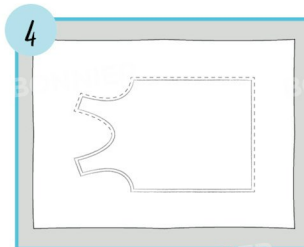
Using the tip of a pin, work around the outer edge of the item to mark the outline. By pushing the pin through the paper's surface, you will create an outline of dots around the first pattern piece.



Place the item onto the paper with the element you are drafting a pattern for facing upwards. Try to work on a slightly cushioned surface.



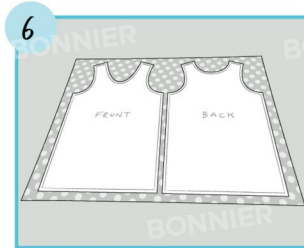
Remove the item from the paper. With a pencil and ruler, carefully draw around the shape you created, dot-to-dot style, to create the finished outline.



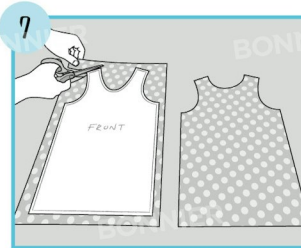
This outline is the sewing line. Add a seam allowance - the area between the cut edge of the fabric and the sewing line. With a ruler, measure a 1 cm to 1.5 cm border around the whole piece. The exact width doesn't matter, but be consistent.



Cut out the shape along the seam allowance line. This is your pattern piece. If the garment has a lot of pieces, write it on each element. Repeat these steps to create a pattern template for each element of your chosen item.



With your fabric right side up (the front of the material), position the pattern pieces across the surface. You may have to move them around to get the best placement. Check all the pieces fit as well as lining up any patterns or designs.



Pin the patterns in place before cutting around each piece. Then they are ready to be sewn together to make your brand-new cloned top!

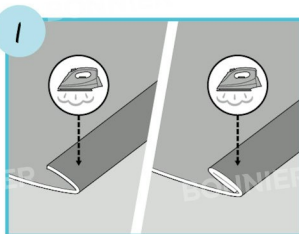
Once you have all of your pieces, place the right sides together and pin in place. Work with neat, straight stitches along each seam, following the sewing line. Once sewn together, turn out and iron to neaten the edges.

The Staple Skirt

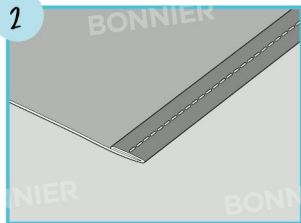
If you can sew a straight line on a sewing machine then you can make this skirt! The basic shape is a large rectangle - ensure the width is approximately 25 to 30 cm longer than your hip measurement. The length is up to you, but add in 2 cm to allow for the hem and a further 10 cm for the waistband.

You will need:

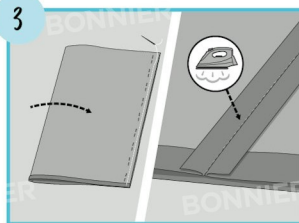
- Lightweight fabric - 2 m or enough to wrap around your waist 1.5-2 times
- Matching thread
- Scissors
- Pins
- Sewing machine
- Iron
- Tape measure
- Safety pin
- Wide elastic - 1.5 times longer than your waist measurement



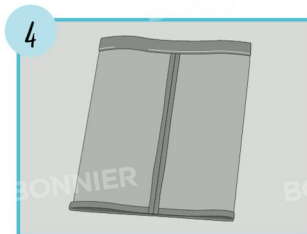
With the right side facing down, fold up 1 cm along the bottom towards the inside of the skirt. Press with an iron. Refold by another 1 cm and press again.



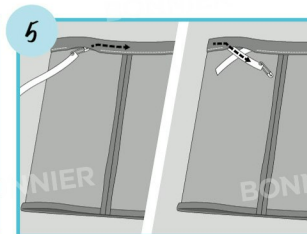
Work a line of straight stitches 0.5 cm from the lower edge, stitching through the double fold at the bottom. This creates a neat hem at the bottom of the skirt.



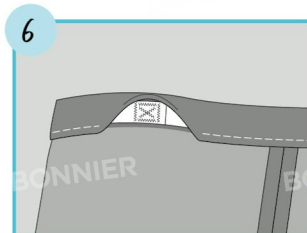
Fold the fabric in half, right side in, so that the two long, raw edges are aligned. Pin the fabric together and sew a line of straight stitch 1.5 cm from the raw edge. This is the centre back seam. With an iron, press the seam open so that it lies flat.



Fold over 5 cm to the wrong side (the back of the material) at the top of the skirt. Sew in place 0.5 cm from the raw edge. Leave around 3 cm unstitched at the top of the seam.



Fasten a safety pin to one end of the elastic and use this to guide it through the waistband. Slip on the skirt and pull the elastic for a good fit. Overlap the ends and pin in place. Remove the skirt and sew over the join in the elastic to secure it.



To finish, fold in the raw edges along the opening of the waistband and sew a line of stitches 1.5 cm in for a neat seam.



To finish, you could add an oversized patch on the front. Is there anything better than saying, 'Yes, I made it myself AND it has pockets!'

KNIT STAR

Do you know that feeling of being drawn to a charity shop jumper in your favourite colour, only to realise that the style would do nothing for you? Before you hang it back up, consider this: why not give it a second life by upcycling it?

If you have a knitted jumper in a great colour, either languishing in a drawer or from a charity shop, you can unravel the yarn and use it to knit something new. If you're a seasoned knitter, you will be able to recycle the yarn into anything your heart desires. The more novice among us can use this as a great way to try out a fun, creative hobby.

Pro tip: You will find the process more manageable if you pick a chunky knit, so look for jumpers with larger stitches. The yarn will be heavier, therefore it will be easier to unravel and re-knit.

Getting Unravelled

Starting at the neckline or waistband lower hem, make a small cut in the knitting and pull the first yarn tail. You may need to make a few snips in the yarn to release the stitches. Pull on the yarn and it will soon begin to unravel in rows.

Wind the yarn into a ball as you pull it to stop it from tangling. You may find that you need to stop and restart when you hit a seam. If so, you can simply make a new cut and start again, then join the yarns together with a small, neat knot, and continue unravelling.

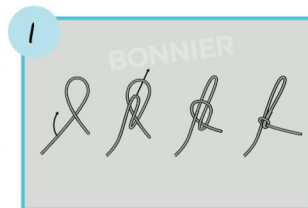
Don't be worried that the yarn resembles an old-school telephone cord, you will be able to knit with it just fine.

Knit a Recycled Scarf

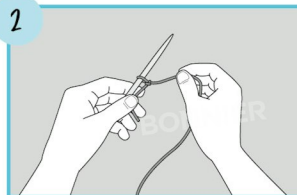
When it comes to knitting needles, they should be the same length as each other and roughly the same thickness as the yarn you are using. The instructions below are for someone right-handed. If you are left-handed, it will be opposite.

You will need:

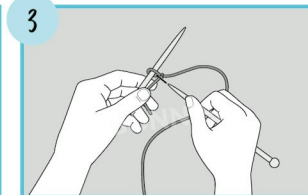
- Yarn from an old jumper
- Knitting needles
- Yarn needle (large eyed sewing needle)



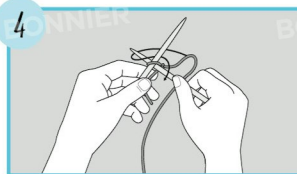
Cast on by making a slip knot and loop.



Slip the loop onto the end of the left-hand needle.

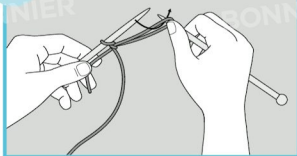


Insert the tip of the right-hand needle into the loop on the left-hand needle.



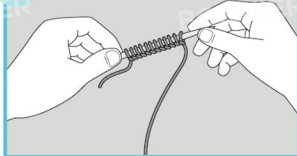
Wrap the tail of the yarn around the right-hand needle from back to front.

5



Use the needle to pull the yarn through the loop and then transfer it onto the left-hand needle. This is your first stitch!

6



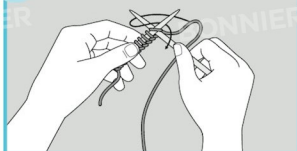
Repeat steps 2-5 to create a series of stitches on the right-hand needle. When you have a row of stitches the width you want your scarf to be, hold the needle with the stitches in your left hand.

7



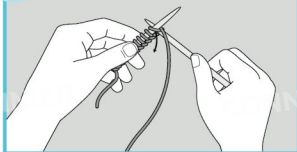
Insert the tip of the right-hand needle into the first loop on the left-hand needle.

8



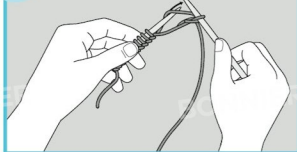
Bring the yarn around the tip of the right-hand needle from back to front.

9



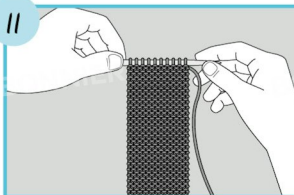
Then use the tip of the right-hand needle to guide the yarn back through the loop.

10



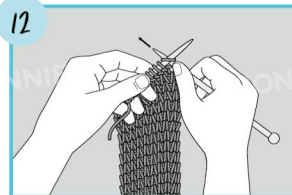
Leave this on the right-hand needle. This is the first knitted stitch.

11



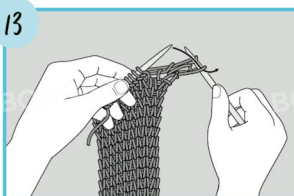
Repeat steps 7-10 to create a row with all of the stitches on the right-hand needle. Pass the needle with stitches to your left hand and repeat until the scarf is your desired length. This part can take some time!

12



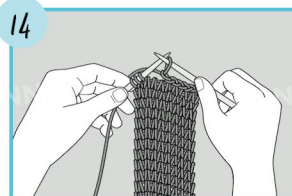
Now you need to cast off. Work the first stitch as usual: insert the right-hand needle tip into the first stitch on the left-hand needle, wrap the yarn, draw it through the loop and place it on the right-hand needle. Repeat with a second stitch.

13



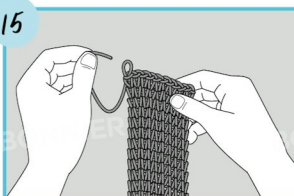
Insert the tip of the left-hand needle into the second stitch on the right-hand needle. Lift the stitch over the other and drop it off the needle. This locks the stitch in place and is now cast off.

14



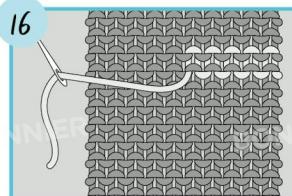
Knit the next stitch as usual so you have two stitches on the right-hand needle. Using the left-hand needle, lift the first stitch over the second again and drop. Continue along the row to cast off all the remaining stitches.

15



When you get to the last stitch, knit in the same way, then cut the yarn with a tail 15 cm long. Pass this through the last loop and draw it up to tighten.

16

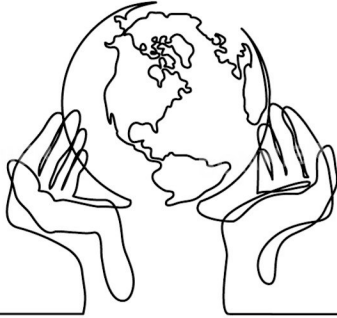


Take your yarn needle and weave in any ends by working the yarn under and over the stitches in one row. Once secure, cut the tail.



CHAPTER 10

MOMENTUM MOVING FORWARD



THINKING BIG

There is no denying that a lot of people making small changes does make a difference. Most of the things suggested in this book are things that we can do ourselves, and things that we can encourage those around us to do, too. But no style lover is an island, and while changing our shopping and laundry habits is excellent, there is a bigger picture to think about.

Keeping up to date with developments in current affairs, particularly stories relating to garment workers and the climate crisis, is a great way to stay on top of the most relevant information out there. Try adding filters or keywords to your chosen news app, or bookmark a few of your favourite eco-fashion bloggers. It can be easy to get caught up in signing petitions, yet never discover the outcome of them. Rather than showering your energy far and wide, try finding some activists you can relate to.

GET INVOLVED

Flip forward to the Shout Out page (page 157) to see some of our favourite activists and organisations. This list is growing by the day – be sure to add your top personalities to the mix!

You may feel moved by someone who is fighting for better working conditions for the 40 million people employed in the garment trade. Or you might prefer to challenge the clothing production practices that are endangering the planet. There is no harm in focusing on both causes, but remember to think of the long game. It might be better to support a few choice campaigns for years to come, until their goals are achieved, rather than to throw yourself into supporting lots of different movements.

Activists and organisations will be glad of your help. They often guide their followers through the steps that are required to achieve their desired outcome. After all, these guys are the experts. They might direct you towards petitions to sign, posts to share or events that you can be a part of.

SHARE YOUR VOICE

How many times have you thought to yourself, 'I'm going to write a strongly worded letter'? Joking aside, writing a letter is a great way to communicate your beliefs, to call for change and to ask for accountability.

As well as contacting brands directly (see pages 82–85), you can also contact your local politician. As a member of parliament (MP), they are your direct route to government and they can raise issues and help find a solution.

It is rumoured that handwritten communication is better received, but whether you send a letter or an email, it's best to be personal. Letter and email templates are good for giving guidance, but a simple copy and paste won't cut it. This communication needs to show that you have researched the issue you are raising and why, in your own words, you see this as an essential issue that needs urgent action.

FIND YOUR LOCAL MP

Head to

www.members.parliament.UK/FindYourMP

and insert your postcode to
locate the right person for
you to contact.

New message

To info@local.mp.com

Subject Fixing Fashion Report Findings

Dear Full Name, MP,

Allow me to introduce myself [insert brief description of yourself here]. I am a fashion lover with a strong interest in the world of ethical and sustainable fashion.

I am eager to gain your support on a matter of importance.

[Outline issue]

I have read the Environmental Audit Committee's Fixing Fashion Report. I am concerned about the impact of the existing fast fashion business model and how the government is currently dealing with the issues surrounding it.

[Share some research here]

The report put forward several recommendations that covered a wide range of issues, including carbon emissions, slavery and fair treatment in the workplace, microfibre pollution and an action plan for sustainable clothing. It also indicated that the government rejected the majority of these recommendations.

[Outline what you would like to see]

As a voter, I am keen to know what tangible changes are being made and how the relevant ministers are dealing with the pressing environmental and human impacts raised in the report.

[Conclude and show gratitude]

I look forward to hearing from you in due course and thank you in advance for your time.

Yours sincerely,

[Sign your name here]

SEND



GLOBAL COMMUNITY

The world of social media is fantastic for connecting with like-minded people. Who doesn't love to watch those #getreadywithme (#GRWM) reels and scroll away the day looking at gorgeous #OOTD (outfit of the day) posts? But, you can also use social media to support the movement for change, to challenge fast fashion and to push for a more sustainable circular fashion model.

According to marketing experts, Instagram is the social media network with the highest engagement rate for apparel. Since its launch in 2010, Instagram has grown to epic proportions and is now one of the world's biggest and most influential social media platforms. You can use hashtags to find things of interest and you can follow accounts of your favourite brands and personalities.

From activists to inspirational stylists, consider adding a few of these accounts to your social media feeds. It's a great way to check in on the current critical issues in the journey to sustainable, circular fashion. And you can pick up lots of styling tips and inspo along the way, too!

Don't miss these hashtags

#PayUp	#WhoMadeMyClothes
#WearYourValues	#WhatsInMyClothes
#RanaPlazaNeverAgain	#EarthDay
#GoTransparent	#LowImpact
#PayYourWorkers	#RewearThat
#RespectLabourRights	#StyledSustainable
	#Project333

Positive Influencers

Check out some of these resources dedicated to garment workers, ethical style, conscious consuming and global and environmental issues.

@Aditimayer Aditi Mayer

Photojournalist focused on decolonizing fashion, sustainability and social justice.

@Themiminalists

Joshua Fields Milburn and Ryan Nicodemus help people evaluate their consumerism and live meaningful lives with less.

@CleanClothesCampaign

A campaign focusing on improving the working conditions in the global garment industry.

@LabourBehindTheLabel

Non-profit, anti-sweatshop organisation campaigning to improve conditions and empower workers in the garment industry.

@Remakeourworld

Global movement focusing on educating and promoting sustainable and ethical values in fashion.

@RememberWhoMadeThem

A campaign dedicated to support the workers in the global garment industry.

@Fash_Rev Fashion Revolution

A global movement for the fashion industry that focuses on ethical practices. Founder of Fashion Revolution Week.

@Pattiegonia Pattie Gonia

Queer environmentalist building community for queer people, allies and the planet.

@SlowFashion.Movement

A global movement that focuses on slow fashion and pushing for change from the fashion industry.

@Project333 Courtney Carver

Author and creator of the fashion challenge Project 333, encouraging people to try a capsule wardrobe.

@ChicksForClimate

A dedicated account focusing on issues of feminism and environmentalism.

@Greenpeace

The official account dedicated to environmental issues and aiming to bring about a positive change to the planet.

I'd love to hear how you're trying to fix your fashion, too! Connect with me on Facebook or Instagram [@madepeachy](#) or through my website, www.madepeachy.com.

THE ROAD AHEAD

When you initially thought about taking action against fast fashion to change the world, it sounded like an epic job. Now, you can feel empowered, knowing that there are so many different ways that you can help, starting by making a few tweaks to your everyday life.

Just like that new handbag that your friends will spot from a mile off, don't be surprised when people start to notice your sparkling new attitude. I said ethical fashion would look good on you, didn't I?

Taking time to research and change your own practices is an excellent way to help fix fashion, but if you keep the conversation going, your efforts will grow exponentially.



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