



EXPLORING TEXTILES
and the
circular economy ➤

A circular economy

is one in which stuff is kept in use for as long as possible, delivering the highest value it can, for as long as it can.



Linear Economy (current practice)



So... It's just recycling with extra steps?

NO! The Circular Economy is so much more

It's about >>>

>> **Using stuff wisely** using recycled materials to make something new, and/or minimising waste and making the most out of every bit of material.

>> **Using stuff again** capturing materials at the end of their first life and using them again for a different (valuable) purpose.

>> **Making things well** designing things to last as long as possible and ensuring that they can be maintained, re-used, and repaired.

>> **Renting, not buying** leasing and renting products so that the burden of maintenance, repair and recycling falls on the provider (rather than the consumer).
E.g., companies like byrotation, Hirestreet, Hurr Collective. Or through brands – e.g., John Lewis, Selfridges.


>> **Sharing** getting maximum value and use out of underutilised products and buildings, vehicles by providing access to sharing platforms, such as Hiyacar, AirBnB or Nuw. You can also share through Library of Things, By Rotation, and My Wardrobe HQ. Rent clothes out and make some money.

Let's TALK TEXTiLES

WHAT IS A TEXTiLE?

A TEXTiLE is cloth made from thread by hand or machine.

So items like t-shirts, trousers, dresses and household fabrics like curtains, all count as textiles.



In London we buy an average of **48 items** of new clothing per person each year.

Together, that's a **whopping 155,000 tonnes** of new clothes every year!

But sadly, we each throw out an average 44 items of clothing per year.

This waste results in a pile of clothes more than **1 kilometre taller** than the London Eye!



IT'S CLEAR...

**fashion has a HUGE
carbon footprint!**

**In fact - over 2 million
tonnes of greenhouse
gas emissions per year.**

**WE NEED TO
END THIS**

NOW!

SO HOW?



1 REPAIR, REPAIR, REPAIR

Mend your broken clothes. Repairing only 5% of the garments clothes already in our wardrobe rather than throwing them away could help reduce London's carbon footprint by a staggering 30%!

Want to be more creative with your existing wardrobe?

Sew a new button on your top or take your favourite ripped jeans to a repair shop so you can wear them again. Turn a pair of trousers into a pair of shorts, or a ripped t-shirt into a cleaning cloth.



2 PURCHASE PRE-LOVED, RENT OR SWAP YOUR CLOTHES

Wear your existing clothes in a new way using apps like **Save Your Wardrobe**. Shop second-hand – browse charity and vintage shops for unique finds or use online apps such as Vinted, eBay or Depop to find bargains.



2 PURCHASE PRE-LOVED, RENT OR SWAP YOUR CLOTHES



Rent your next prom outfit or **swap with friends or through apps** like Nuw (thenuwardrobe.com). Remember, all it takes is switching to 12 second-hand items instead of new to make a big difference!

Buying clothes that are already in circulation means you are not contributing to the emissions generated from the farming, manufacturing, packaging, and transportation of new items of clothing.



3 DON'T BIN IT!



Clothes waste is not the biggest emitter of greenhouse gas – about 1% of the item's emission comes from this part of its lifecycle – but it's still terrible for the environment! If it can't be repaired, swapped or re-worn consider organising a collection through TRAIID or deposit into a clothing bank!





4 DON'T FALL FOR THE HYPE!

Big fashion loves to **GREENWASH** their fast fashion products by labelling them as **eco** and **SUSTAINABLE**.

If you need to buy new, find responsible retailers who are sustainability champions using low emission fibres, creating durable products with transparent supply chains.

Check out <https://goodonyou.eco/> to help you get started.

Doing your research and shopping sustainably is a great way of doing your bit to reduce your impact on the environment.



**BUT MOST
iMPORTANTLY...**



**...GET
TALKiNG AND
LeARNiNG!**

**GRéAT CHANGé
REQUIRES GRéATER
AWARENESS**

»» **Whether it's a chat with your mates or on your socials, talk and share about what you're doing to fight climate change.**

Follow inspirational sustainability bloggers, sustainable fashion authors, your favourite charity shops and listen to podcasts to keep up-to-date on second-hand swap, repair or pop-up shops and events and latest research/advice on how you can reduce your own fashion carbon footprint.

HUNGRY FOR MORE?



Check out the resources below for more information

»» www.repairwhatyouwear.com

»» www.reusefuluk.org/about/about-scrapstores/for-community-groups

»» www.wrap.org.uk/resources/guide/textiles/love-your-clothes

»» www.mindfulshopper.co.uk/guides

»» www.traid.org.uk/education/education_resources

»» www.thenuwardrobe.com

»» www.saveyourwardrobe.com/for-consumers

SOME OF OUR **SOCIAL MEDIA** PICKS FOR YOU TO CHECK OUT



»» #LoveNotLandfill
(@lovenotlandfill)

»» Fashion Revolution
(@fash_rev)

»» Hannah Elliman
(@hannahxelliman)

»» The Social Fashion Rental App
(@byrotation)

»» Shelter - Coal Drops Yard
(@shelterkingscross)



FAQ'S >>

>> I'm still unsure what a Circular Economy is?

Not to worry! For now, remember three things,

1. Products get produced, manufactured, and packaged using finite resources.
2. They are sold and used.
3. After they are used, products can be repaired and reused OR reused and resold to someone new OR refurbished and reproduced to be sold OR recycled and reproduced to be sold so that virgin resources are not needed to produce new products.

That's it! instead of going into a bin, they re-start their cycle over and over again. No new waste is created and the impact on carbon emissions is reduced or minimising waste and making the most out of every bit of material.

>> What is a textile?

A cloth made by hand or machine. In other words, t-shirts, trousers, dresses and household fabrics like curtains, all count as textiles.

>> How does the Circular Economy relate to Textiles?

The same concept applies to the fashion industry – clothes are repaired, recycled and resold to eliminate waste and avoid virgin resources from being used to make new products, ultimately reducing fashion-related carbon emissions!

>> What is fast fashion and why is it so bad?

Fast fashion prioritises cheap and trendy clothing that has a short expiration date. This puts massive stresses on ecosystems and natural resources.

FAQ'S >>

>> What are the benefits of a Circular Economy?

Fights climate change, gives nature a break to heal, saves money, enhances new skills and improves people's lives by building a new community based on sharing, learning. Swapping, remanufacturing and repairing goods together.

>> How can I help?

Access over ownership. Asking yourself, do I need to own this item, or do I just need access to it? Style your existing clothing differently rather than buying new or buy second-hand, rent clothes, swap with friends and family, or when you need to buy something new buying from sustainable sources and repairing, recycling, and buying less are all great ways of playing your part.

>> Is zero waste even possible?

Not only possible, but nature is the original circular economy. Nothing gets wasted! It starts with a "make do and mend" mentality. Then reducing how much we produce as a society and looking at the value of a product over its entire lifetime, redefining what we consider to be rubbish.

REFERENCES >>

- >> Circular economy explained – Relondon
- >> ReLondon (2023). London's fashion footprint: An analysis of clothing material flows, emissions and levers for climate action in London.
- >> 'London fashion footprint'



GREAT CHANGE

requires greater

awareness ➤➤

➤➤ Photos: hohl, iitevgeniy, urfinguss, Thaweeseek Saengngoen, Kerrick, Juanmonino, Daisy-Daisy, Khosrork, Prostock-Studio and triocean.

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