



How to Recycle

Where to Recycle

Inspire & Motivate Style & Fashion

Reading time: 2 mins

# Earth Action: Host a Clothing Swap



By Gemma Alexander

OCT 7, 2022 clothing, clothing-swap, earth action



Earth911 is honoring the 52 years of Earth Day with 52 Actions for the Earth. Each week through Earth Day 2023, we will share an action you can take to [invest in the Earth](#) and make your own life more sustainable. This week you can save money, build community, and even have some fun by hosting a clothing swap.

## Action: Host a Clothing Swap

### The True Cost of Clothing

Your clothing has a significant environmental impact. The textile industry is responsible for [more than 8%](#) of global greenhouse gas emissions. Every year, [40 million tons](#) of textiles are thrown away – many of them never worn. It takes nearly [3,000 liters of water](#) to make one cotton T-shirt and [3,781 liters of water](#) to make a pair of jeans – yet as a [natural fiber](#), cotton is a good fabric choice (especially if you buy organic). More than half of our clothes are made of oil-derived [synthetic fibers](#) that [contribute 35%](#) of all ocean [microplastic](#) pollution. After technology manufacturing, the garment industry is the next leading cause of [modern slavery](#) and child labor.

### What Do You Think?

Are you considering moving because of climate change?

- I'm researching my options to decide
- Yes
- No

\* By clicking "NEXT" you agree to the following: We use cookies to collect your survey answers. If you would like to continue with this survey, please read and agree to the [CivicScience Privacy Policy and Terms of Service](#)

NEXT \*

Opting out of [fast fashion](#) is the first step toward making your [wardrobe sustainable](#). But what you do when you're done with your clothes is also important to reducing your impact.

## Clothing Community

A clothing swap is just what it sounds like – an event where people bring their old clothes for others to take and go home with clothes that other people brought. Besides extending the life of your (and your friends') clothes, trading used clothes also saves money and builds community.

Your clothing swap can be whatever works best for you and the people you invite. You can invite three or four friends who wear similar styles and sizes to bring five items of clothing each. Or you can invite your entire school community to bring any kids' clothes that are still wearable. You might fill a backyard or garage with tables and run it like a free swap meet. You can offer wine and snacks in your living room and take turns trading items like it's a holiday gift exchange.

## Hosting a Clothing Swap

Whatever you decide, make the [ground rules](#) clear ahead of time. The only really hard and fast rule is that clothes on offer should be clean. Many people specify that clothes should also be in good condition, but if you know a lot of people who sew, an upcycle swap could be lots of fun, too.

It's a good idea to set quantity guidelines so you don't all end up shopping from one friend's closet. Martha Stewart recommends [stocking your shop](#) so it's easy for guests to browse available items. Even if you don't have spare display racks on hand, make sure you have clean, flat surfaces to put the clothes on, so people don't have to paw through piles of clothes on the floor. Try to provide a private space for people to try things on so they don't get stuck with clothes that don't fit. Have a plan for unclaimed items; donate to a thrift store or try a [retail take-back](#) program to keep the leftover clothes out of the garbage.

If your swap is a success, consider making it an annual, or even seasonal, event.

---

advertising

---

[Edit](#)



[Reading time: 2 mins](#)

[Earth911 Podcast: Jane Velez-Mitchell on UnchainedTV's Vegan News Mission](#)



By [Gemma Alexander](#)

Gemma Alexander has an M.S. in urban horticulture and a backyard filled with native plants. After working in a genetics laboratory and at a landfill, she now writes about the environment, the arts and family. See more of her writing [here](#).

---

Related Post