



# Environmental & Social Costs of Fashion

# Agenda



**1**

**Environmental Costs**

**2**

**Water**

**3**

**Microplastics**

**4**

**Energy**

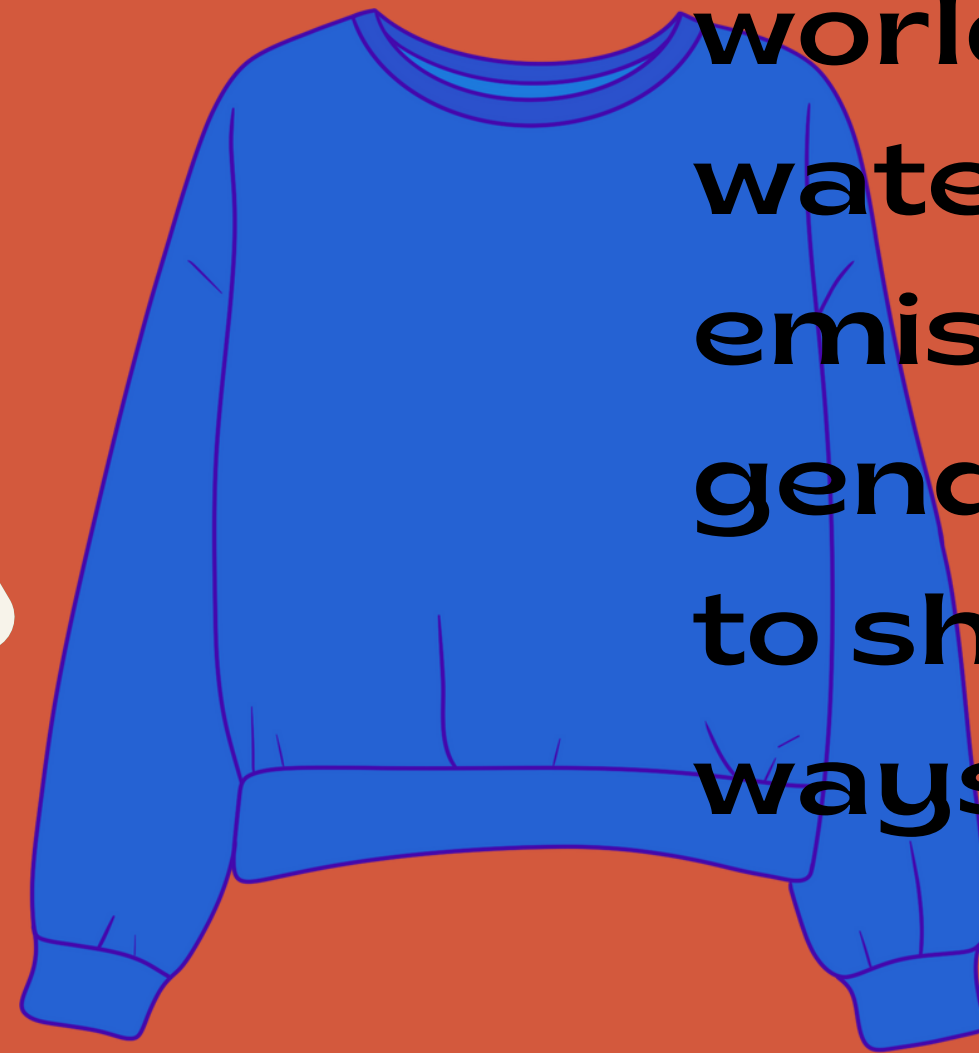
**5**

**Social Impacts**



# **Impacts of the fashion industry**

**As the fast fashion industry is growing in size, it is also increasnigly impacting the world in terms of pollution, water usage, carbon emissions, human rights, and gender inequality, leading us to shift to more sustainable ways of fashion.**



# Multiple Choice!

What percentage of humanity's carbon emissions is made up of the production of fashion?

**A**

**0.5%**

**B**

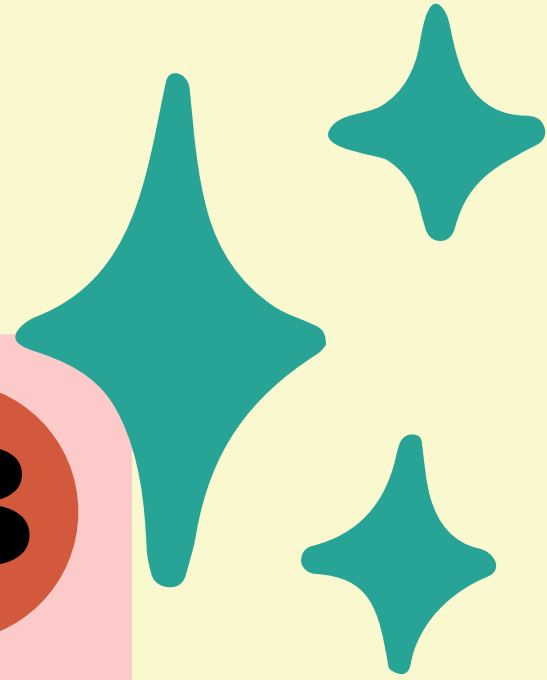
**2%**

**C**

**7%**

**D**

**10%**



# Multiple Choice!

What percentage of humanity's carbon emissions is made up of the production of fashion?



**10%**

This is more than all international flights and maritime shipping combined.



# Environmental Costs

The fashion industry represents an important part of any nation's economy but there is an increasing scale of negative impacts occurring to the environment. The UN Framework Convention of Climate Change states that the emissions from the manufacturing of textiles alone are projected to skyrocket by 60% in 2030, but not only are the carbon emissions to be worried about, but it's also the drying up of water sources for communities, and the polluting of rivers and streams too.



## Three main drivers of the industry's global pollution:

- 1 36% comes from dyeing and finishing of garments,
- 2 28% from yarn preparation
- 3 15% from fibre production

\*from 2018 report by Quantis International\*

# Environmental Costs

Worldwide there is an equivalent of one garbage truck full of clothing that is burned or sent to landfill every second. Within Australia, Aussies will buy up to 14.8kg of clothing, or 56 new items each year, which makes the country of the highest textile consumers in the world, per capita.

There are 1.43 billion pieces of clothing or about 373,000 tonnes of fabric that reaches Australia each year and only 7,000 tones of these textiles are then recycled... Think about clothes labeled as 'faulty', sample items, or out-of-season stock just heading to the landfill without fulfilling their purpose.

The 85% of textiles ending up in landfill each year will have some clothing sending significant amounts of microplastics into the ocean.



# Water

The impacts of the fashion industry on the environment comprise the depletion of non-renewable sources, emission of greenhouse gasses, and copious amounts of water and energy.

Water is one of the earth's most valuable resources and different materials will utilise water in distinct ways. A cotton shirt, for example, uses water for the growth, dyeing, and washing of the cotton. 2,600 litres of water are used to produce a single cotton t-shirt. Jeans, another textile that uses a high amount of water during their production, will use 7,570 litres for just one pair.



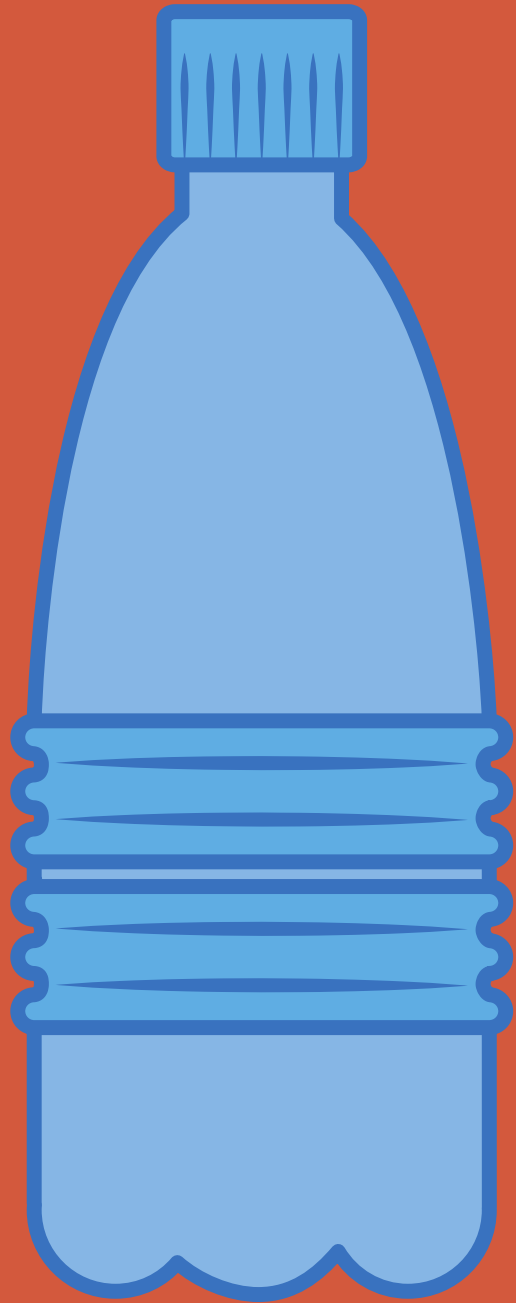


# Water

The fashion industry is the second largest consumer industry of water, using 93 billion cubic meters of water every year - unfortunately, this is enough water to meet the needs of five million people, thus contributing significantly to the water scarcity in some regions.

And to top it all off, the industry creates approx. 20% of industrial wastewater pollution worldwide through the textile dyeing process, which is a result of leftover water often being dumped into ditches, streams, and/or rivers.

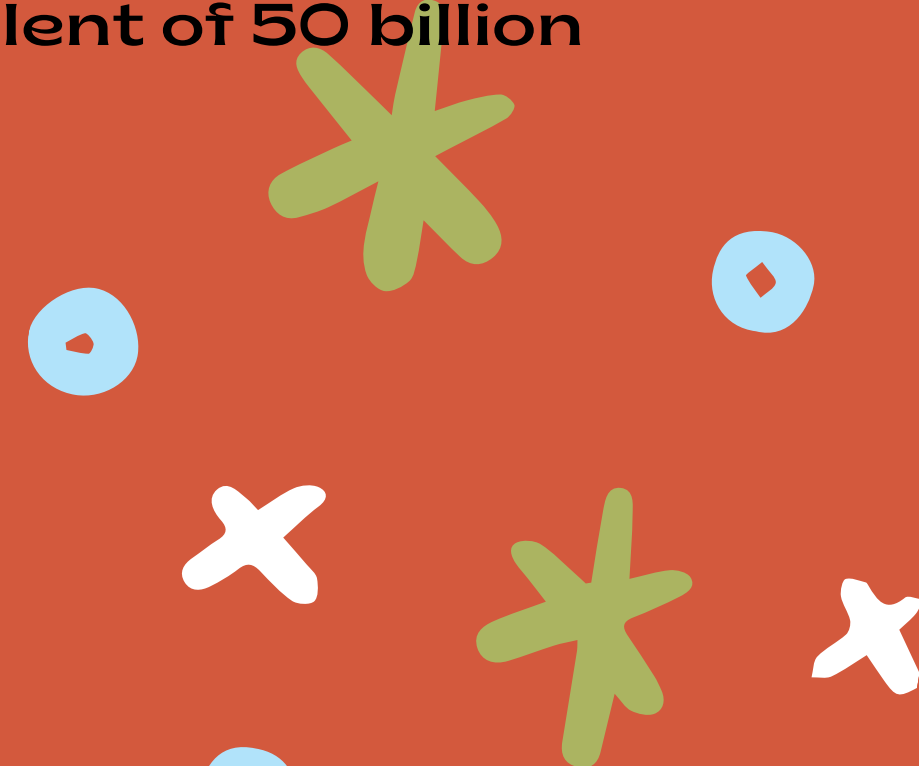
# Microplastics



Fibers used by brands, such as polyester, nylon and acrylic, will take hundreds of years to biodegrade. The International Union for Conservation of Nature had a 2017 report that estimated 35% of all microplastics within the ocean, come from the laundering of synthetic textiles such as the three mentioned above.

According to a study done in 2011, a single synthetic garment can generate more than 1,900 microplastic fibers in one washing machine cycle.

Approximately 60% of all materials used by the fashion industry are made from plastic. 500,000 tonnes of microfibers are released into the oceans each year just from washing clothes - That is the equivalent of 50 billion plastic bottles.



# Energy

The making of plastic fibres into textiles leads to an energy-intensive process that requires large amounts of petroleum and releases volatile particulate matter and acids such as hydrogen chloride.

Among the fashion industry, the tanning process of leather is one of the most toxic in all of the fashion supply chain due to the chemicals used - including mineral salts, formaldehyde, coal-tar derivatives, and various oils, along with dyes that aren't biodegradable and contaminates water courses. The production of leather itself requires large amounts of feed, land, water, and fossil fuels to raise livestock.

The dyeing and finishing, yarn prep, and fibre production stages have the highest impacts on resource depletion, due to the energy-demanding process, which is based on fossil fuel energy.

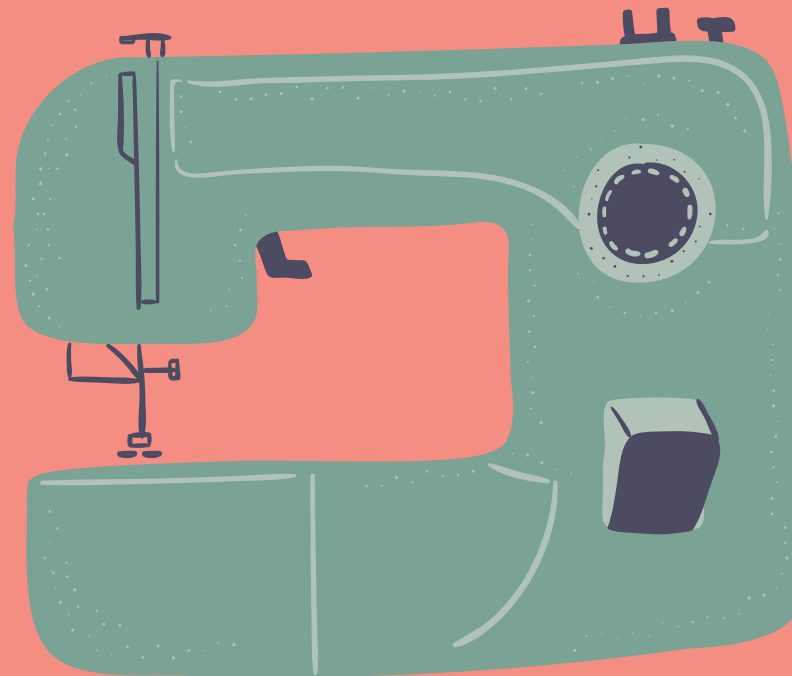
Globally, 98 million tons of non-renewable resources are used in the fashion industry, including oil to produce synthetic fibres, fertilisers to grow cotton, and chemicals to produce dye.

In Australia, 2/3 of clothing is made up of synthetic fibres, which are often derived from petroleum.



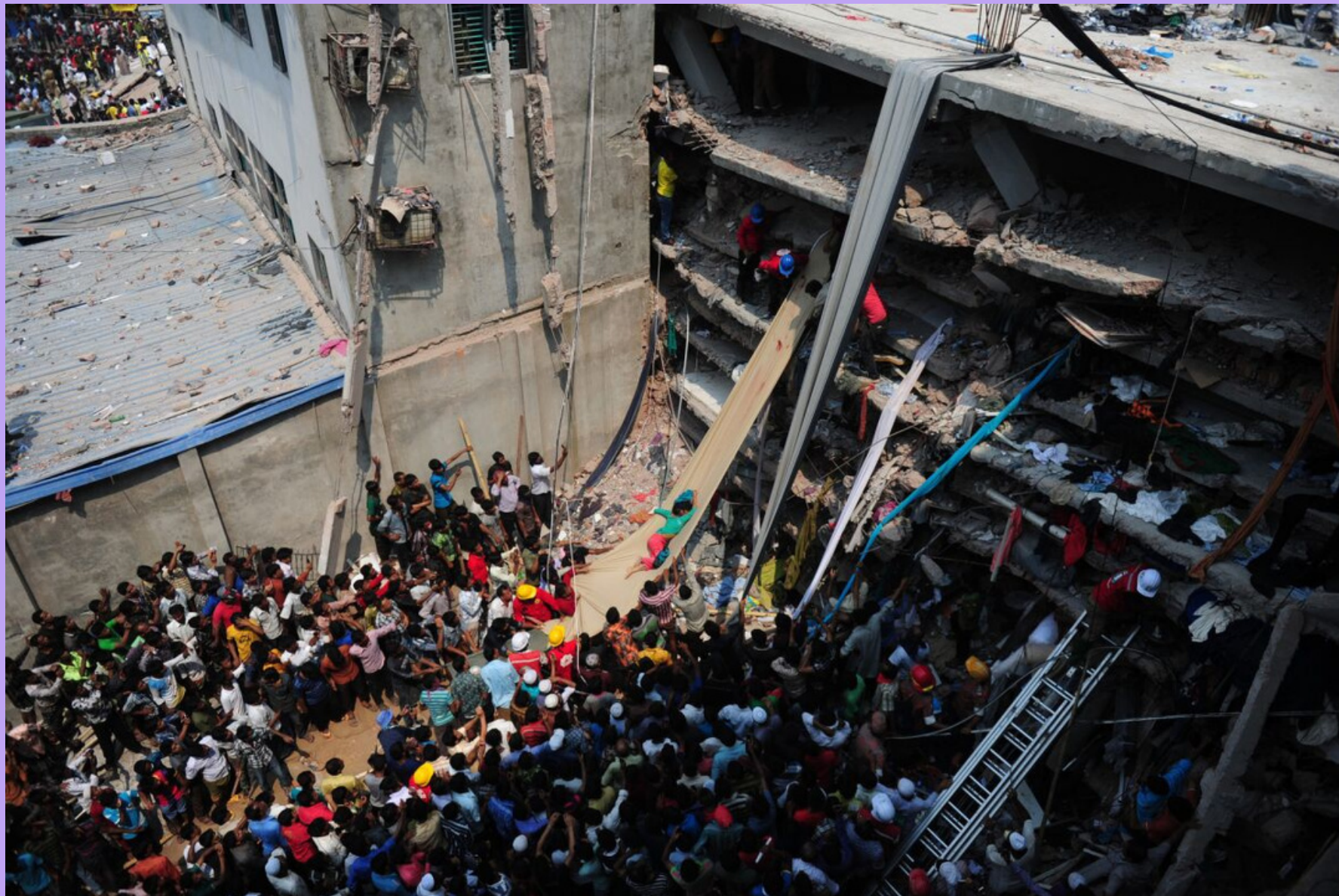
# Social Impacts

Fast fashion and the fashion industry has a human cost to it. Textile workers, primarily women in developing countries - are often paid insufficient wages and are forced to work long hours in appalling conditions, in which create infringements on the worker's human rights. Health concerns of workers and consumers arise with the chemicals used in clothing.



Developing economies see heaps of societal issues caused by the fashion industry, so much so that a 2018 report by the US Department of Labour found evidence of forced and child labour within the industry in a number of countries, including but not limited to: Argentina, Brazil, China, Philippines and Turkey.

# Social Impacts



In 2013, an eight-storey factory building, housing several garment factories, collapsed in Dhaka, Bangladesh. This killed 1,134 workers, injuring more than 2,500. It was revealed that the collapse was entirely preventable and that parts of the building were constructed without the proper permits from the city.

Many developing nations will rarely follow environmental regulations along with building regulations. For example, China is a major producer of fast fashion and is notorious for land degradation, as well as air and water pollution.

# Social Impacts

Workers are getting paid as little as 39 cents an hour.

Children are forced to stay home alone while their mothers work long hours.

Women report astonishing levels of workplace abuse.

These workers are stuck in the cycle of generational poverty that is also being impacted the most by climate change.



Violent monsoon rains increasing in Bangladesh can see the country be a source of many waves of climate refugees, and with a high percentage of Australia's fast fashion industry made in Bangladesh, the thousands of women who work to make our dresses, shoes, undies, sleepwear, will be some of the most affected.

# What can we do?

We can remove ourselves from the fast fashion world by:

Buying long-lasting quality clothing that comes from ethical manufacturers. and local small businesses.

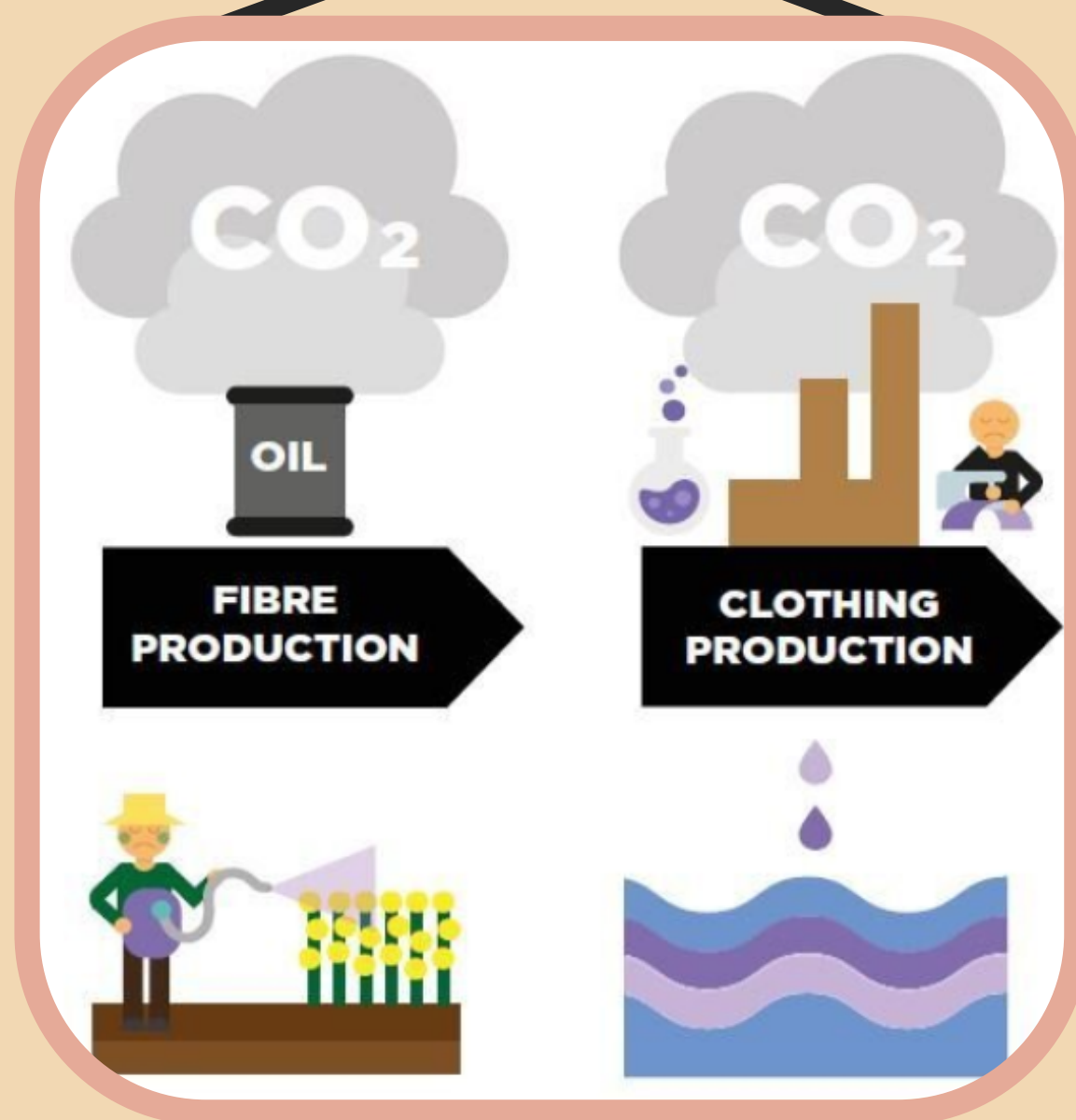
selling and buying second-hand clothes and over goods alike

Renting clothing such as formal dressed and attire is another way to reduce clothing consumption, along with swapping clothes with friends and family or going to clothing swap events such as this one.

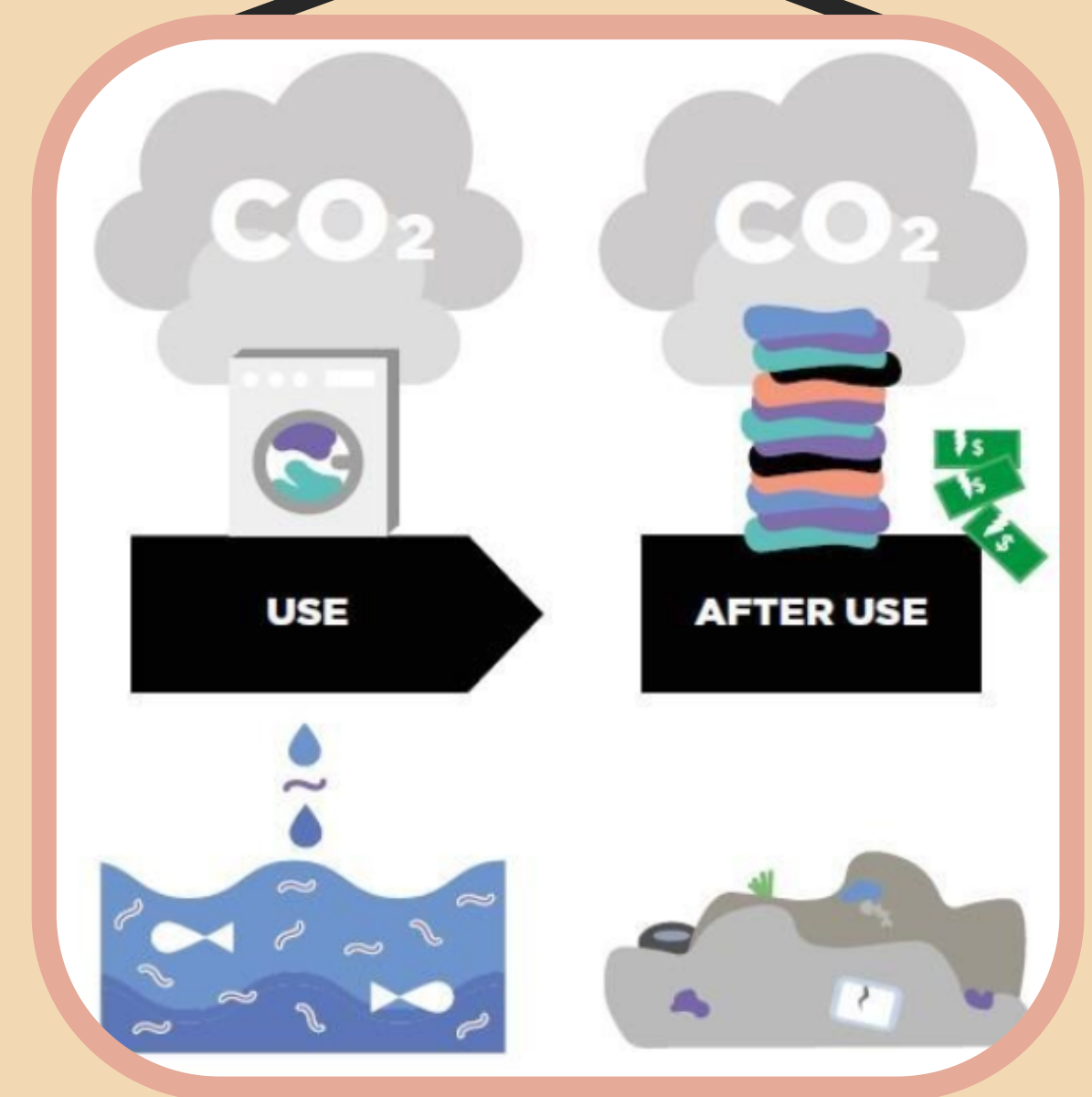
**SECOND HAND  
SALE**

# Online Shopping & Hyper-consumerism





## WHAT IS FAST FASHION?



Fast fashion is a term used to describe cheap and low-quality clothing that are rapidly produced and are cycled in and out the market quickly to meet new trends



## WHAT IS HYPER CONSUMPTION?

Hyper consumption is the excessive and rapid consumption of goods beyond a person's necessities, and the associated significant pressure to consume those goods, exerted by social media, as those goods shape one's identity

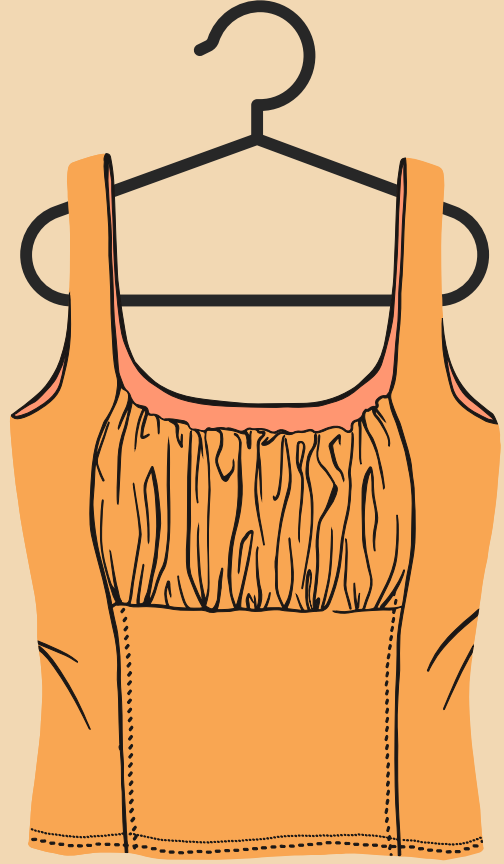
Notions such as retail therapy have been engrained into our culture to fuel corporate profits at the cost of the Earth and the most vulnerable



## WHAT MAKES FAST FASHION WORSE?

These cheap, trendy garments are designed to be worn only a handful of times before being discarded. After a few wears, the garment either falls apart or goes out of style, encouraging customers to return to the store to shop for new trends. Unfortunately, the majority of fast fashion garments are made with synthetic fibers that don't degrade over time in landfills.

*Thanks to the normalization of this overconsumption, the fashion industry has become one of the biggest contributors to global waste and pollution.*



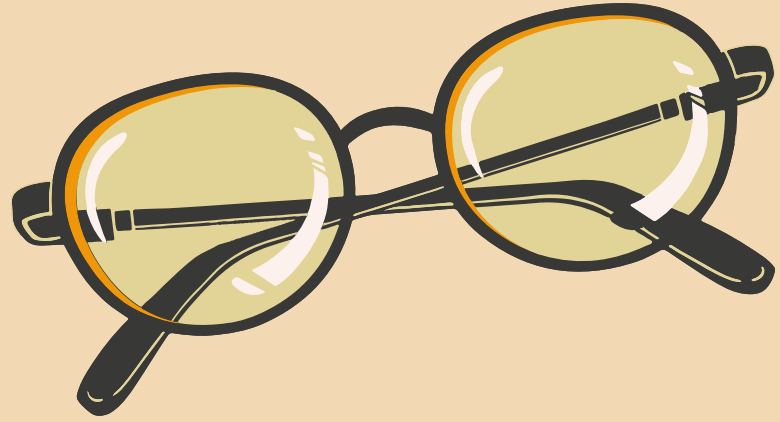
# What is so bad about online shopping?

Most national or multinational retailers with physical stores simply cannot get 600+ new garment lines to all locations on a weekly basis, as online stores can. Nor can they, in most cases, afford to produce as cheap clothing as a standard. *This fuels hyper consumption.*

It's easier than ever to buy new clothes by clicking through social media feeds whenever you see something you like. And it's a time-consuming habit: *how many hours a day you have spent online shopping?*

People online shop for emotional and social reasons. For many, comfort buys occur when people need to channel their anxieties. Shopping is a way to kill time, relieve stress and avoid boredom. But the cheap thrill of buying something new dies away pretty fast. *Half of the people surveyed said that the immediate excitement of a shopping spree lasted less than a day.*





# Stuffocation



Stuffocation describes a state where people's lives are trapped in a vicious cycle of working and accumulating products in order to keep up with the pace of consumerism. This fuels the anxiety of modern life; destroying the planet while keeping us from leading more imaginative, fulfilling lives. Materialism is eating us inside out.

So how do we stop it? Ads, promotions and 1-click buying functions are all designed to trigger impulse buying. The rate of buying increases the more companies speed up delivery. Therefore, the slower the buying process, the lower the desire to shop.

To break free from the cycle of consumerism, *we need to slow down.*

# How to spot a fast fashion brand

## COMMON TRAITS OF FAST FASHION BRANDS

### Offshore manufacturing

Often offshore manufacturing takes advantage of cheap labor in countries with few wage and safety regulations, often using complex global supply chains with little to no transparency

### Inexpensive, low-quality materials

These materials are designed to quickly degrade and be thrown away after a single season

### Hundreds to thousands of different styles

Most of these styles are focused on current fashion trends

### Limited quantities of trendy garments

To avoid markdowns and pressure shoppers into buying immediately before they miss out

### Short turnaround time

A short amount of time between when the trend was first spotted on a runway, red carpet, or celebrity Instagram feed and when it hits the stores



Shein lists between 2 thousand and 10 thousand new items on its website per day

Each year GAP lists 12 thousand items, H&M lists 25 thousand, Zara lists 35 thousand,  
and Shein lists 1 million 300 thousand

1 in 3 young women, the biggest segment of consumers, consider garments worn  
once or twice to be old

Extending the life of clothes by just 9 months of active use would reduce  
carbon, water and waste footprints by 20-30% each

# SUSTAINABLE FASHION OPTIONS

**Young Mercy Links**

**Clothing Swap to End Hyper-Consumerism**



# WHAT HOPE IS THERE??

After the last presentation it may seem hopeless and like there are no good options when it comes to buying clothes but don't worry! We're also here to help you find the best ways to find your style and help save the planet too!

# ALTERNATIVES TO FAST FASHION

## ♥ UPCYCLE

The cheapest and most sustainable option is to reuse or upcycle your own clothes to avoid buying anything new!

## ♥ BUY USED

Thrift shops, marketplace and reselling websites are all ways to both keep clothes out of landfill and avoid contributing to the fast fashion industry.

## ♥ ETHICAL BRANDS

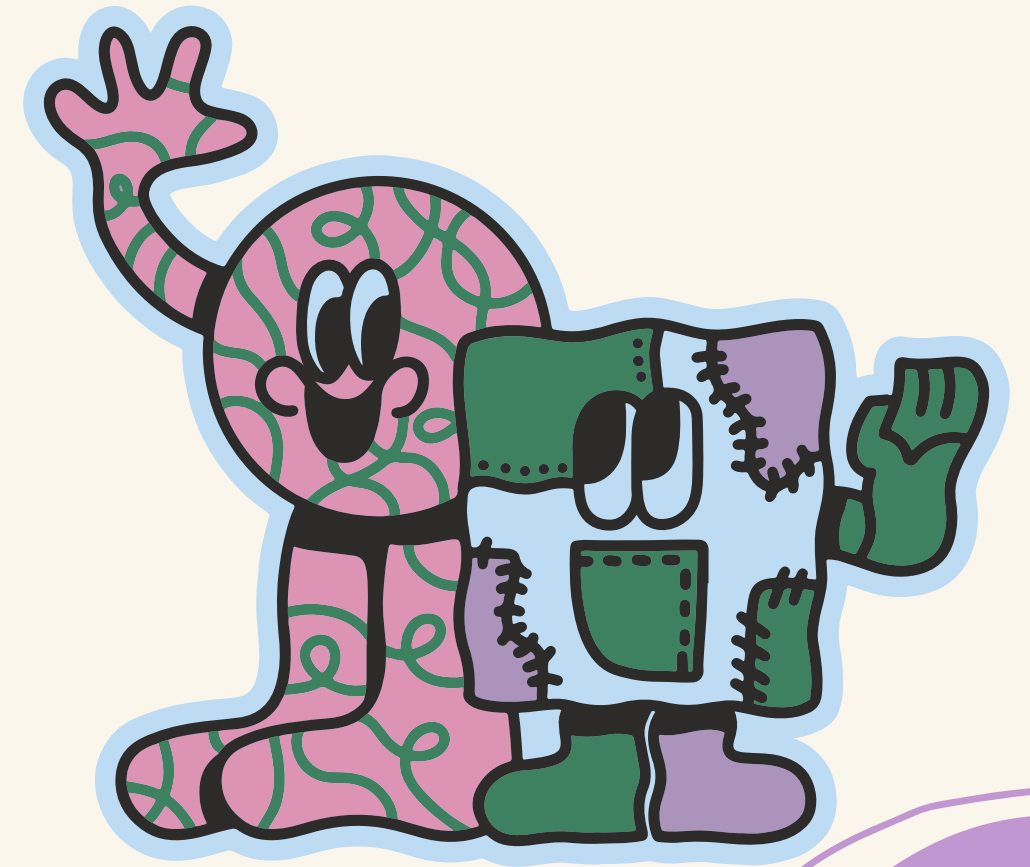
Sometimes finding brands that have a commitment to sustainability is time-consuming, but every little bit helps. Brands that use recycled materials or reduce the chemicals used in production can be an excellent alternative.

# UPCYCLE

Reuse or Repurpose the clothes you already have!

Re-wearing the clothes you already have is an important part of reducing textiles in landfill, so try to avoid only wearing clothes once!

Repurpose damaged clothes by making them into something else! (a shorter skirt, a handbag, dish cloths – use your imagination!)



# BUY USED

Reselling Websites | Marketplace | Thrift Stores

There are many reasons people might get rid of their clothes when they are still in good condition so make sure you check out the best used clothes spots available to you.  
Don't forget to donate/resell your own clothes as well to keep the cycle going!



# ETHICAL BRANDS

Brands with a commitment to sustainability

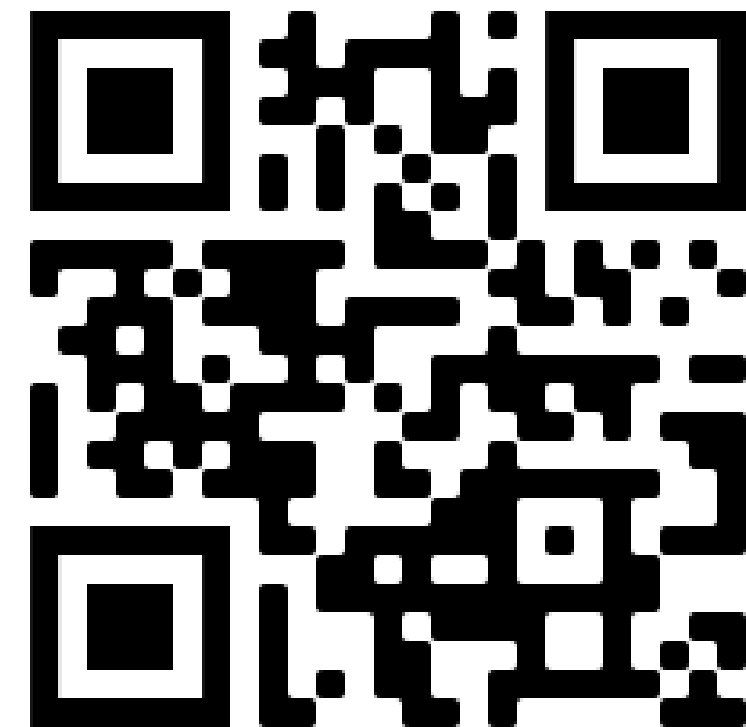
Most brands will have their mission statement or information about their sustainability commitments on their website.



# GOOD ON YOU

<https://goodonyou.eco/>

"Wear the change you want to see. Download our app to discover ethical brands and see how your favourites measure up."

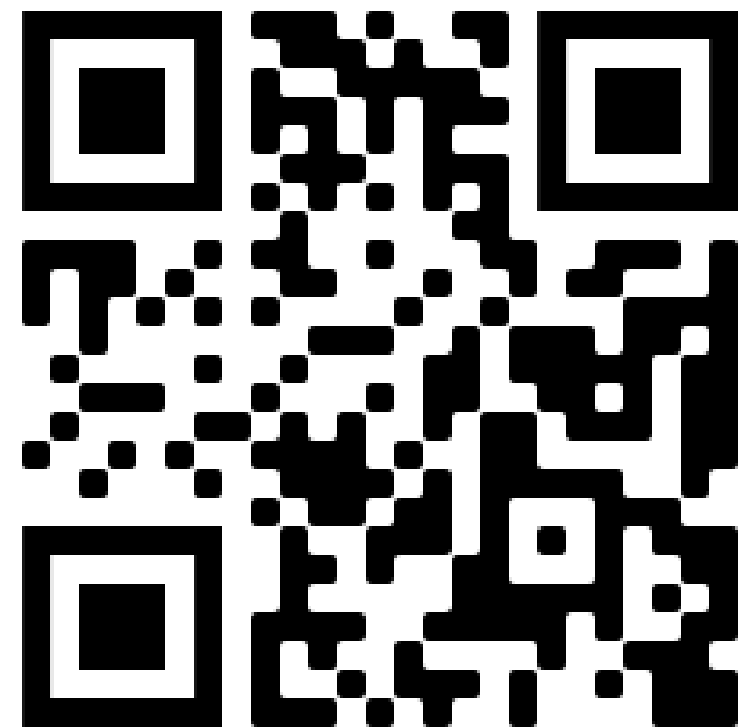


# BRITTS LIST

<https://www.brittslist.com.au/>

"Britt's List is an online fashion publication dedicated to telling the stories behind Australian fashion brands that lead their industry in environmental sustainability and ethical treatment of people and animals."

*Britt's list*

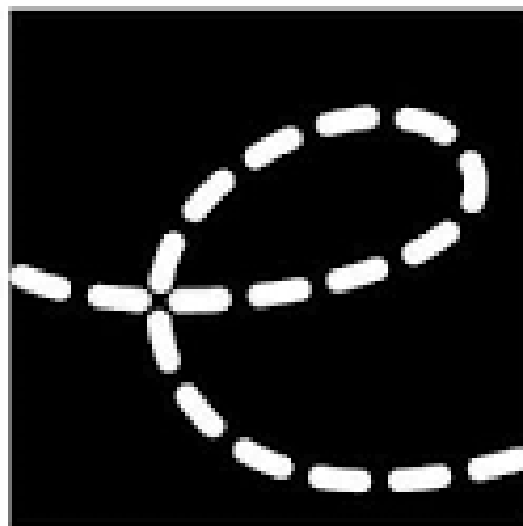


# ETHICAL CLOTHING AUSTRALIA

<https://ethicalclothingaustralia.org.au/>

"Ethical Clothing Australia (ECA) is an accreditation body. We work collaboratively with local textile, clothing and footwear businesses to protect and uphold the rights of Australian garment workers."

Accredited by



ethical  
clothing  
AUSTRALIA





# FAV'S OF THE YML TEAM

## WHAT ARE OUR FAVOURITES?

The rest of this presentation contains the YML member's favourite brands

## DO YOU HAVE ANY TO ADD?

Know a sustainable/ethical brand we haven't included? Let us know so we can add it for our next event!



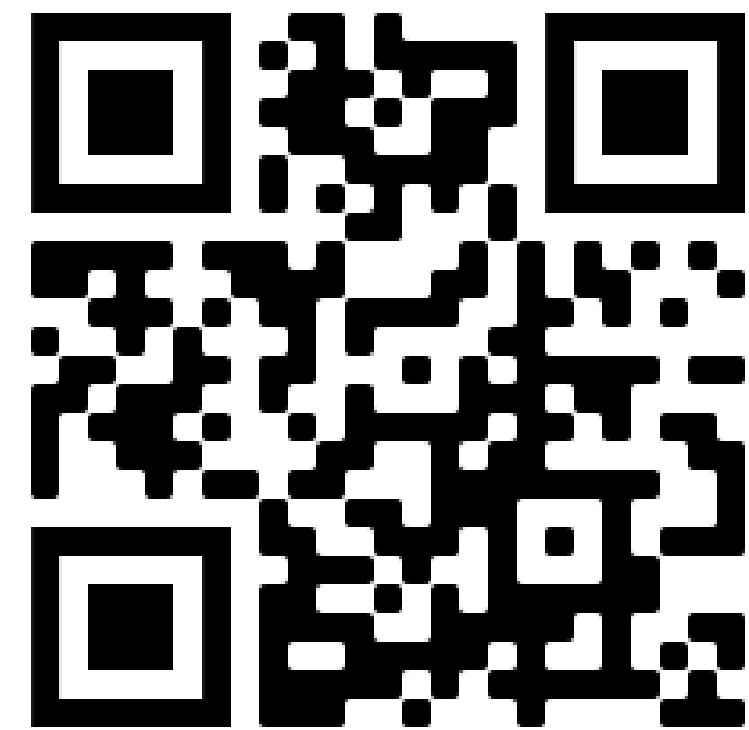
# DHARMA BUMS

<https://www.dharmabums.com.au/>

An Australian owned company that makes active-wear from recycled water bottles.

I love all my leggings and sports bras from here, they are super comfy, gorgeous and high quality!

– Eve (23)

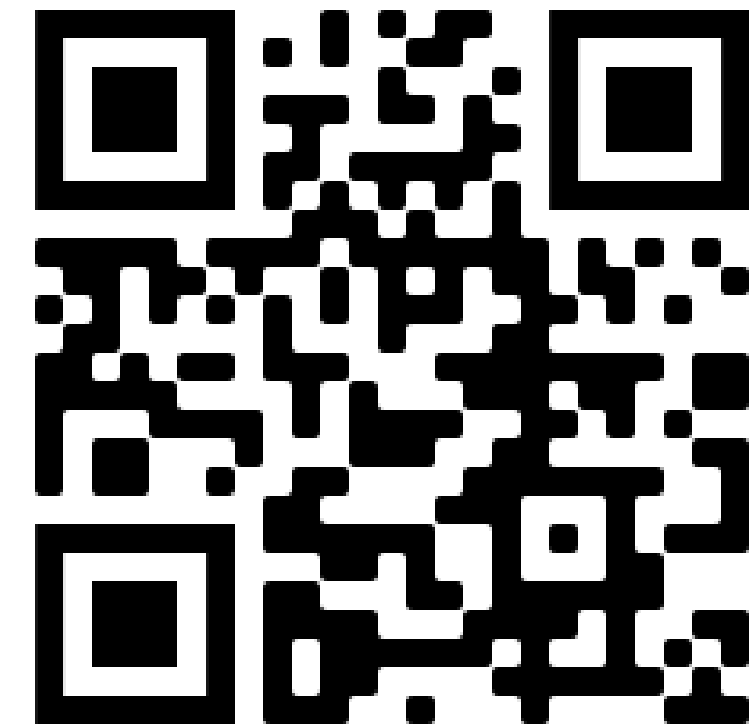


# MODIBODI

<https://www.modibodi.com/>

Washable menstrual products are another important aspect of sustainability.

ModiBodi is an Australian owned brand that produces period underwear and swimwear (for teens and adults), incontinence underwear and washable nappies!

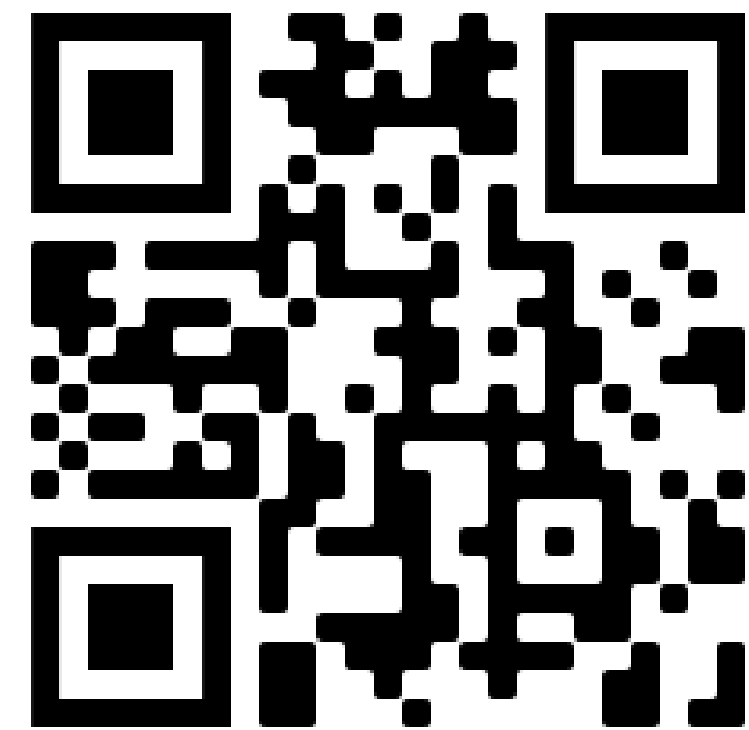


# SÜK WORKWEAR

<https://sukworkwear.com.au/>

An ethical Melbourne label, they are super inclusive (xxs to xxxl) with adjustable waists on the pants and shorts and they are very durable!!

– Pheobe (20) and Cass (27)



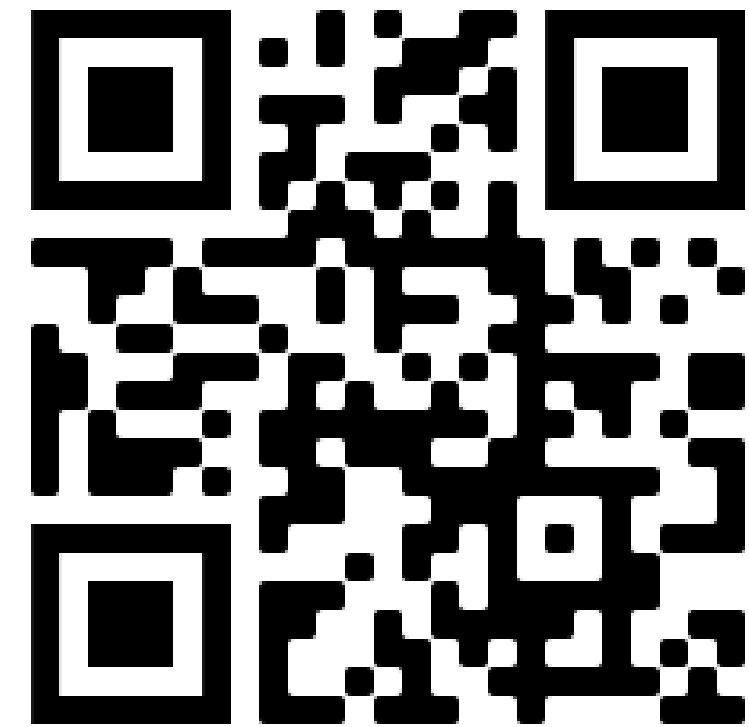
# BOODY

<https://www.boody.com.au/>

Boody bamboo underwear is so comfortable and soft!  
I love their inclusivity when it comes to "nude" colours.

Their socks in particular are my favourites though!

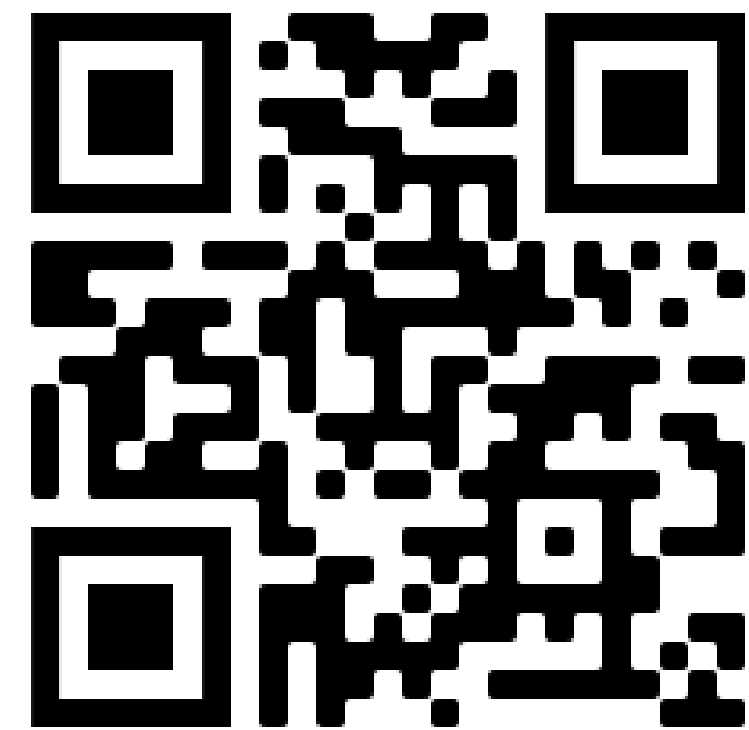
—Eve (23)



# ARGENT SILVER SMITH

<https://argentsilversmith.com/>

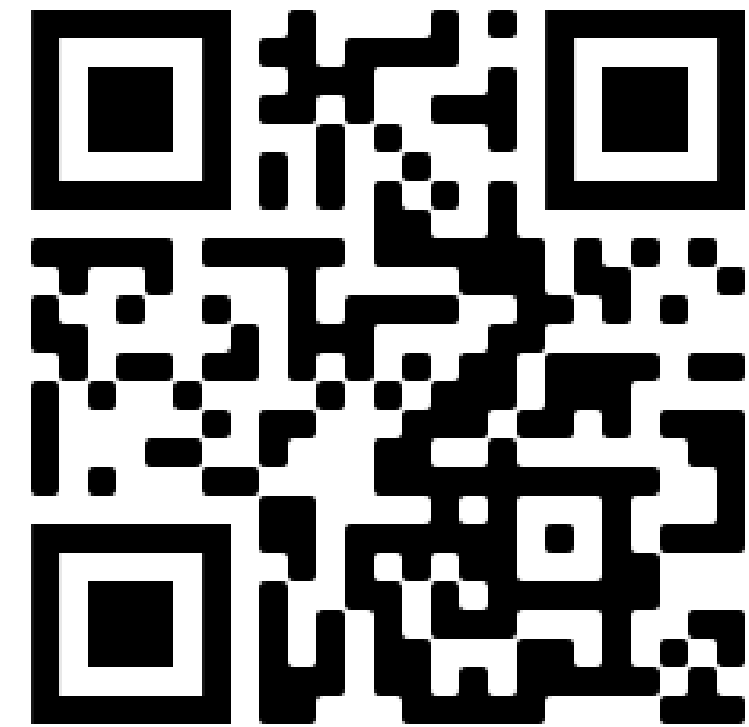
High quality jewellery that you don't need to take off in  
water that are super cute chunky designs  
-Isabel (20)



# PIXIE MOOD

<https://pixiemood.com/>

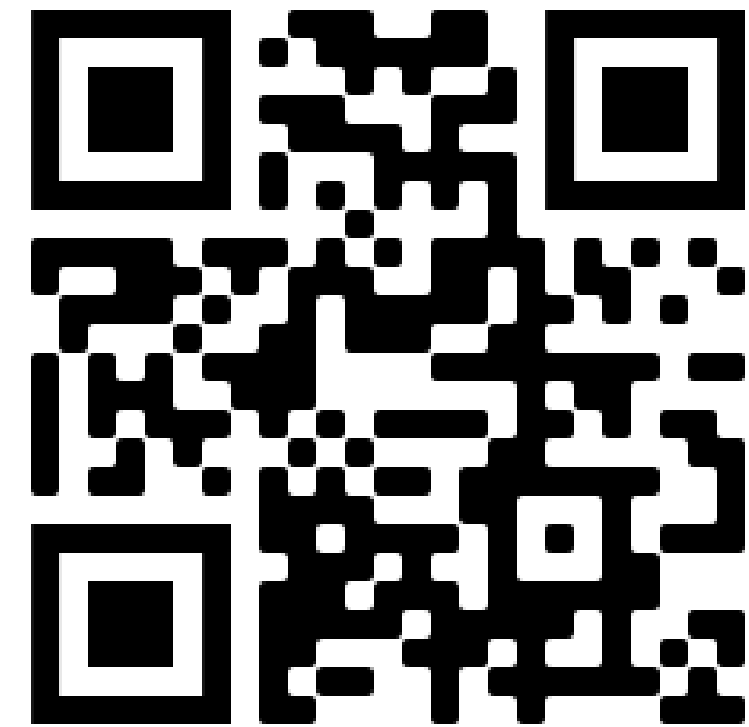
I have one of the vegan handbags that fits my laptop perfectly. It has lasted two years so far and I don't treat it all to well, it's held up and still looks great!



# CASA AMUK

<https://www.casamelbourne.com/>

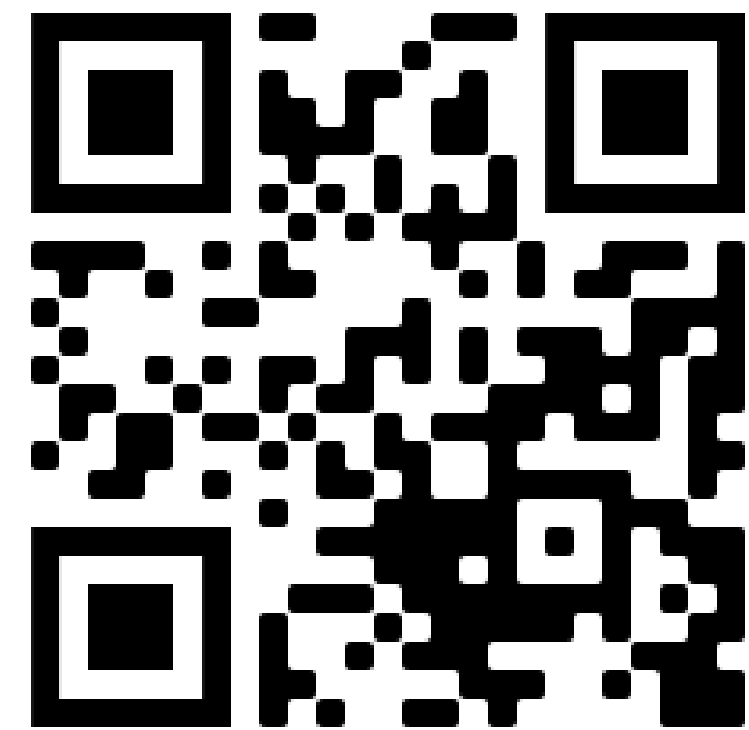
Range of basics to suit every need, made from cotton and  
based in Melbourne.



# REMI

<https://remilabel.com/>

High quality and youthful!  
-Isabel (20)

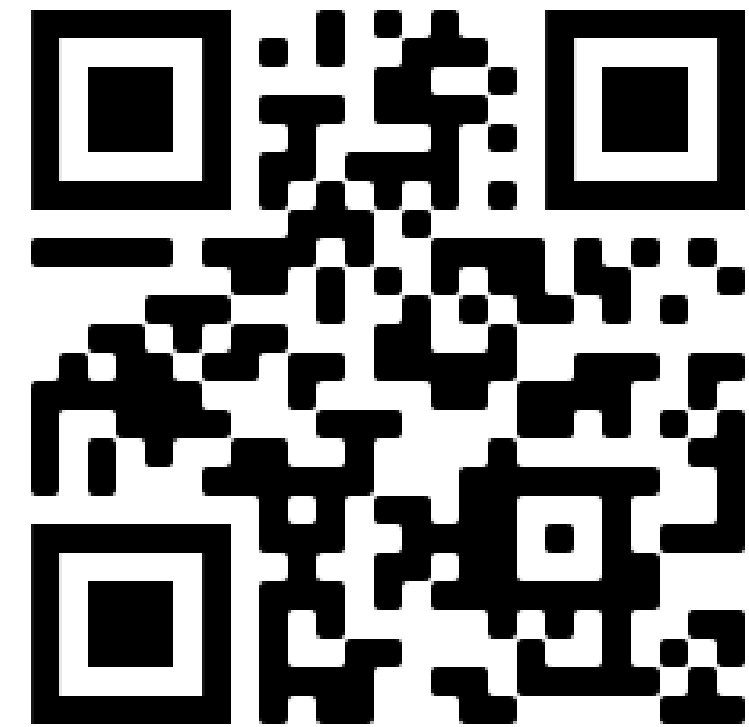


# ICHPIG

<https://ichpig.com/>

I like ICHPIG because they are a street wear label whose garments are all made in Melbourne.

—Cass (27)



# ARLO AND OLIVE

<https://www.arloandolive.com/>

Love it because it's 70s style and so well made !  
It's youthful but still lasts a long time!  
-Isabel (20)

