

L'oeuvre

Vivienne Westwood

ZIGGY CHEN



# WEAR SUSTAINABLE

*“everyone said they were super cheap, so I had to check them out.”*

Cheap, trendy clothing brands are producing a negative environmental impact as they lure in teenagers and young adults with inexpensive prices and encouragement from influencers. One of these trending fast fashion retailers is SHEIN, a brand which originates in China. With an emphasis on women’s apparel, SHEIN produces lower quality replicas of high-end fashion designs with prices that seem too good to be true. This poses as the ideal bait for young individuals on a budget.

However, the over production and, in turn, over consumption of fast fashion has contributed to pollution of the environment.

Fast fashion accounts for 10 percent of all carbon emissions in the world and is the second largest industry when it comes to pollution behind the oil industry, according to a feature article from BORGEN Magazine.

Likewise, a huge trend on the rise to combat fast fashion and help the planet is thrifting. Secondhand clothing is much more inexpensive and in right now. Salvaging dead-stock fabrics and vintage clothing is a style all on its own. Most thrifters look forward to the “hunt” when they head over to their local Goodwill. “I get all my best clothes when I thrift and they’re way better than anything from Urban Outfitters or ZARA,” Emily, 25, said. She is completely aware of the effects of fast fashion and against it. Thrifting is her affordable method of shopping and allows her to distinguish herself with unique pieces. “I take pride in what I wear. Especially when I get compliments and I can say ‘I thrifted these’ and then it feels like I influenced someone to hop on the thrifting train.”

A quick survey revealed that most shoppers were familiar with the term “fast fashion” but were strangers to the environmental effect behind it. An eco-friendly option that doesn’t contribute to textile pollution for people to consider is shopping brands that recycle or use nontoxic textile dyes. NA-KD, a Sweden-born fashion forward brand, sells sustainable clothing made from eco-friendly materials including recycled materials. While they don’t have a physical store in the U.S., their online selection is vast and includes a pre-loved section to shop returned items in excellent condition. Reformation is another brand on the rise with their commitment to becoming a climate-positive company by 2025. Their methods are by carbon offsets and the use of more regenerative fibers. According to a case study done by Future Learn, Reformation makes killer clothes that don’t kill the environment.

A notion that started as something cheap and easy has lured millions of consumers and in turn threatened the planet. Fast fashion is ultimately a trend of short-term benefits. The environmental menace is hidden across the lifecycle of each piece of clothing. The fashion industry is currently responsible for more annual carbon emissions than all international flights and maritime shipping combined, according to extensive research by Princeton University. Conducting background research on brands prior to purchasing clothes can help enlighten and produce a more informed consumer. The goal is to take proactive steps towards advocating for a green-friendly fashion industry.

*say no to fast fashion.*



This image was taken by photographer @martinbernetti\_photojournalist and depicts a massive landfill of clothing dumped in Chile's Atacama Desert.

"These textile scraps come from all over the world and the problem is that the clothes are not biodegradable and contain chemicals, so they are not accepted in municipal landfills."

Ever since this bizarre image of the "world's dumpster" came to light around 2022, the wasteland has only continued to grow.

It's a strange world we live in.

