

Eastern Kentucky University

Encompass

Honors Theses

Student Scholarship

Spring 2024

The Ultimate How-To Guide: Addressing Sustainability in Fashion

Corinne R. Campbell

Eastern Kentucky University, corinne_campbell134@mymail.eku.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://encompass.eku.edu/honors_theses

Recommended Citation

Campbell, Corinne R., "The Ultimate How-To Guide: Addressing Sustainability in Fashion" (2024). *Honors Theses*. 1037.

https://encompass.eku.edu/honors_theses/1037

This Open Access Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at Encompass. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of Encompass. For more information, please contact laura.edwards@eku.edu.

Eastern Kentucky University

The Ultimate How-To Guide: Addressing Sustainability in Fashion

Honors Thesis

Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment

of the

Requirements of HON 420

Spring 2024

By

Corinne Campbell

Mentor

Dr. Catherine L. Stearn

History, Philosophy, and Religious Studies

Abstract

Every year, the pollution in our world increases but few people have addressed this issue. Between the culture of consumerism, little to no recycling, and lack of education, it can feel difficult as a regular person to make a difference. However, it is not impossible. As the consumer, the general public has the ability to enact change. While sustainability in the fashion industry may seem unattainable, making progressive changes in the manufacturing and buying process of clothing will make fashion more eco-friendly over time. With the proper education and guidance, anyone can make more sustainable fashion choices without going outside their price range. Making big, expensive changes all at once is not the way to go. Instead, consider what switches could be made easily, such as buying clothing from “low-end” stores. However, if the resources are possessed to make more permanent changes then consider shopping from fully sustainable brands or making clothing from scratch. These are not the only changes that can be made, but they do represent a large portion of the spectrum of more sustainable purchases. We have the power to make change happen.

Keywords: Pollution, Consumerism, Sustainability, Fashion Industry, Clothing, Sustainable Brands.

Table on Contents

Introduction.....	1
Beginner.....	4
Intermediate.....	8
Thriftig.....	9
Hand-Me-Downs.....	12
Pro.....	14
High-End Sustainable Brands.....	14
Mending Clothing.....	21
Ultimate.....	23
Yarn.....	25
Other Supplies.....	27
Where to Learn Crochet.....	29
Conclusion.....	30
Bibliography.....	32

Acknowledgements

I want to thank my mentor, my friends, and my family. Dr. Stearn, thank you so much for seeing the potential in me and my project. Thank you for being flexible when I changed my thesis from the history of crochet to sustainability in fashion, and thank you for keeping me on track to complete this paper and my corresponding project. Chloe, thank you for listening to me rant about everything I needed to have in this paper and everything that I have learned. Thank you for listening to me being a little crazy at 8:00pm, after we finished dinner, talking about how I am so tired but I still have so much to do and also need to be in bed in an hour. Andrew, thank you for all your long distance support, hilarious FaceTime calls, and listening to me talk about my thesis at all hours of the day and night. Mom, Dad, and Conner, thank you for supporting me as I have constantly added things to my schedule to accomplish everything I could hope to achieve and thank you for keeping my head on straight.

To all my friends, family, and professors, thank you for supporting me as I have changed my major and life plan. The last year has been a wild ride, but I could not imagine going through it with any better people than those I have in my life. I cannot wait to see what the future will bring.

Introduction

Every year, the pollution in our world increases. Yet, it seems that many people are not tackling, or even talking about, one of the largest polluting industries: fashion. The fashion industry is responsible for upwards of eight percent of the world's carbon emissions and twenty percent of the global waste water.¹ These emissions come from the dyeing and manufacturing process of clothing; however, many people do not know this because of the mental disconnect between other sustainable life practices and buying sustainable clothing.² While some consumers may understand that the chemicals used on their produce is damaging for the environment, they do not always connect that the chemicals used in the dyeing and manufacturing process of their clothing are also very harmful.³ This can sometimes be because seeing is believing, such as when hotels post how much energy and detergent a load of towels takes to wash so hotel patrons end up using their towels more than once.⁴ Since many consumers cannot see how harmful the

¹ Kerrice Bailey, Aman Basu, and Sapna Sharma, "The Environmental Impacts of Fast Fashion on Water Quality: A Systematic Review," *Water* 14, no. 1073, (2022), 1.

² Annamma Joy et al, "Fast Fashion, Sustainability, and the Ethical Appeal of Luxury Brands." *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 16, no. 3, (2012), 277.

³ Alyce McGovern and Clementine Barnes, "Visible Mending, Street Stitching, and Embroidered Handkerchiefs: How Craftivism Is Being Used to Challenge the Fashion Industry," *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy* 11, no. 2, (2022), 89.

⁴ Gerd Bohner and Lena E. Schluter, "A Room with a Viewpoint Revisited: Descriptive Norms and Hotel Guests' Towel Reuse Behavior," *Plos One* 9, no. 8, (2014), 1.

fashion industry is, it makes it more difficult to understand. Another little known fact is that the fashion industry produces more carbon emissions than international flights and shipping combined, and uses ninety-three billion cubic meters of water every year.⁵ That high amount of water usage is concerning because so many people do not have access to a stable, safe water source. In addition to high pollution rates and high water usage, the fashion industry, particularly in fast fashion, also contributes to the exploitation of garment workers who are primarily women.⁶ In Australia, 77% of those employed in the garment and textile industries are women.⁷ Only at the highest level of fashion do we see mostly male employment, meaning that the most vulnerable employees in this industry, garment makers, are primarily women.⁸ Work completed by women is already typically undervalued, but for years manufacturers in the fashion industry have been paying unfair wages, exposing employees to harmful working conditions, not fulfilling health and safety requirements, and not fulfilling labor rights.⁹ These labor rights include the freedom of association, collective bargaining, and the right to organize.¹⁰

These women employed in fast fashion make much of the clothing we wear everyday. The clothes themselves are typically made out of completely virgin materials, or materials that are being used for the first time to make the clothing. However, virgin does not mean natural and wasteless. In fact, using virgin materials is very wasteful because of how many offcuts and clothes donated to second hand stores go unused and

⁵ Kerrice Bailey, Aman Basu, and Sapna Sharma, “The Environmental Impacts of Fast Fashion on Water Quality,” 1.

⁶ Natalya Lusty, “Fashion Futures and Critical Fashion Studies,” *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 35, no. 6, (2021), 815. Fast fashion refers to garments produced as quickly and cheaply as possible, exploiting the workers and environment in the process.

⁷ Natalya Lusty, 815.

⁸ Natalya Lusty, 815.

⁹ Natalya Lusty, 815; McGovern and Barnes, “Visible Mending, Street Stitching, and Embroidered Handkerchiefs,” 89.

¹⁰ McGovern and Barnes, 89. These rights together form the right of unionization.

end up in landfills, shipped offshore to developing nations, or are incinerated.¹¹

Approximately one garbage truck every second carries materials that meet one of these fates.¹² Instead of these materials going unused or destroyed, they could be used to make mixed fiber yarn. This material could be used to once again make clothing that has similar properties to completely virgin materials, if mixed at the property ratio. For example, research performed on 75% virgin cotton yarn and 25% recycled yarn does not show a large alteration of any aspect of the yarn, including tenacity, elongation, hairiness, and imperfections.¹³ These are the aspects of the yarn that control clothing performance, such as how many times the article can be washed before ripping, how long that article will stay “looking new,” and if the article will stretch out or shrink.

Unfortunately, mixed fiber clothing can be difficult to recycle because traditional recycling methods rely on separating each individual material, instead of recycling it as a mixed fiber unit and branding it as such.¹⁴ Because of its difficulty to recycle, mixed fiber clothing is an additional barrier in the sustainable fashion movement, but they are also typically cheaper to buy than other clothing made of just one, natural fiber. This guide is not to shame anyone for not buying what they cannot afford, but it is to recognize that many families have to choose with their wallets and would still love to buy clothes that are better for our world.¹⁵ This guide is to provide access to more sustainable practices at a variety of knowledge and price points because, while sustainability in the fashion

¹¹ McGovern and Barnes, “Visible Mending, Street Stitching, and Embroidered Handkerchiefs,” 89. Incineration may seem like a viable solution, however the burning of clothes sends smoke and toxins into the air and leaves ash behind as a byproduct.

¹² McGovern and Barnes, 89.

¹³ G.M. Faysal et al. “Sustainable Yarn Production Using Leftover Fabric from Apparel Industries.” *Heliyon* 8, no. 11, (2022), 4.

¹⁴ McGovern and Barnes, 89.

¹⁵ Cindy D. Kam and Maggie Deichert. “Boycotting, Buycotting, and the Psychology of Political Consumerism,” *Journal of Politics* 82, no. 1, (2020), 84.

industry may seem unattainable, making progressive changes in the buying and manufacturing process of clothing will make fashion more eco-friendly over time.

The following sections will demonstrate examples of more sustainable fashion and how to implement them into life effectively. The sections are labeled as beginner, intermediate, pro, and ultimate. The beginner section will consist of learning how to switch to more sustainable fashion choices and what to look for when making this switch. The intermediate section will include making sustainable fashion practices part of a larger lifestyle choice, such as intentionally going thrifting and/or accepting hand-me-down clothing. In the pro section, what makes a high-end sustainable brand will be discussed to give the luxury consumer all the information to make the right choice for them. Also in this section, the mending of clothing will be discussed so they can be worn longer and upcycling, which is where clothing that would normally be thrown away is altered to extend its wearability by the owner, will be discussed. In the ultimate section, making clothing will be discussed as a statement against fast fashion. This section will also address different material choices that change the level of sustainability a garment has when making clothes from scratch. However, it is important to remember that any garment made by hand, regardless of the materials used, is more sustainable than fast fashion.

While all of these changes may seem small when looking at them individually, they can enact change. Large corporations will continue to produce harmful fashion until consumers stop buying from them. They will only change when we do, and we hold the power.

Beginner

Entering a clothing store can be very intimidating, especially when there is a strict budget that must be followed since most have to make decisions based on what is in their wallet.¹⁶ This space can feel even more intimidating when the consumer knows most, if not all, of the clothes are made with fast fashion. It can be very difficult to avoid purchasing fast fashion when shopping on a budget, but it is not impossible.

One company that is taking many steps in the right direction is Walmart. Walmart has committed to “source key fibers like cotton, polyester, and manmade cellulosic fibers more sustainably.”¹⁷ According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, cotton makes up 25% of all fiber used around the world and the United States is one of the leading producers and exporters.¹⁸ Walmart has recognized that cotton is a very versatile fiber, but also that it requires large amounts of land, water, and other natural resources. Because of this, they have committed to using more sustainable cotton in order to work “to continuously improve environmental and social performance on the fields where cotton is grown.”¹⁹ This includes maximizing land use, improving the health of the soil, optimizing water and chemical usage, decreasing energy usage and carbon emissions, and promoting better working conditions for the farmers.²⁰

Taking all of these improvements into consideration makes Walmart a very easy store to switch to when trying to avoid the worst of fast fashion. They still sell most of

¹⁶ Cindy D. Kam and Maggie Deichert. “Boycotting, Buycotting, and the Psychology of Political Consumerism,” 84.

¹⁷ “Product Sustainability,” Walmart Sustainability Hub. Accessed February 25, 2024. <https://www.walmartsustainabilityhub.com/sustainable-products>.

¹⁸ “Cotton and Wool,” U.S. Department of Agriculture. Accessed February 25, 2024. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/crops/cotton-and-wool/>.

¹⁹ “Product Sustainability,” Walmart Sustainability Hub.

²⁰ “Product Sustainability,” Walmart Sustainability Hub.

their products at an affordable price, and these products are better for the environment than other budget retailers. Individual brands sold at Walmart are at different points of sustainability, but two brands stand out more than the rest. One of them is called *Kindly Yours*, which primarily sells women's undergarments and has committed to using at least 75% recycled materials in their products.²¹ When looking at their prices, the vast majority of products sell for under fifteen dollars and frequently go on sale. In addition to this, they use plant based material in many of their products instead of the traditional plastic.²² The material feels very soft on the skin, is machine washable, and holds up to countless wears. It has quickly become a very popular brand at Walmart because of its affordability, and it has the added benefit of being better for the environment.

Another brand sold at Walmart that has been making headway in sustainability is *No Boundaries*, which carries both men's and women's apparel, as well as a clothing line "designed with the planet in mind." This slogan is printed on the paper tags attached to the clothing to denote that it contains recycled materials and/or Better Cotton. While the quality of clothing from this brand has been increasing since they were first introduced in 2019, the price has stayed affordable.²³ A sturdy bathing suit can be purchased for under twenty dollars when a similar style suit would easily cost forty to fifty dollars at another store.²⁴ In addition to this, a bathing suit purchased from *No Boundaries* would contain nearly one hundred percent recycled materials while competing suits are normally made of virgin materials. One caveat about this brand is that the clothing they carry are junior styles, meaning that they are typically made for teens and young adults. Therefore, their

²¹ "We Are Kindly," Kindly. Accessed October 15, 2023. <https://thisiskindly.com/>.

²² "We Are Kindly," Kindly.

²³ "Introducing No Boundaries," YouTube, July 25, 2019. <https://youtu.be/BsGQf0APh5E?feature=shared>.

²⁴ "No Boundaries Swim," Walmart. Accessed February 26, 2024. <https://www.walmart.com/search?q=no%2Bboundaries%2Bswim>.

size range could use some work, but they do generally range from an extra small to an extra extra large.²⁵ Because of their work to be more sustainable and cheap prices, *No Boundaries* has become a staple of Walmart fashion that can last in any wardrobe. With their low prices and commitment to sustainability now and in the future, Walmart has become a very good place to start purchasing clothing that is better for the planet.

Other brick and mortar stores with commitments to sustainability include, but are not limited to:

- *Kohl's* has reduced greenhouse gas emissions, reduced the amount of waste headed to landfills, and increased their sustainable material usage.²⁶
- *JCPenney* has a five year plan in place to move toward using one hundred percent sustainable materials in their private label apparel and home products by 2026.²⁷
- *T.J. Maxx* has set goals to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2040, one hundred percent renewable energy sources by 2030, reduce landfill waste by eighty-five percent by 2027, and change to one hundred percent reusable/recyclable/contains sustainable materials packaging by 2030.²⁸

There are also a variety of online exclusive options. Two of which are:

- *Earth Hero* is an online store similar to Amazon and they offer products from a variety of sustainable brands that they assess through their “5-Pillar

²⁵ “No Boundaries Swim,” Walmart.

²⁶ “Environmental Sustainability,” Kohl’s. Accessed March 20, 2024.

<https://corporate.kohls.com/corporate-responsibility/sustainability>.

²⁷ “Environmental Sustainability,” JCPenney. Accessed March 20, 2024.

<https://companyblog.jcpnewsroom.com/corporateresponsibility/environment-sustainability/>.

²⁸ “Environment,” TJX. Accessed March 20, 2024.

<https://www.tjx.com/corporate-responsibility/environment/overview>.

Sourcing Methodology.”²⁹ They are also a Certified B Corp, a member of 1% for the planet, and are Certified Carbon Neutral.³⁰ Unfortunately, as of right now, they only ship within the United States, to Puerto Rico, and US military bases, but they are trying to expand into international shipping.³¹

- *Project Cece* is similar to Earth Hero in the way that it is a website with many curated brands and shops all located in the same site. This allows the consumer to scroll through many different kinds of clothing without having to worry about whether or not they were ethically made. They are more expensive than the other previously mentioned locations, however they have frequent sales and all products are made with free trade and ethical production methods.³² All products are also made with at least seventy percent sustainable materials.³³

Intermediate

Choosing to buy from stores with commitments to becoming more sustainable is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to beginning a journey in sustainable lifestyle choices. There are many facets of living a sustainable life and many resources available to provide a starting point. However, a good portion of these resources do not connect sustainable fashion to an overall sustainable lifestyle. Making this connection is vital in the pursuit of living a life that causes the least damage to the planet; however, fast fashion

²⁹ “Our Story,” EarthHero. Accessed March 20, 2024. <https://earthhero.com/pages/our-story>; “Our 5 Pillars of Sustainable Sourcing,” EarthHero. Accessed March 20, 2024.

<https://earthhero.com/pages/our-5-pillars-of-sustainable-sourcing>.

³⁰ “Our Impact,” EarthHero. Accessed March 20, 2024. <https://earthhero.com/pages/impact>.

³¹ “FAQ,” EarthHero. Accessed March 20, 2024. <https://earthhero.com/pages/faq>.

³² “Project Cece Sustainability Standards,” Project Cece. Accessed March 20, 2024.

<https://www.projectcece.com/sustainability-standards/>.

³³ “Project Cece Sustainability Standards,” Project Cece.

provides a source of instant gratification that the modern brain craves because of its quick production time and low cost to the consumer.³⁴ This allows for the continual reinvention of the self, but it comes at a cost to the planet.³⁵ Although reinvention also comes at a cost, it can also serve a valuable purpose. Some consumers are becoming disillusioned with the state of the fashion industry and how it is promoting mindless consumption of unneeded fashion.³⁶ They are recognizing the harm it is doing to a variety of ecosystems and are choosing to align with “ecologically sustainable fashion.”³⁷ This does not mean that consumers have to stop buying any and all clothing, though mindful consumption of fashion is another way to reduce the impact we have on the planet, and that every piece of clothing bought has to be made from recycled materials or that clothing purchased must only be timeless pieces. Two easy ways to find “new-to-you” pieces and feel a similar sense of gratification are by choosing to go thrifting for clothing and accepting hand-me-down clothes that still have use left in them. Both of these are great options to get new clothing to satisfy the part of the brain that is always craving adventure and freshness. It also prevents many clothes from going to a landfill.

Thrifting

Thrifting is one of the easiest ways to find secondhand clothing at a fraction of a cost to the original product. It also comes at a fraction of the cost to the environment. While the articles of clothing that can be purchased are still likely fast fashion, they are being prevented from contributing more to pollution when they are purchased secondhand. Nonetheless, this only results in pollution reduction if secondhand purchases

³⁴ Annamma Joy et al, “Fast Fashion, Sustainability, and the Ethical Appeal of Luxury Brands,” 276.

³⁵ Annamma Joy et al, 277.

³⁶ Annamma Joy et al, 277.

³⁷ Annamma Joy et al, 277.

are made instead of buying firsthand, not alongside them.³⁸ This means a consumer with a mind for sustainability should choose to thrift first before going to a department store and that clothing should not be bought solely for the purpose of owning more clothing or only to wear it once. Clothing should be bought with the intention of wearing until they cannot be worn anymore.

When it comes to thrifting, there are several options to choose from, but also several things to consider. Some things to consider as a consumer would be the ability to try the clothes on before purchasing, personal values held, values that the store holds, budget, ability for clothing to be delivered, and geographic location of the consumer's residence. These are all personal decisions that individual consumers will make for themselves. Even with many personal decisions to make, the age of technology has improved the ability of the consumer to be able to find secondhand clothing for sale.³⁹

Found below is a non-exhaustive list of secondhand clothing resources:

- *Goodwill* is a chain of stores found across the United States and in several other countries. Several locations have changing rooms where clothing can be tried on to see how well it fits. Goodwill also provides career training to employees in fields like banking, technology, and health care, as well as access to childcare, transportation, and English language training.⁴⁰ Most clothes are casual and affordable, but dress clothes can also be found.
- *Plato's Closet* is also a chain of stores that is located within the United States and Canada. They buy and sell gently used clothing, which means if

³⁸ Sarah Gray et al, "Reducing the Environmental Impact of Clothing: An Exploration of the Potential of Alternative Business Models," *Sustainability* 14, no. 10, (2022), 17-18.

³⁹ Cosette M. Joyner Armstrong and Hyejune Park, "Online Clothing Resale: A Practice Theory Approach to Evaluate Sustainable Consumption Gains," *Journal of Sustainability Research*, (2020), 2.

⁴⁰ "About," Goodwill. Accessed March 21, 2024. <https://www.goodwill.org/about/>.

the consumer has good quality clothing they want to get rid of, Plato's Closet may make them an offer.⁴¹ Each location is locally owned and operated and prices can be up to seventy percent off retail.⁴² The clothing found at Plato's Closet typically follows the latest fashion trends so please buy wisely and choose clothing that will be worn more than once.

- *Poshmark* is an online platform where individuals can buy and sell clothing. They carry luxury brands such as Gucci, Louis Vuitton, and Prada, but also have clothing from locations like Target. Within the platform, the consumer can customize their price range and what kind of products they are looking to purchase. Since they allow individuals to sell their clothing through the website, Poshmark can also be a good option for consumers who are looking to give the clothes they no longer wear to a new home before bringing in more.
- *ThredUp* is similar to Poshmark. They also carry both luxury and non-luxury brands and allow consumers to sell their unused clothing through their website. Unlike Poshmark, ThredUp has made clear progress to be more sustainable and have initiatives in place to make them more sustainable in the coming years.⁴³

One of the most important things to consider when thrifting is location. Some chains that are available in the United States are not available in other countries and some online platforms only sell to certain geographic regions. That is why it is the consumer's

⁴¹ "About Plato's Closet," Plato's Closet. Accessed March 21, 2024.

<https://platoscloset.com/about/?country=US>.

⁴² "Shop In-Store," Plato's Closet. Accessed March 21, 2024.

<https://platoscloset.com/shop-in-store/?country=US>.

⁴³ "Our Impact," ThredUp. Accessed March 21, 2024. <https://www.thredup.com/about>.

responsibility to research what locations are near them and what sites will sell to their geographic region.

Thrifting for everyday clothing is important, but so is thrifting when on vacation. Many individuals love to come home with clothing that reflects the culture of the location they visited. What better way is there to do this than to buy clothing that has been worn by people of that culture beforehand! A common country to visit as an American citizen is England, and while there are Goodwill locations there, there are also local thrift chains. One of these chains is called Traid. They are located primarily in and around London and are the only charity in the United Kingdom that generates all funds through the sale of secondhand clothing.⁴⁴ They are on a mission to support and empower those who contribute to the fashion industry, as well as advocate for a better industry altogether.⁴⁵ Traid is not unique. There are stores like this all across the world. A prospective buyer only has to do an internet search for “charity thrift stores near me” to find a new adventure in their location of choice that aligns with their values.

Hand-Me-Downs

Another easy way to find secondhand clothing is by accepting hand-me-downs instead of purchasing something new. Typically in a working class family with multiple children, wearing hand-me-down clothing becomes the standard of life. In a world of rising prices and non-corresponding wages, this is more common than ever; however, because of the internet, it is also easier than ever to find secondhand clothing from others in the surrounding community. While hand-me-down clothes are usually traded between relatives, there are now spaces on social media specifically for giving away and receiving

⁴⁴ “About Us,” Traid. Accessed March 21, 2024. <https://traid.org.uk/about-traid/>.

⁴⁵ “About Us,” Traid.

clothes from other families. These groups are most common for families with young children that are quickly outgrowing baby and toddler clothing, but clothes can also be found from adults who do not want to hold onto clothes that they cannot wear anymore.

One of the many places to find spaces for the trading of clothing is Meta, better known as Facebook. Facebook is an online, social media platform intended to help people connect with and find communities.⁴⁶ Since Meta/Facebook is designed to build communities, the search function works much like Google and any group that could be desired to be found is only a search away. By typing in “trade clothing,” a variety of groups that buy, sell, and trade immediately appear, and they appear for many different types of clothing. This means that if clothing for young children is needed they can be found, but so can clothes for someone who has a more alternative style or a harder to find size. Along with the ability to find any type of clothing desired/needed, clothing from a wide variety of geographic regions can be found as well and so can clothing from traders that are willing to ship packages to others that may be too far away to come and pick up items at a neutral location. Finding a community of clothing traders can be a good give-and-take relationship that can also lead to finding new friends outside of swapping clothes. If clothing is given or received numerous times from the same person, a bond can be formed through frequent chats and can lead to a lasting friendship.

Accepting hand-me-down clothing may seem like taking someone else's garbage to the uneducated mind, but clothes that are being traded still have much wear left in them. Giving clothes away for free is also typically the last resort for rehoming pieces that are no-longer worn so those who take hand-me-downs are saving clothing from a landfill. The situation is a win-win.

⁴⁶ “About,” Meta. Accessed March 22, 2024. <https://about.meta.com/>.

Pro

Increasing sustainability through shopping for secondhand clothing is an amazing way to reduce the amount of clothing that goes to a landfill and to reduce the carbon footprint at the individual level. In some cases though, secondhand clothing will not provide for the needs and/or wants of the customer. This could be because they are accustomed to a certain lifestyle that is more luxurious than the average person or maybe they have different needs when it comes to clothing. Regardless, two ways to prove a higher commitment to the environment are through shopping from high-end sustainable brands and by choosing to mend the clothing that is already owned. Both of these actions take much more time and consideration than other forms of more sustainable shopping.

High-End Sustainable Brands

When buying clothing, if the consumer is already familiar with paying luxury prices then they will be able to afford paying for sustainable brands. The difficult part comes in when trying to find ethically and sustainably produced designer brands and not knowing what indicates an ethical or sustainable brand. Below is a list of seven areas to be considered when looking for sustainable products from high-end brands:

- *Transparency* is how easily a company's business practices are found.

When business practices are clearly laid out in an informational page then a consumer can decide whether or not that company aligns with their values. However, many corporations will be intentionally vague with details about how they run their business, what materials they use, where their materials are sourced from, and how they treat their employees.

When there is vagueness in descriptions it can be assumed to be because

they do not want the consumers to know the unethical practices they use in their production methods. Reports of production methods for major companies exist, but by making them difficult for consumers to find, it makes the consumer less likely to boycott since they cannot find out what shady business practices they use. However, if a company has full transparency of their methods, they are likely to be true to what they have claimed.⁴⁷ Otherwise, they leave themselves open to a lawsuit if they are found to be lying.

- Vagueness can be seen in H&M's sustainability webpage by having to go through multiple links and make separate searches to find where, how, and with what the products are made.⁴⁸ This is also known as greenwashing because it makes consumers think a company is doing more for the environment than they actually are.⁴⁹ It leads a company to make more sales at the expense of their customers' values.
- *Material* is what fibers, man-made or natural, a clothing brand uses to make their products. Much of modern clothing is made with man-made fibers that produce high amounts of harmful emissions and/or byproducts, such as microplastics, so when looking for a sustainable brand the materials the company typically uses should be checked.⁵⁰ Natural fibers produce less harmful emissions if they are cultivated and sourced properly

⁴⁷ Mariam Simmons, "How to Find Sustainable Fashion Brands in 7 Easy Steps," Recycle Coach. Accessed March 22, 2024. <https://recyclecoach.com/blog/how-to-find-sustainable-fashion-brands-in-7-easy-steps/>.

⁴⁸ "Sustainability," H&M. Accessed April 2, 2024. https://www2.hm.com/en_us/sustainability-at-hm.html.

⁴⁹ "Greenwashing - The Deceptive Tactics Behind Environmental Claims," United Nations. Accessed April 2, 2024. <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/climate-issues/greenwashing>.

⁵⁰ Mariam Simmons, Recycle Coach.

and are more long lasting than most man-made materials. Some natural fibers, like bamboo, also have a relatively short growing time and are a good option for the future of more affordable and more sustainable clothing.⁵¹

- *Color/Dyeing Process* is typically a chemical and water heavy process. It can take as much as 10,000-20,000 liters of water to produce a pair of jeans and a t-shirt.⁵² This much water would take at least thirteen years for a single person to drink.⁵³ When looking for sustainable brands, focus on finding companies that prioritize low water consumption [and a water treatment system] so that their waste water does not harm the environment once it is re-released.
- *Packaging* is often a part of the shopping process that is not considered by consumers, but it can contribute a lot to pollution and waste. When purchasing from a physical store, bringing reusable bags in tow can help to curb needless plastic consumption. When purchasing online, look into what materials companies use to ship their products. More times than not, items are packaged in plastic and plastic will be used to fill the box up the rest of the way so items do not slide around during shipping. This is a very wasteful process that has to be considered when trying to reduce pollution created by the fashion industry. A consumer should do research into a company before buying to see how their products are packaged.

⁵¹ Miranda Howard, "How Fast Does Bamboo Grow?," Bumboo. Accessed March 22, 2024. <https://www.bumboo.eco/en-us/blogs/news/how-fast-does-bamboo-grow>.

⁵² "New 2 Me Rethink the Way You Shop," Climate Emergency JSY. Accessed March 22, 2024. <https://www.gov.je/SiteCollectionDocuments/Environment%20and%20greener%20living/New%202%20Me%20facts%20to%20print%20or%20share%201441%20KB.pdf>.

⁵³ "New 2 Me Rethink the Way You Shop," Climate Emergency JSY.

- Kohl's is listed in the Beginner section for stores that are trying to be more sustainable, but when they ship clothing, they use bubble wrap to fill empty space above the clothes. They also package the clothes in plastic before putting them in the box and they use plastic instead of paper tape.
- *Philanthropy* relates most to values that a company holds. A sustainable company will give back to a community that their leaders view as a worthy cause, and they will define what their intentions are for supporting that cause. A company may choose to give back to the local community in ways that are not only donating money. This can include, but is not limited to, providing scholarships, educational opportunities, and enrichment programs. On the other hand, a company may choose to support a global cause or a community that is in another geographic region. These efforts could include donating proceeds to animal conservation, pollution reduction, or water sanitation. A company having this level of social responsibility is usually more transparent about the cause(s) they support, which allows the consumer to choose whether or not the individual company aligns with their personal values.
- *Working conditions* are quite literally what conditions the employees have to endure while they are working. A common trend in the fashion industry is the exploitation of their employees. A sustainable company will pay their employees livable wages, provide safe and clean working conditions, and allow for time off of work. They will also not use any sort of child

labor. This aspect can be difficult to check reliably, but it is worth looking into and seeing what can be found about how a company treats its employees.

- *Certifications* are one of the easiest ways to see if a company is environmentally and sustainably focused. They document what standards the company abides by and are another way to check what they value. A company having certifications can also provide a way to check other areas of this list that may be harder to find. Some good certifications to look for are:
 - *Fair Trade Certified* is a network that puts “people and planet first.”⁵⁴ To be certified, a company must support environmental protection efforts, provide their employees safe working conditions, support community development funds, and support sustainable livelihood.⁵⁵
 - *Certified Carbon Neutral* requires a business to calculate its carbon footprint and then reduce it to net zero through external carbon negative efforts and by reducing carbon emissions produced through manufacturing.⁵⁶ This also means that businesses must be transparent with their methods to get an accurate measure of their carbon footprint.

⁵⁴ “Why Fair Trade,” Fair Trade Certified. Accessed March 22, 2024.
<https://www.fairtradecertified.org/why-fair-trade/>.

⁵⁵ “Why Fair Trade,” Fair Trade Certified.

⁵⁶ “How to Become Carbon Neutral,” Certified Carbon Neutral. Accessed March 22, 2024.
<https://www.carbonneutral.com/how>.

- *Certified B Corp* shows that a company has a high standard of business and business ethics, as well as a force for good in environmental sustainability and social justice.⁵⁷
- *1% for the Planet* connects businesses to nonprofits that hold similar environmental values and certifies that one percent of all sales are going back to the environment.⁵⁸ This allows consumers to know that their purchase is going to a worthy cause that aligns with their own values.
- *The Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS)* is a worldwide certification in sustainability that is only awarded to companies that use organic fibers and are environmentally conscious at all levels of production.⁵⁹
- *Positive Luxury* is a third-party certificate that is only awarded to luxury brands that have repeatedly demonstrated ethical and sustainable practices across nearly all areas of business.⁶⁰ Brands must use responsible sourcing, make a positive social impact, and not use harsh chemicals.⁶¹
- *Standard 100 OEKO-TEX®* certifies that the companies products do not contain anything harmful to human or ecological health.⁶²

⁵⁷ Ultan O'Callaghan, "8 Sustainability Certifications You Need To Know (2024)," Thooja. Accessed March 22, 2024. <https://www.thooja.com/blog/sustainability-certification>.

⁵⁸ Ultan O'Callaghan.

⁵⁹ Ultan O'Callaghan.

⁶⁰ Ultan O'Callaghan.

⁶¹ Ultan O'Callaghan.

⁶² Ultan O'Callaghan.

- *Leaping Bunny* is an international certification for cruelty-free products, meaning that animal testing is not allowed at any stage in the manufacturing process.⁶³
- *Rainforest Alliance Certified* supports social, economic, and environmental sustainability, and it focuses on helping farmers limit climate destruction and deforestation while operating organically.⁶⁴ Another focus is on improving the lives of the farmers with livable wages and safe working conditions.⁶⁵
- *The Green Business Bureau* certification process allows each business to customize their assessment criteria.⁶⁶ It is typically held by smaller businesses, but is available to businesses of any size. This is a good certification for companies that are just starting their sustainable journey and are taking the first small steps in the right direction.

These are not the only sustainable certifications that exist, but they are all ones that can be trusted if seen.

This is not an exhaustive list of what to consider when shopping from a new high-end brand, but it is a good foundation. In the end, it is up to the individual consumer to choose what company best fits their values and environmental considerations. Taking the environmental effects into account at all is a win.

⁶³ Ultan O'Callaghan, "8 Sustainability Certifications You Need To Know (2024)," Thooja.

⁶⁴ Ultan O'Callaghan.

⁶⁵ Ultan O'Callaghan.

⁶⁶ Ultan O'Callaghan.

Mending Clothing

In addition to buying from brands that are doing their best to protect the planet, the clothing, once bought, needs to be taken care of to ensure that no more buying than necessary is done. To accomplish this, clothing should be treated as gently as possible. However, eventually, clothing will begin to deteriorate no matter how well it has been treated. Once this occurs, learning to mend is a valuable skill to possess. Mending clothing that is already owned is a deliberate action to reduce reliance on and consumption from the fashion industry.⁶⁷

Mending in of itself is not a political action, but can become one if desired. The upcycling movement has gained popularity in recent years as a way to consume less fashion, but it can also be used as a “form of creative action, or craftivism, against the modern fashion industry.”⁶⁸ Making mended areas of clothing intentionally seen will start a conversation. Others will ask about the mended area, and this leads to an opportunity to educate others about the fashion industry and why it is not very good for people or the planet. Even if the opportunity to educate others never arises, mending can still be a personal stance against the fashion industry and against consumer culture.⁶⁹ It is a way to push back against the status quo.⁷⁰ It is also a legal form of protest, known as protest art.⁷¹ Going against the grain can be very intimidating, especially if the form of resistance chosen treads the line between legal and illegal. Choosing to mend visibly puts the participant at no risk with local law enforcement in the United States; however, laws on

⁶⁷ McGovern and Barnes, “Visible Mending, Street Stitching, and Embroidered Handkerchiefs,” 92.

⁶⁸ McGovern and Barnes, 92-93. In this context, upcycling refers to taking already own clothing and embellishing them in a way where they are, once again, wearable.

⁶⁹ McGovern and Barnes, 93.

⁷⁰ McGovern and Barnes, 93.

⁷¹ McGovern and Barnes, 93.

what can be worn in public do vary country to country, and it is the responsibility of the participant to do this research.

If the participants in mending clothing are uncomfortable with the idea of being directly a part of a political movement, there is nothing to fear. There are a variety of reasons to choose to mend clothing that are not politically charged. Buying clothing at any level of sustainability is expensive, and mending what has previously been purchased reduces the cost to the consumer. Mending clothing allows for a favorite outfit to be worn time and time again even after a hole has developed. Mending also allows for participation in a new trend without having to buy a new wardrobe or violate any principals held. Many stores sell jean shorts with smiley faces, fruit, rainbows, and other cute additions; instead of buying a new pair of shorts, a previously owned pair can be updated by embroidering these icons by hand. The only cost to the consumer would be the thread, needles, and a little time.

Although learning to mend or embroider does take time, there are many resources available to help. A quick Google search of “how to learn to mend clothes” or “how to learn embroidery” pulls up beginner blogs on each subject and YouTube channels that are dedicated to each craft for more visual learners. There are also books on both subjects for those who like to read and look at pictures at the same time. Once beginner skills have been mastered, there are also blogs, YouTube channels, and books about how to read patterns when a specific design is being looked for and when trying to learn to free hand. There is no shortage of information when it comes to others trying their own hand at protecting the environment.

Ultimate

Mastering the beginnings of pursuing sustainable fashion as one person is not enough to help the environment as much as it needs. It is a journey everyone needs to take. Being willing to educate with all of the known information is vital to spreading sustainable lifestyle practices to others. Education begins with the foundation of what makes fashion unsustainable in the first place and patience as another person works through all the information at their own pace. This stage cannot be rushed or forced because others will not want to learn. Instead, a kind and helping hand is a more preferred style when it comes to introducing information that can be distressing. While another is working through how they can best change their lifestyle practices to fit their situation, offer every option known and explain why it is more beneficial than what was previously being done. This will give the other party all the information to make the best decisions possible. This also must be a judgment free zone because everyone will not have the same resources to make the objectively “best” decisions for the planet. They have to make the best decisions for themselves.

At this stage, if it is clear that the other party wants to do more, another option can come into play. This option is to make their own clothing. One of many options to make clothing is crochet. It is a form of fiber art that uses a hook and yarn to produce simple to intricate patterns. While this decision to make clothing can be costly, it does not have to break the bank. Acrylic yarn is typically the cheapest and can be found for as low as approximately three US dollars a skein. This is enough yarn to make a couple of toboggan style hats or a scarf. While acrylic is not the most sustainable option because of it being plastic, it is still less processed than clothing made from acrylic and other

plastics. Acrylic yarn can also easily be found with the Standard 100 OEKO-TEX[®] certification. In addition to this, there is little to no need to buy patterns as a beginner because so many other crocheters post their patterns for free.

One caveat to this option is that crochet does take longer to become efficient in than the other levels of sustainability do. While it is more time consuming and the beginning stages can be frustrating, once the skills are learned they are very hard to forget. Many patterns only use basic stitches such as the chain (ch), slip stitch, single crochet (sc), half-double crochet (hdc), double crochet (dc), increase (inc), and decrease (dec). These are the first seven stitches that any crocheter will learn and most other stitches outside of these are produced with some combination of the basic seven. While learning, it may be hard to focus on anything other than the task at hand. This stage does not last long though, and soon even beginners will be able to concentrate when there is much background noise. Once this level of fluency has been reached, crochet can be integrated into other parts of life that will cut down on extra time added into the day. For example, many people watch television while crocheting as part of their daily routine.

On the other hand, while educating others about making their own clothing, it may be found that they are ready to dive in head first, and they have the financial means to buy more than the cheapest supplies on the market. There are a wide variety of yarns, hooks, and other supplies that crocheters choose to use because they are the most sustainable option available to them. Not every option will be the most sustainable for every person because of where they can be found. If a supply can only be shipped, it may be more sustainable to choose a local option that has already gone through the mass

shopping process rather than something that will need to be shipped as a single item and then left as a front door delivery.

Yarn

When it comes to buying yarn, there is a generally accepted hierarchy of sustainability. Plastic based yarns are the least sustainable, cotton is in the middle, and other natural fibers such as sheep wool are the most sustainable.⁷² When trying to buy the most sustainable yarn, looking for natural fiber, recycled fiber, or fiber with certifications is key.

While acrylic, and other plastic based yarns, are the least sustainable option, there are some that are better than others. The company Yarnspirations, which produces Red Heart and Bernat yarn, has at least one hundred and seven different skeins of plastic based yarn that are Standard 100 OEKO-TEX[®] certified.⁷³ Red Heart yarn is one of the most common yarns for beginners to work with because it is generally the cheapest on the market unless another brand is having a sale. Because of its affordability and Standard 100 OEKO-TEX[®] certification, Yarnspirations yarn (that meet the certification standard) are one of the most sustainable plastic based yarns on the market. Other more sustainable options would include yarns that contain recycled materials, such as Lion Brand Yarn Re-Spun Yarn that is one hundred percent recycled polyester.⁷⁴

⁷² Jeanette, "Your Cheat Sheet to the Most and Least Sustainable Yarns," New Wave Knitting. Accessed October 23, 2023.

<https://www.newwaveknitting.com/blog-posts/your-cheat-sheet-to-the-most-and-least-sustainable-yarns>.

⁷³ "Yarnspirations Spark Your Inspiration!," Yarnspirations. Accessed March 24, 2024.

<https://www.yarnspirations.com/collections/yarn?filter.p.m.global.feature=OEKO-TEX%C2%AE+Certified&filter.p.m.global.material=Polyester&filter.p.m.global.material=Acrylic&filter.p.m.global.material=Nylon&filter.p.m.global.material=Blended+Fiber>.

⁷⁴ "Re-Spun Yarn," Lion Brand Yarn. Accessed March 25, 2024.

<https://www.lionbrand.com/products/re-spun-yarn>.

Cotton falls in the middle of the sustainability spectrum for a few reasons. It requires a lot of land, a lot of water, and a lot of pesticides to be grown. If cotton yarn is desired, the best options are to choose recycled cotton yarn or yarn made with Better Cotton. Recycled cotton will come in various ratios of recycled cotton to virgin materials. Yarn made with Better Cotton means that the yarn was made with cotton that was produced as sustainably as possible. Another kind of yarn that falls in the middle of sustainability is mixed material yarn when a portion of it has been recycled. This includes yarn such as Lion Brand Re-Up yarn, which is made out of seventy percent recycled cotton and thirty percent polyester.

The top end of the sustainable yarn spectrum includes other natural fibers. The most popular option is sheep wool. This is because it is typically a cheaper natural fiber, thermoregulating even when wet, and durable. As long as the sheep is alive, it will also be producing wool that must be sheared for the health and safety of the animal. This makes wool a byproduct to many other things that sheep are typically used for, such as meat and cheese. One sheep can serve many purposes in its lifetime, and this makes wool a more sustainable fiber because the sheep are not only being bred for wool production. They are being bred to produce quality wool, quality meat, and quality milk in the case of female sheep. However, watch out for Superwash wool. It is more convenient because it is machine washable, but it is only machine washable because it has been intensely treated with chemicals and plastic. This leads to microplastics being released every time the item is washed, defeating the purpose of trying to choose a more sustainable yarn. To avoid this concern and others, because there are always concerns that any animal being used for human gain and/or consumption is being exploited, purchase plant based fibers.

With this in consideration, another popular yarn choice is hemp. In some circles, this fiber is controversial because it is often mistaken for marijuana. Unlike marijuana, hemp contains very little THC, and it is grown specifically for industrial and commercial purposes. This fiber is more expensive and coarse, but it is very durable and softens with each use and wash. Hemp, along with bamboo, is also one of the fastest growing plants for fiber production.⁷⁵ In ideal conditions, hemp can be ready for fiber production in as little as sixty days after planting.⁷⁶

Other Supplies

Other supplies in the craft of crochet include hooks, stitch markers, buttons, stuffing, and eyes. Typically stuffing and eyes are not used for making clothing, but they are important to mention because most stuffing and eyes that are easy to find are made completely out of plastic. If eyes and/or stuffing are desired for any project, be sure to look at the materials they are made out of to make the best choice for the particular situation.

Crochet hooks come in a variety of materials. Plastic and metal hooks are the most common, but there are also bamboo hooks sold commercially. Plastic hooks have a tendency to break because they are not as strong as metal hooks and crochet is very dependent on the amount of tension in the project. Some people can crochet with plastic hooks and not break them for years because their tension is loose. Others can only go a few weeks or months before the hooks break due to having a tight tension. Plastic hooks do have an upside for those who travel a lot. They are significantly less likely to be

⁷⁵ “Industrial Hemp Production and Management,” Manitoba. Accessed March 31, 2024. <https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/crop-management/hemp-production.html>.

⁷⁶ “Industrial Hemp Production and Management,” Manitoba.

confiscated when going through security checkpoints because they do not show up in a metal detector. Generally, metal hooks are not a problem because, unlike knitting needles, they are not sharp, but it has been known for metal hooks to be confiscated because they still resemble a weapon. Even though it can be questionable at an airport, metal hooks are what most crocheters will pick first. They last longer than plastic, but there are still sustainability concerns with metal hooks as well. Refining metal into a usable material is not a very eco-friendly process, so when choosing metal hooks refer back to the non-exhaustive list of what to consider when trying to buy from sustainable brands. The most sustainable crochet hooks are bamboo because it is a fast growing plant, it is very durable, and plant fiber is more resilient than plastic. Bamboo hooks may feel a bit clunky when first used, but the hook gets smoother and smoother the more it is used. It can also make dropping stitches off the hook a thing of the past because of the way bamboo grips yarn.

Stitch markers and buttons are two other materials that crocheters may frequently buy and they are frequently made out of plastic. Ways to get around buying plastic stitch markers can include researching the materials the company uses to make their product, searching for businesses that specialize in making eco-friendly crochet supplies, or realizing that stitch markers are not a necessary purchase. Many crocheters never use “real” stitch markers because they make their own out of scrap materials that are too short to be used in any other project, but are long enough to stay in a crochet stitch. Buttons take a similar level of searching to find more sustainable options; however, wooden buttons are a good alternative to plastic and are relatively easy to find in stores. The internet also has a wide variety of options and solutions for unsustainable products.

Where to Learn Crochet

Having all the right supplies to crochet is just the beginning because crochet can take a while to learn, but once it is learned it is easy to remember how to do everything. When learning, there are a variety of resources on the internet that can be used. Many avid crocheters have Instagram accounts dedicated to showing the basics such as how to make a slip knot, how to chain (ch), and how to single crochet (sc). Other accounts go more in depth once the absolute basics have been learned and show how to do other stitches like the half-double (hdc) and double crochet (dc), as well as other more complicated stitches. These accounts can also teach how to follow a crochet pattern. In addition to Instagram accounts, there are YouTube channels where creators teach the craft so others can follow along and learn. Like Instagram, some accounts are dedicated to the basics while others teach more advanced skills, like the difference between slip stitch chain one and working in the round. Since YouTube videos are not confined to a certain amount of time, this platform is also more likely to have patterns that can be followed along with until the individual that is learning has become an accomplished pattern reader. There is one downside to learning crochet online. It is typically harder to follow along as a beginner because there is no one there to ask when something is confusing and Google only helps so much. Online resources are amazing because small communities are unlikely to have the resources to learn from someone first hand, but they can also make the learning process confusing. If possible, check to see if there is already a crochet group in the area. If there is not a group, but there is interest for one, try to find a good place and time to meet with other crocheters. All members of the group will benefit from

being around other like-minded individuals, and the beginners of the group can have the hands-on help that they may need.

One potential complication is that some experienced people tend to “gate-keep” beginners out of a hobby. However, do not let others be the reason to stop learning the hobby itself and the larger goal of living more sustainably. Skills can only be learned so fast, and it makes no difference whether they are crochet skills or sustainability skills. Making clothing from scratch is more sustainable than buying them from the store, even if they are made with acrylic yarn and a plastic hook.

Conclusion

Trying to shop more sustainability can be intimidating, especially when there is so much misinformation about the fashion industry—but it is not impossible. Steering clear of the cheapest fast fashion is the best place to start. This can be done by shopping at locations like Walmart that has pledged to increase their use of Better Cotton and other sustainable fibers, or by shopping from online locations like EarthHero that allow consumers to specify their price range, the values they hold, and what items they are trying to obtain all while buying sustainable items.

Making more conscious purchases is a great first step, but connecting other more sustainable lifestyle choices with the decision to not purchase from fast fashion is another step in the right direction. However, wanting to add new clothing into a wardrobe is something that the brain craves. Instead of completely denying this craving, it is okay to indulge it occasionally by adding clothing that comes from a secondhand source. Two great options are by thrifting and accepting hand-me-down clothing. Sometimes secondhand clothing may not satisfy all the consumer's needs or wants, which is okay

too. It is time to turn to high-end sustainable fashion. High-end clothing can allow more luxury of choice; by picking sustainable fashion, the planet is also helped. A foundation of things to look at from a company are their transparency, materials, color/dyeing process, packaging, philanthropy, working conditions, and certifications. There are many available certifications for more environmentally conscious companies. After the clothing has been purchased, mending can allow additional clothing freedom and less future clothing purchases. However, the most clothing freedom comes from having the ability to make the clothes because the consumer can make them exactly how they want them. One way to make clothing is by crocheting them. This skill can take a long time to perfect, but beautiful and comfortable pieces can be made with beginner level skills.

Making changes to a practiced lifestyle can be scary, but what is scarier is what is and will happen to our world if action is not taken against the fashion industry. Every effort helps, and no change is too small. This guide is not a step-by-step instruction manual for making gradual lifestyle changes for the betterment of the global community, but it can serve as a foundation for which the lifestyle is built upon. Not every person will make the same changes and not every person will change as quickly as others; choices must be made for the individual situation and cannot be a blanket statement of what is best for everyone. Every person is different. Every person is coming with different needs and resources to make their lives more sustainable. But, everyone has one thing in common. All of us can take our time and try. We hold the power.

Bibliography

- “About.” Goodwill. Accessed March 21, 2024. <https://www.goodwill.org/about/>.
- “About,” Meta. Accessed March 22, 2024. <https://about.meta.com/>.
- “About Plato’s Closet.” Plato’s Closet. Accessed March 21, 2024.
<https://platoscloset.com/about/?country=US>.
- “About Us.” Traid. Accessed March 21, 2024. <https://traid.org.uk/about-traid/>.
- Armstrong, Cosette M. Joyner and Hyejune Park. “Online Clothing Resale: A Practice Theory Approach to Evaluate Sustainable Consumption Gains.” *Journal of Sustainability Research*, 2020, 2. doi:10.20900/jsr20200017.
- Bailey, Kerrice, Aman Basu, and Sapna Sharma. “The Environmental Impacts of Fast Fashion on Water Quality: A Systematic Review.” *Water* 14, no. 1073, 2022, 1-11. doi:10.3390/w14071073.
- “Cotton and Wool.” U.S. Department of Agriculture. Accessed February 25, 2024.
<https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/crops/cotton-and-wool/>.
- “Environment,” TJX. Accessed March 20, 2024.
<https://www.tjx.com/corporate-responsibility/environment/overview>.
- “Environmental Sustainability.” JCPenney. Accessed March 20, 2024.
<https://companyblog.jcpnewsroom.com/corporateresponsibility/environment-sustainability/>.
- “Environmental Sustainability.” Kohl’s. Accessed March 20, 2024.
<https://corporate.kohls.com/corporate-responsibility/sustainability>.
- “FAQ,” EarthHero. Accessed March 20, 2024. <https://earthhero.com/pages/faq>.

Faysal, G.M. et al. “Sustainable Yarn Production Using Leftover Fabric from Apparel Industries.” *Heliyon* 8, no. 11, 2022, 1-6. doi:10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e11377.

Gray, Sarah et al. “Reducing the Environmental Impact of Clothing: An Exploration of the Potential of Alternative Business Models.” *Sustainability* 14, no. 10, 2022,17-18. doi:10.3390/su14106292.

“Greenwashing - The Deceptive Tactics Behind Environmental Claims.” United Nations. Accessed April 2, 2024.

<https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/climate-issues/greenwashing>.

“How to Become Carbon Neutral.” Certified Carbon Neutral. Accessed March 22, 2024.

<https://www.carbonneutral.com/how>.

Howard, Miranda. “How Fast Does Bamboo Grow?” Bumboo. Accessed March 22, 2024. <https://www.bumboo.eco/en-us/blogs/news/how-fast-does-bamboo-grow>.

“Industrial Hemp Production and Management.” Manitoba. Accessed March 31, 2024.

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/crop-management/hemp-production.htm>

1.

“Introducing No Boundaries,” YouTube, July 25, 2019.

<https://youtu.be/BsGQf0APh5E?feature=shared>.

Jeanette. “Your Cheat Sheet to the Most and Least Sustainable Yarns.” New Wave Knitting. Accessed August 7, 2022.

<https://www.newwaveknitting.com/blog-posts/your-cheat-sheet-to-the-most-and-least-sustainable-yarns>.

- Joy, Annamma et al. "Fast Fashion, Sustainability, and the Ethical Appeal of Luxury Brands." *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 16, no. 3, 2012, 273-296. doi:10.2752/175174112X13340749707123.
- Kam, Cindy D., and Maggie Deichert. "Boycotting, Buycotting, and the Psychology of Political Consumerism." *Journal of Politics* 82, no. 1, 2020, 72-88. doi:10.1086/705922.
- Lusty, Natalya. "Fashion Futures and Critical Fashion Studies." *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 35, no. 6, 2021, 813-823. doi:10.1080/10304312.2021.1993568.
- McGovern, Alyce and Clementine Barnes. "Visible Mending, Street Stitching, and Embroidered Handkerchiefs: How Craftivism Is Being Used to Challenge the Fashion Industry." *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy* 11, no. 2, 2022, 87-101. doi:10.5204/ijcjsd.2352.
- "New 2 Me Rethink the Way You Shop." Climate Emergency JSY. Accessed March 22, 2024.
<https://www.gov.je/SiteCollectionDocuments/Environment%20and%20greener%20living/New%202%20Me%20facts%20to%20print%20or%20share%201441%20KB.pdf>.
- "No Boundaries Swim." Walmart. Accessed February 26, 2024.
<https://www.walmart.com/search?q=no%2Bboundaries%2Bswim>.
- O'Callaghan, Ultan. "8 Sustainability Certifications You Need To Know (2024)." Thooja. Accessed March 22, 2024.
<https://www.thooja.com/blog/sustainability-certification>.

“Our Impact.” EarthHero. Accessed March 20, 2024. <https://earthhero.com/pages/impact>.

“Our Impact,” ThredUp. Accessed March 21, 2024. <https://www.thredup.com/about>.

“Our Story.” EarthHero. Accessed March 20, 2024.

<https://earthhero.com/pages/our-story>.

“Our 5 Pillars of Sustainable Sourcing.” EarthHero. Accessed March 20, 2024.

<https://earthhero.com/pages/our-5-pillars-of-sustainable-sourcing>.

“Product Sustainability.” Walmart Sustainability Hub. Accessed February 25, 2024.

<https://www.walmartsustainabilityhub.com/sustainable-products>.

“Project Cece Sustainability Standards,” Project Cece. Accessed March 20, 2024.

<https://www.projectcece.com/sustainability-standards/>.

“Re-Spun Yarn.” Lion Brand Yarn. Accessed March 25, 2024.

<https://www.lionbrand.com/products/re-spun-yarn>.

“Shop In-Store.” Plato’s Closet. Accessed March 21, 2024.

<https://platoscloset.com/shop-in-store/?country=US>.

Simmons, Mariam. “How to Find Sustainable Fashion Brands in 7 Easy Steps.” Recycle Coach. Accessed March 22, 2024.

<https://recyclecoach.com/blog/how-to-find-sustainable-fashion-brands-in-7-easy-steps/>.

“Sustainability.” H&M. Accessed April 2, 2024.

https://www2.hm.com/en_us/sustainability-at-hm.html.

“We Are Kindly.” Kindly. Accessed October 15, 2023. <https://thisiskindly.com/>.

“Why Fair Trade.” Fair Trade Certified. Accessed March 22, 2024.

<https://www.fairtradecertified.org/why-fair-trade/>.

“Yarnspirations Spark Your Inspiration!” Yarnspirations. Accessed March 24, 2024.

<https://www.yarnspirations.com/collections/yarn?filter.p.m.global.feature=OEKO-TEX%C2%AE+Certified&filter.p.m.global.material=Polyester&filter.p.m.global.material=Acrylic&filter.p.m.global.material=Nylon&filter.p.m.global.material=Blended+Fiber>.