

Sustainable vs. Fast Fashion

Sustainability in Fashion

Lessening the environmental impact of fashion hinges upon two factors: buying from sustainable brands and creating or strengthening green clothing practices. For the former, "Sustainable fashion brands create fashion in a way which is most considerate of humanity and the environment, reducing the environmental impact wherever possible." (Soleigh) The latter focuses on reducing fast fashion purchases, increasing the use of every piece we own, and maintaining clothing so it lasts, reducing our need for new purchases.

The Downsides of Fast Fashion

Did you know that it takes 2,700 liters of water to make a single cotton t-shirt? (Soleigh) Inorganic cotton requires almost double the amount of water as its organic counterpart, yet only 1% of global cotton production is organic. Fast fashion brands also contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and promote the use of fossil fuels in their production. While sustainable fashion brands often turn to natural or recycled materials, fast fashion relies on polyester, acrylic, and nylon among other petroleum-based fabrics. Additionally, many fast fashion brands house their factories in regions without proper work regulations or conditions in order to drive down the cost further. While the strain on the environment is an important consideration, the human toll that our consumption causes is a far weightier issue.

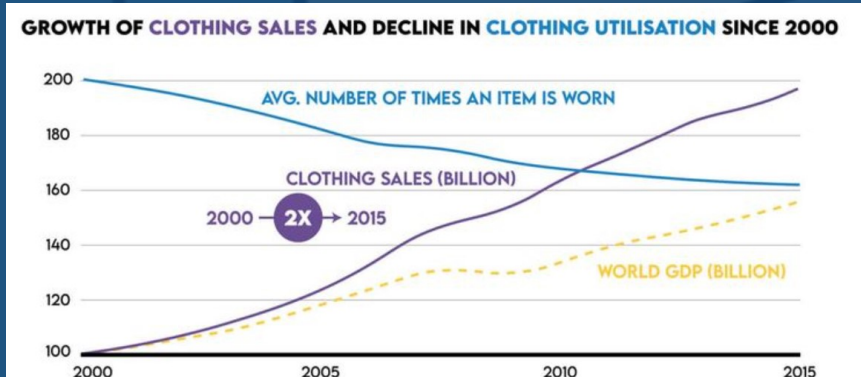
Tips for Lessening Your Wardrobe's Footprint and the Benefits

Buy Sustainable: It's undeniable that a well-made, sustainable piece of clothing is likely to cost you much more than its fast fashion equivalent. However, that quality piece will last longer with proper care, meaning the cost per use of the two will be comparable in the end.

Build a Capsule Wardrobe: There have been many versions of the capsule wardrobe, but at its core it is a wardrobe curated with only items that suit your style and appearance, match each other effortlessly and endlessly, and can potentially be worn across seasons. This can boost the usability of a smaller wardrobe and reduce time spent trying to put an outfit together each morning.

Maintain Your Clothing: Making smart purchasing decisions is great, but it's far better to avoid the need for new clothing in the first place. There are many laundering tweaks that can preserve the longevity of your garments, such as: follow the washing guidelines, wash using cold water, use the most gentle setting, and drip dry your clothes when possible.

Buy Secondhand: If the cost of sustainable clothing is an issue or you love designer brands, there are websites and shops that make it easy to purchase high quality finds for a fraction of the sticker price. You can often find brand new items this way and save them from being tossed into a landfill.



Source: "The 9 Essential Fast Fashion Statistics: Earth.org - Past: Present: Future." Earth.Org - Past | Present | Future, <https://earth.org>.

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Works Consulted

Soleigh, Narah. "8 Reasons Why Sustainable Fashion Matters." Narah Soleigh, <https://www.narahsoleigh.com>.

"The 9 Essential Fast Fashion Statistics: Earth.org - Past: Present: Future." Earth.Org - Past | Present | Future, <https://earth.org>.

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