

Fighting Fast Fashion

You just watched a Shein haul on TikTok, and you think to yourself, “I really should order some clothes for school from there!” Hmm, sounds like a great idea, right? Cheap, trendy clothing – but at what cost to our planet?

Fast fashion is becoming an increasingly dangerous problem as manufacturers can mass-produce clothing at such a high volume. A shocking amount of waste is produced by U.S. consumers as [the average person throws away approximately 81.5 pounds of clothing](#) annually.

As a broke college kid myself, I get it. Going for the cheaper option is the easier thing to do, but there is money to be saved with sustainable shopping. Every year, [\\$500 billion is lost due to under-wearing and excessive buying of clothing](#), which means re-wearing your clothing and skipping the weekly shopping trip is worth it!

Now that I've got your attention, here are five ways you can start being more sustainable with your clothing choices:

1. Do your research. Dig into the brands you shop at and check to see if they are using sustainable clothing materials and be sure that they have an ethical work environment for employees. [Here are 35 sustainable clothing brands to check out.](#)
2. Buy clothing less often. I have seen many people on TikTok starting a [“time capsule” wardrobe](#). This means they are buying better quality pieces that will last longer. This can include more neutral colors that will always be in style in comparison to patterns and colors that will no longer be relevant in a year.
3. Buy your clothing secondhand. You never know what you'll find at a thrift store, which is the most exciting part about going! Thrift stores are a great way to start off your sustainable clothing journey, especially in college. You may not have the money now to purchase high-quality pieces, but thrifting is an affordable way to help the environment. Also, platforms like [Poshmark](#), [Mercari](#) and [Depop](#) give you the ability to shop secondhand without having to leave the comfort of your own home.
4. Sell/donate clothing you don't want anymore. In the same breath, you can also sell your clothing on [Poshmark](#), [Mercari](#), [ThreadUp](#) and [Depop](#). I have been selling on a few of these platforms for years, and it's an easy way to make a little extra cash for your used clothes. Usually, whatever I can't sell on those platforms, I will donate to a local thrift store.
5. Wash your clothes sustainably. The [average household uses 60,000 liters of water](#) annually doing loads of laundry. Besides the obvious (socks and underwear), sometimes clothes don't need to be washed after every wear. Also, washing full loads of laundry with [cold water reduces the energy used by 90 percent](#).

You may not think that you, as one, singular person, can make an impact on the world. The truth is – you can. If we all work together in the fight against fast fashion, we can make the world a more sustainable place.