I upcycled clothing and it was way harder than I thought
(read to find out why)

What if instead of throwing out old pieces of clothing that still fit you upcycle them? Now, some of you might be wondering what’s upcycling? Well to explain, upcycling clothes is taking clothing that is too big, out of style or that you just no longer like, and altering them to remake into something even better than it was before. So why should you upcycle? Well, I’m about to tell you!

Let’s first take a look at the facts. You don’t really need to buy new clothes when the average American throws out 65 lbs of clothes per year. Upcycling is also good for the environment. For example, for every 1 lb of clothing that isn’t thrown out, 3-4 lbs of CO₂ is not released into the atmosphere. Even some retail companies waste their clothes when they do not sale. While some places do sell their clothes to stores like Ross or donate them to Goodwill, other stores just down right throw away all their old clothes. Out of all the clothes that people donate to places like goodwill, only 20-30% are actually resold. The rest goes to 99 cent goodwill store and are eventually auctioned off. Even clothes that are donated to charities end up being resold instead redistributed.

Ok so if we are being real here I was being a bit dramatic in my headline, upcycling clothes can be fun and it can also it can help our environment and even make you a bit of money. Of course I did this for a school project so unfortunately my partner and I were not allowed to keep any of our profits because it was a school project(we ended up donating to the SPCA). Upcycling clothes instead of buying new ones can help you save money or even make a little if you sell the clothes you make. But before you start to get ahead of yourself you will first need to make your product. So step one is “where are you going to get your clothes?” my partner and I had a clothing drive so we accepted donations from friends, family and classmates. If you can not organize a clothing drive using your old clothes or buying used clothes from thrift stores. Now once we had our clothes we began the process of upcycling. Now we both already knew what we were going to do which included cropping, braiding, or ripped t-shirts, Making shorts. And re-vamping dresses. Upcycling the clothing is a lot easier that you may think most of the time you
don’t even need a sewing machine

Step two of our process was selling our clothes. So first we needed a location, which was relatively simple for us (we just set up at the Clement St. farmers market). Now the hard part (step 3) was actually getting people to purchase our clothing. After selling for five hours in the sun (I ended up getting sunburned, I don’t recommend that!) we had sold to my parents, my babysitter, our teacher who happened to be there. Eventually we finally sold to a random shopper! But of course after that we had no more sales and the farmers market closed. Admittedly if we had advertised more before just showing at the market would have more customers.

Watch our how to video below:
5 upcycling tips

Here are a few tips if you want to upcycle and sell your clothes!
- Try to get your materials cheap
- Watch a few videos to get inspired
- It takes a few times to get stuff right
- If you are selling advertise about a week before you sell
- Sell where there is a lot of foot traffic

Overall this project was actually a great experience and I really enjoyed it. I didn’t realize how difficult it would be to try to get people to purchase our merchandise. But it was fun getting to take old clothes that would be unworn, upcycling them, and then selling them for a profit that was donated to charity. So if you are looking for a fun way to help the environment upcycling is a good way to go.