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# HOW CAN CONSUMERS EXTEND THE LIFE SPAN OF THEIR CLOTHING?

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# KEY TERMS

- Over the last decade, people's fashion habits have resulted in the need for mass production of clothing.
- This is called fast fashion, and it has many environmental and ethical implications.
- The clothing produced under these circumstances are usually of a far lower quality and do not have a very long life span.
- Life span refers to the amount of time a garment takes to undergo its entire life cycle.
- We as consumers can slow down the fashion cycle and extend the life span of our clothing once it has been purchased and taken home.



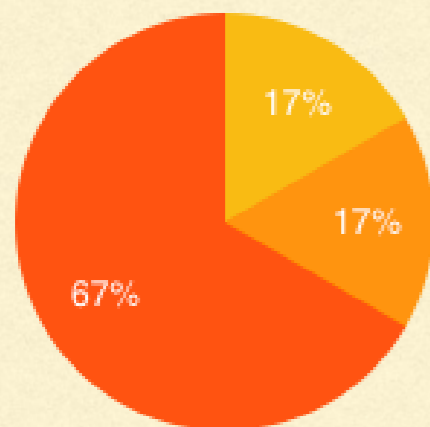
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# PRIMARY RESEARCH

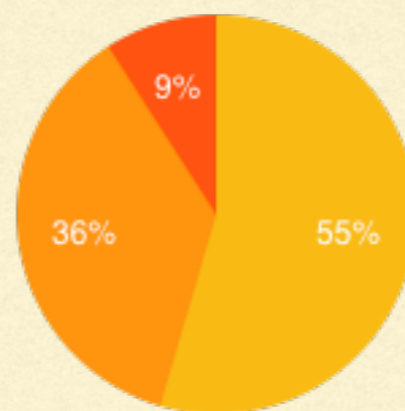
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- I carried out a survey to get an idea of the way some people care for their clothing currently, and some of the ways that they are extending it's life.

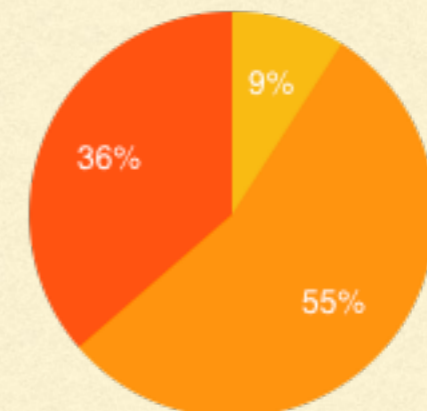
6 months-1 year   1 year-2 years  
2 years-5 years



Don't like the item anymore   Item does not fit  
Item is damaged



Throw the item out   Give them away  
Recycle item



On average how long do you keep an item of clothing for?

Why do you get rid of them?

What do you do with them at this stage?

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# AN EXPLANATION OF THIS DATA

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- Majority of people I surveyed were conscious to try and keep their clothing for as long as possible. However many survey members were young, so it was common that they were growing out of their clothing. There were also many responses saying that they end up not liking the item.
  - When done with a garment, most give them away to op shops or other family members etc. and some mentioned they like to recycle their clothing into something new.
  - For the people that said they throw things out when they are done, there are other much better solutions.
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# SECONDARY RESEARCH

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## Where should you buy your clothing?

- If you want to slow down your fashion habits, then buying better quality clothing is the best place to start.
  - Price is not always an indicator. Expensive clothing can still be made poorly.
  - A good way to check the quality of something before buying it is to check the seams. Look for things like unravelling strings.
  - Also, if you hold a garment up to the light and it shines right through, that is a sometimes a sign that the fabric is not very good quality.
  - If you have already bought an item of clothing from a fast fashion store, there are ways that you can minimise the damage and get the most out of that product without having to buy a replacement.
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## Take care of your clothes....

- Take care of your clothes when washing them- Only wash them when they need to be washed, look at the labels and see how they are meant to be cared for, don't use too much detergent, washing darks inside out can reduce fading, try to avoid dry cleaning and ironing too often, and it is both better for your garment and better for the environment if you hang dry.
  - When storing them- try not to hang heavy items up as they may stretch (plastic and wire coat hangers are more likely to cause stretching), putting lavender or cedar wood in with clothes helps prevent moths getting in.
  - Some shoes, especially leather can benefit from having treatments or conditioners put on them which increases their life. Investing in something like this can also save you a lot of money in the future.
  - Stain pens can help remove stains before they become permanent.
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When you think you're done with them...

- If you don't think you like the time anymore, consider ways it could be altered, and turned into something you like and will wear more often.
  - If not, giving the item away to the op shop etc. is a good way to have the item reused.
  - If they are a damaged, learn some simple mending skills, and try to repair the item. If the mending required is too advanced there are local repair stores that can do it.
  - If the clothes are past this point, they can be used for other purposes such as cleaning rags which prevents excess landfill.
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# NEW INNOVATION

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- Patagonia has released 'worn wear' as a way to reduce landfill and to extend the life of Patagonia clothing.
- After a garment is not being used anymore it can be taken back to a Patagonia store where it will be repaired if necessary, and sold again or recycled if it is beyond repair.
- This helps reduce landfill and is a very useful way of reusing an item because repairs can be done with the right materials etc.
- It is an efficient way of extending the life span and giving the garment more use and more brands introducing things like this could be very beneficial.



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# SUMMARY

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- Fast fashion and fast changing trends are causing the life span of clothing to be reduced greatly.
  - It is common for clothes to be purchased excessively and then not end up being worn, or to be grown out of. These clothes can still be given away to somebody who wants them or they can be transformed into something new.
  - Buying better quality clothing slows down fashion.
  - Taking good care of your clothes by washing and storing them appropriately helps extend their life.
  - Once damaged, simple repairs should be attempted or the items can be reused for something else.
  - Companies such as Patagonia are creating opportunities for their products to be repaired and reused.
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