

THE FASHION SECTOR

Extending product lifetime

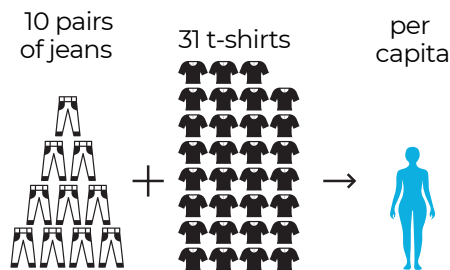
Did you know?

2-8% of the **global carbon emissions** are attributed to the fashion industry¹⁻²

35% of ocean primary **microplastics** come from washing synthetics³

92 millions tons of clothing are **disposed of annually**⁴

Which means...



85% of clothing ends up in **landfill**⁵

1% of clothes (or less) are **recycled** as clothing³

Sources: (1) [Measuring Fashion](#), (2) [WRI](#), (3) [European Parliament](#), (4) [Fashion Revolution](#), (5) [Calpirg](#)



What can be done?

The term **product lifetime extension** refers to the postponement or reversal of the obsolescence of a product, with the goal to maximize its utilization rate and duration.

Product lifetime extension initiatives are key to fighting against intense resource use, waste, and pollution of garments and contribute to a circular economy. There are instruments to be applied by businesses, governments and consumers, which represent opportunities to improve business models, develop sustainable economies, increase job opportunities and promote conscious consumption.

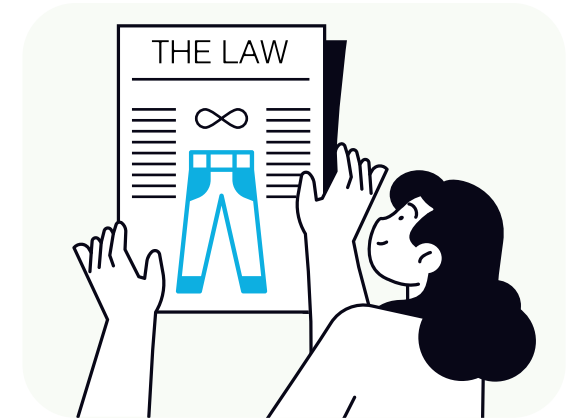
By businesses

- (✓) **Reduce:** to try and reduce demand or its own overall environmental impact
- (✓) **Refuse:** to not use harmful chemicals or microplastics especially in the design of a product



- (✓) **Circular design:** considering the durability of the textiles in the design process ensuring efficient use of materials, longer lifetimes, and better options for maintenance, repair, reuse, and recycling
- (✓) **Repair:** offer accessible and affordable services and widespread support for users to maintain their clothes for longer
- (✓) **Reuse (second-hand market):** sell unwanted clothes that are still usable, increasing significantly clothing utilization
- (✓) **Rental:** provides access to a variety of clothes, without the need to own them, while decreasing the demand for new clothing production
- (✓) **Upcycling:** converting old or discarded materials into something useful, creating something new from used garments, giving them a second life, and even increasing their value
- (✓) **Education:** to raise consumers' awareness through a multi-channel approach, to reduce fashion consumption and promote easy, accessible, and convenient sustainable choices

By governments



- (✓) **Set circular eco-design** requirements to make textiles last longer, be easier to repair, and recycle
- (✓) **Tackle greenwashing** to ensure the accuracy of companies' claims related to fashion products
- (✓) **Introduce clearer information on textiles and a digital product passport** to provide information across the value chain and increase transparency
- (✓) **Education of the consumers to raise awareness** to reduce fashion consumption and promote more sustainable lifestyles

What can be done?

By consumers



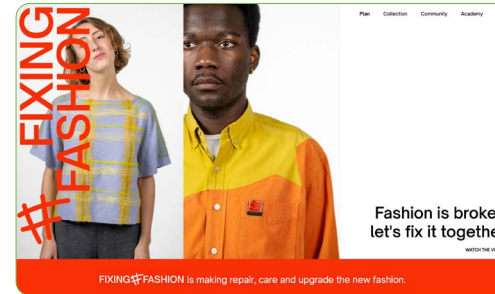
- (✓) **Rethink consumption behavior:** avoid buying new clothes, lengthening their use and buying only when necessary. When purchasing, choose those with durable, repairable, recyclable, or even second-handed attributes
- (✓) **Take proper care of your pieces:**
 - ▶ **Wash only when necessary:** since each washing shortens the life of a garment. Preferably, wash them at lower temperatures and with less detergent


- ▶ **Follow the washing instructions:** avoid damage through incorrect cleaning to ensure that the piece will last longer
- ▶ **Skip the drier or avoid ironing:** the heat can ruin the fibres over time. Instead, hang them flat to dry while you also save energy
- ▶ **Store properly:** clothes should be kept away from sunlight and when hanging, use adequate hangers to avoid distortions

- (✓) **Accept imperfections:** even if decoloured or out of fashion, many clothes can still fit their main purpose which is to dress us up
- (✓) **Repurpose unwanted clothing or donate:** there are a lot of uses for those garments that are not being used, for example, old t-shirts can be turned into rags. It's also possible to extend its lifetime donating to someone else
- (✓) **Repairing:** sewing a button, fixing a hem, and reattaching a strap are some simple repairs to keep a garment in use for a longer time

Yes, it's possible!

Check out two initiatives that developed innovative solutions to extend the useful life of fashion products. They inspire and encourage organizations to shift to more circular models and promote sustainable consumption.



 fixing.fashion

Fixing Fashion

It is a clothing brand that aims to educate a global community on various knowledge and techniques to help people to care, repair, and upgrade their clothes through an open-source academy. The initiative created an inspirational collection that tries to set a new standard of what a new fashion could look like, from fixed, upgraded, and repaired clothes.



 insectashoes.com

Insecta

An ecological and vegan fashion brand based in Brazil that started in 2014 by turning thrift store clothes that weren't sold into shoes, increasing the useful life of those materials. Nowadays, the initiative works with used clothing, reused fabrics, and reused rubber, among other materials, to upcycle them into new shoes, accessories, and clothes.