

How to Shop Sustainably

By Free People

Free People is a clothing company that celebrates young women's free spirits and encourages creative expression through fashion.

In the modern age, it is easy to get caught up in fashion trends promoted by social media influencers and the affordable price tags on trendy clothing at stores like Zara and H&M. Although it may feel like you're spending less money on your fast fashion clothing purchases, these spending habits add up quickly.

Today, Free People wants to help shoppers pause and consider their options before rushing to the nearest Target to pick up the latest pair of shoes. We have compiled a list of tips that focuses on helping consumers learn how to evaluate whether they truly need to add another sweater to their wardrobe.

Tip #1: Shop Secondhand

Do you want to add unique pieces to your closet that no one else seems to have? If so, shopping secondhand is a great option for you. With '90s fashion making a return this season, cheap thrift stores like Goodwill and Salvation Army likely have original pieces from the decade. However, if you're looking for a higher-end, curated thrift store, Plato's Closet is a great place to begin your sustainable shopping journey. Plato's Closet evaluates all items before they are bought based on a list of strict requirements, such as: item condition and trendiness.

Additionally, Free People started a sustainable line this month called the "Free People and Planet Initiative" that allows customers to return brand items that they no longer wear. The Free People and Planet Initiative pays customers for their gently-used clothing and then sells the secondhand clothing on its website, www.fp&planet.com.

Tip #2: Ask Yourself Why You Want It

In order to shop sustainably and reduce the impact of the fashion industry on the planet, it is important to only buy items that we truly need. Therefore, consumers should pause and consider why they are purchasing the item. If you are only purchasing an item to fit in with the crowd or to increase your perceived financial status, the clothing item probably won't be worn for long. However, if you feel that a new sweater or pair of shorts will bring you genuine joy, the item is a good investment.

Tip #3: Set a Budget for Yourself

Set a monthly clothing budget for yourself. This can help keep yourself accountable both financially and consumption-wise. Since fast fashion and thrift store clothing are available at such low prices, it may feel like you're spending less than you actually are.