

## THREE COMMON WARDROBE QUESTIONS WITH SOME ANSWERS TO GET YOU STARTED

### **Where do I discard my worn out underwear, random collection of odd socks, tattered and stained old clothes -?**

#### KEEP THEM OUT OF LANDFILL

Use the H&M Garment Collection Program and ZARA's textile collecting and recycling service. These global initiatives mean that you can drop-off "all textiles - any brand, any condition - even odd socks, worn-out T-shirts and old sheets" in recycling bins in their stores. These are the best, most accessible options for now.

#### RE-USE, RESOURCE

Connect with your local community groups that are creating opportunities to upcycle textiles into functional and other items, like your local Upcycle community group and Boomerang Bags. Disassemble pieces of clothing for materials to use. Learn how to make t-shirt rag rugs on YouTube!

### **What do I do with clothes that still have good value, that are too good to give away -?**

#### RE-PURPOSE

Think about value and cost per wear, and how you can shift the way you view the garments you bought for particular occasions that could perhaps be worn more regularly, in other useful ways.

#### SWAP YOUR CLOTHES

Host your own! or tap into a nationwide initiative like Seaside Scavenge to organise one in your community. Consider sharing your clothes with others - check out Tumnus (Australia)

#### SELL-IT-YOURSELF

Gumtree, eBay, Facebook groups, Garage Sale Trail and other marketplaces dedicated to on-selling pre-loved clothing. Google "online consignment stores Australia" to start your research.

#### RE-INVENT

Change your garments by alteration or colour into a style that you would wear. For example, there is Cullachange in Sydney where you can have your clothes dyed one at a time.

### **I don't really have the tech or know-how to sell my clothes online. What are some easier options -?**

#### DEALER OR CONSIGNMENT

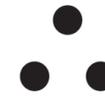
Find a consignment boutique in your area to sell your branded clothes that are in good to excellent condition.

community organisation and create your own fundraising events with clothing sales.

- The Remote Op Shop Project (supports the development of independent locally-owned op shops in remote Aboriginal communities throughout Australia)
- Dress for Success (improves the employability of women in need)
- Got Your Back Sista (provides relief and support for women and children who have escaped domestic violence)

#### CHARITY STORES, COMMUNITY SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

Donate your best quality pre-loved clothes to your favourite charity stores for recommerce or, better yet, get together with your friends to connect with a



# SLOW WEARING WELL

A WORKABLE APPROACH  
TO A SUSTAINABLE WARDROBE

by High Tea with Mrs Woo

## SLOW WEARING WELL

We're proposing Slow Wearing Well as a workable approach to a problem. The problem is you and me, and the ways we consume and use, love and care for the things we wear.

It's so much more common to have too many clothes than not enough - from our 100 pairs of jeans to 3 good ones that only get worn and dry-cleaned annually; our beautiful wool jackets with moth holes that we despair rather than repair; our sweating in microfibrines; our 2 pairs of good shoes and 12 pairs of bad ones;

our tangle of belts and jewels... oh! the flourishes!

We're not suggesting that you throw out everything in your wardrobe and start again. The most sustainable garment is the one that is already in your wardrobe after all. FROM NOW ON - when you're shopping, be curious and mindful. When you're laundering, be learned and attentive. When you're getting dressed, be inspired - be proud! Know what you want and what you have. Look after your things, let them live long and full lives.

## WEAR CLOTHES. NO MORE THAN YOU NEED. MOSTLY NATURAL FIBRES.

Many folks have been asking us 'where do we start? How do we shop for better clothing choices?' In explore anecdotes and antidotes, we look to one of our favourite food, nature and culture writers, Michael Pollan, for inspiration. We love his mantra -

Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants.

It's a succinct and helpful guide that feels easy in the back of our minds when we shop, plan and prepare meals for ourselves and our families.

It may seem impossible to follow his advice to a tee, but being perfect about it is not actually the point. It's to inspire us all to make better decisions - to pause, think and be a little more mindful. As we consider the kind of mantra that could work as a simple guide to help you make better clothing choices, we came up with -

Wear clothes. No more than you need. Mostly natural fibres.

This is a good place to start.

## MATERIALS MATTER

When we talk about plastic in clothing, we're talking about synthetic fibres.

The statistic is that around 60% of fabric produced by the textiles industry globally is polyester (which is made from coal and petroleum), and more is being made of other synthetic materials such as acrylic, nylon, rayon, acetate, spandex, polyamide over more sustainable ones.

Basically, they shed microfibrines when we launder them which ends up in our waterways, oceans and in our bodies.

Choose wool instead of fleecy, choose linen instead of polypropylene. Your choices matter to your well-being, community and planet. Where and what you spend your money on really makes a difference and really does create change.

## HOW TO EDIT YOUR WARDROBE

Here is a simple guide on how to thoughtfully edit your clothing collection, and create a mindful and practical approach to maintaining a sustainable wardrobe.

### 1. EXPLORE AND EXPOSE

Look broadly at your wardrobe to identify any categories in the way you organise your clothing collection, and expose any patterns of shopping behaviour that you want to change.

### 2. EDIT AND EVALUATE

Hone in on your wardrobe items and work out a set of criteria to help you decide what stays and what goes. Ask yourself questions like, will I wear this for another day or another five years? Understand yourself better through this process and feel confident that you know what to add to your collection from now on. Curb compulsive shopping!

### 3. REPAIR, RE-USE, RE-INVENT, RE-PURPOSE, RECYCLE

Reconnect with your sewing machine, upskill yourself and learn how to hem your own pants. Alternatively, connect with a dressmaker or alterationist you trust and engage with them in bringing new life to your loved garments. Change your mindset, look at how you can repurpose garments you don't like or would like to wear more of.

Research and learn old and new crafts. From darning to visible mending, rag rugging to contemporary patchworking, tap in to YouTube tutorials and local workshops to see what you can do with textile materials.

### 4. ENGAGE, BE CURIOUS

Ask questions, doesn't matter how simple or complicated. Be better informed about sustainable clothing ideas and options as the world moves to create better ways, materials and systems. Sign up to newsletters, subscribe to podcasts. Some easy, informative favourites are Wardrobe Crisis (podcast), Eco Warrior Princess, Fashion for Good and Fashion Revolution.

Also, who are the local makers in your community? Find out, get to know who makes your clothes. Attend maker's markets, like Olive Tree Markets and Slow Fashion Market.

### 5. DISCARD, DO NOT DESPAIR

Don't stress out about what you've already accumulated. It just creates inertia. Lighten your load, mentally and wardrobe -! There are many ways to discard clothing that are no longer suitable or useful. Do it mindfully, there are always better ways.

The best and most impactful decision you can make is at the point of purchase. Be informed and thoughtful about the garment you are buying AT THE BEGINNING. Think about the lifecycle of the garment you are purchasing. Have a better workable approach to your wardrobe and you'll find that you won't be confronted with having too many clothes as an issue to deal with.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND REFERENCE LINKS IN THIS GUIDE  
[www.highteawithmrswoo.com.au/about](http://www.highteawithmrswoo.com.au/about)