

7 WAYS TO

AFFORD BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE WARDROBE

1

DON'T TOSS THINGS YOU ALREADY OWN, JUST BECAUSE THEY'RE NOT "SUSTAINABLE."

You might feel the need to purge everything that's not "green" or ethical from your closet and start from scratch, but resist the urge! The most sustainable closet is the one you already own and wear everyday. Getting rid of clothing just to buy new only contributes further to the textile waste stream. You're better off treating what you already own really well, so it lasts as long as possible.

One tip to make clothes last is to avoid over-washing and drying them. Laundering clothing in excess uses lots of unnecessary water and energy, and can wear out your garments more quickly.



2

DONATE CLOTHING TO NONPROFITS THAT PROVIDE FOR OTHERS.

When you do decide to purge, do it thoughtfully. Do some research into regional nonprofits or shelters that will use the clothes to give back locally, by either directly clothing those in need or consigning your clothes to raise funds. Ensure that the clothing you donate to these organizations is in good condition, and could proudly be worn again. For threadbare or otherwise unwearable items, consider recycling them through a company like [Simple Recycling](#) in your community.



3

TAILOR OR REPURPOSE CLOTHES THAT DON'T FIT ANYMORE.

We all know what it feels like to see our favorite clothes begin to fall apart, or to lose interest in a piece we absolutely loved. Instead of throwing these parts of your wardrobe away, there are many amazing ways to repurpose your favorite designs and keep them around. Finding a good tailor is crucial. Oftentimes, there are simple fixes to holes, tears, or even some restructuring of garments that a tailor will be able to alter, bringing new life to cherished pieces.

Feeling creative? Turn your old pullovers into cardigans, shirts into dresses, and with some creative remodeling, the creation of new unique pieces can lengthen the lifecycle of your wardrobe.



4

UPCYCLE ITEMS YOU ALREADY OWN.

One of the easiest ways to upcycle clothing yourself is to dye it, and using natural dyes is the way to go! Most textile dyes available in stores are made of chemicals, which would be washed down your drain and into our waterways after the dyeing process. Natural dyes consists of many ingredients that could found in your backyard, such as roots, nuts or flowers, and are non-toxic to us and our environment. Search for tutorials online or take a local class on natural dyes.

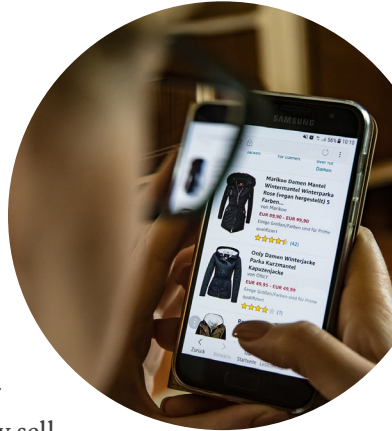
Another great option is to add embroidery, monogram, screen printing or other embellishment to tired clothes. Sewing and embroidery machines can be an investment, but maybe worth the price if you're a dedicated DYIer. You can also snag some free budget-friendly inspiration from Pinterest to make your upcycle dreams a reality.



5

LOOK FOR AFFORDABLE SUSTAINABLE BRANDS WHEN BUYING NEW.

With a little research you'll find plenty of guilt-free brands to suit your budget when buying new. [Threads for Thought](#) is a retailer with prices ranging from \$15 - \$80. They focus on basics and activewear made using sustainable materials, and they support our national parks. [PACT](#) is a label who's main initiative is using all organic cotton while being sustainable and fair trade. They have tons of basics and undergarments ranging from \$20 - \$70. [Alternative Apparel](#) is another brand doing good by using factories that adhere to Fair Trade Association standards, and they use biodegradable packaging for all their orders. They sell their own brand as well as others on their site, focusing on fashion basics ranging from \$30 - \$70.



6

SHOP AT THRIFT / CONSIGNMENT STORES OR HOST A CLOTHING SWAP.

Don't forget you can always check out your local thrift and consignment stores! Search for local second hand shops in your area, nationwide stores like [Buffalo Exchange](#) (or online through sites like [Swap](#) and [ThredUP](#)) and take part of a day to go check them out. Continue to go back often, because products can change quickly in the thrift environment! If you're looking for a more curated selection, check out local consignment stores, which usually sell garments at a higher price point, but often come with a more organized shopping experience. Also never forget one of the best places to shop are your friends' closets! Check out local clothing swaps in your area, or host one yourself using Eventbrite or Facebook. Here you can give your old items a new loving home, while finding some great goodies for yourself.



7

BUILD YOUR WARDROBE SEASONALLY, OVER TIME

The "one item in, one item out" rule is a great way to gradually build a wardrobe of high quality garments you'll own for years to come. As well-loved staple pieces wear out, search for ethical or eco-friendly alternatives to replace them. Seasonal shopping is also a great approach. Saving up to buy one really well-made piece per season can help you build an intentional and curated wardrobe that won't break the bank.

