

We are excited to spend this year working towards being more **conscious consumers**. This is a journey we cannot wait to go on with you.

Here are 12 steps we will be taking this year as we work to be more **conscious consumers**. It won't all happen overnight, so let's take one challenge at a time!

1. EDUCATE YOURSELF

Information is power. Researching and understanding how clothes are made is the first step. Take some time to read about and understand ethical fashion. Check our blog for ideas on where to start.

2. CLOSET CLEANOUT

Part of being a more conscious consumer is knowing what you actually NEED. You can't shop for clothes unless you are aware of how to make your closet more intentional.

3. HOST A CLOTHING SWAP

Why spend money on clothes when you and your friends have plenty to share? A clothing swap is a great way to limit your consumption of fast fashion.

4. PRACTICE MINDFUL PURCHASING

The definition of mindful is "to be more aware of something". Try to take a moment next time you find yourself shopping to ask yourself a few questions: 1) If I put this down, will I still be thinking about it tomorrow? 2) Will I wear this more than 30-40 times? 3) Do I own something similar to this?

5. UPCYCLE YOUR JEANS

Upcycling means to reuse a discarded material in a way to create a new product with a second life. We're no seamstresses, but start with turning an old pair of jeans into new cutoff shorts.

6. SHOP SECONDHAND

Find your local thrift store or try out an app like Poshmark to score some secondhand clothes. We've even found some excellent thrifters selling their finds on Instagram.

7. RECYCLE YOUR CLOTHES

Sometimes clothes just reach the end of their life. Textiles can be recycled instead of being trashed, which eventually sends them to the landfill. Research local options for textile recycling or check out organizations like ReTold Recycling and TerraCycle.

8. FIND ETHICAL BRANDS YOU LOVE

There are so many businesses working to stop fast fashion by making lasting artisan products, paying makers a fair wage and supporting what is best for the planet. Find and support some you love!

9. UPCYCLE A STAINED SHIRT

Extending the life of an item in your closet is a step towards becoming a more conscious consumer. Tie-dyeing items is not only fun, but it also hides a stain or imperfection on an otherwise great shirt.

10. LEARN HOW TO MEND CLOTHING

This is on our list of "learn to do" this year. So many fabulous garments could have a much longer life if we learned how to mend small holes and tears. Reach out to a local seamstress or try a YouTube tutorial for how to fix up your favorite blouse.

11. LOOK FOR CERTIFICATIONS

Certifications are a way that we have standardized showing if a company is participating in ethical behavior. Look into certifications like BCorp, Fair Trade and USDA Organic.

12. TRY DRESSEMBER

DresseMBER is a collaborative movement using fashion (dresses) to raise awareness and funds to fight human trafficking. Many victims of human trafficking are forced into labor for the fast fashion industry. Wearing a dress for the 31 days of DresseMBER is one way to raise awareness to help stop fast fashion.