

HOW LOVING YOUR CLOTHES CAN PROTECT THE PLANET!



LAST year, Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge, launched The Earthshot Prize, a competition to inspire people to solve some of the world's greatest environmental challenges. Every year until 2030, the Prince and members of the prestigious Prize Council will award £1 million to five projects, each tackling a different issue.

Throughout the month of February, the focus has been on Building A Waste-Free World, one of the five categories of The Earthshot Prize. WRAP (the Waste and Resources Action Programme) is a charity partner for the prize, promoting sustainable resource use and, in this article, talking about clothes!

Clothes are a big part of our everyday lives. They keep us warm, allow us to express ourselves and help us enjoy fun activities like baking, playing sports or dancing. And looking after your clothes can also be a good way to look after the planet.

Throwing clothes in the bin when we don't want them any more is something that contributes to climate change. Every year in the UK, about 336,000 tonnes of used clothing are thrown away – that's the same weight as roughly 84,000 Asian elephants! This is a huge waste of all the things that are needed to make clothing in the first place.

For example, did you know it can take up to 2,700 litres of water to create a single cotton T-shirt? If you drank a litre of water every day, it would take you nearly seven-and-a-half years to drink that much! In some parts of the world, water is in very short supply, so throwing clothes away wastes this precious resource that some people can't access at all.

Luckily, there are lots of really easy ways we can all make our clothes last longer. When we get to the age where we grow out of our clothes less quickly, we can keep them for longer, and just doing that means we put less pressure on the environment to make new clothes.

The main thing is not to put your unwanted clothes in the bin.



REPAIR

We get it – rips happen! And although a couple of rips in a pair of jeans can be cool, some clothes don't look so great with a tear or hole in them. But this doesn't mean they have to end up in the bin. With a responsible adult on hand, you can patch up some small holes and tears with a needle and thread, and sewing on a button is easier than you think!



REUSE

When you've grown out of clothes, or they are too old to repair, there are plenty of other ways to carry on using them! If you're a confident crafter, you can



try making some home-made make-up remover pads or kitchen cloths with an old T-shirt. Even better, these are reusable, so you don't have to keep buying disposable alternatives!

If you want a super simple option, there are loads of things you can do with old socks – they make brilliant dusters and storage bags for toys! And of course, there's always the classic sock puppet.

DONATE

When charity shops reopen, they always welcome donations of good quality clothes they can sell. The same goes for textile banks too. These are great options when you've grown out of your clothes.



RECYCLE

When all else fails, you can recycle your clothes! Plenty of shops will accept unwanted and unwearable clothing to recycle, meaning these precious fabrics can be transformed into something brand-new – even new clothes!



No clothing deserves to end up in the bin. We hope you'll try some of our suggested tips to make a difference for our lovely planet. If you need more help, go to [loveyourclothes.org.uk](https://www.loveyourclothes.org.uk) for loads of great advice.