

## Planetary Wellbeing

- Cut Pollution & Toxicity
- Ensure Animal Wellness
- Guard Water Resources
- Ocean Awareness
- Protect Biodiversity
- Reduce Resource Consumption**
  - Composting
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  - Home Improvements
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  - Recycling
  - Resource-Saving Products
  - Reusable Living
    - Sharing & Corporate
    - Consumption
  - **Slow Consumption**
  - Trashless Parenting
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- Save Energy & Climate

## Pretty in Pastels



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## Join the Slow Fashion Movement

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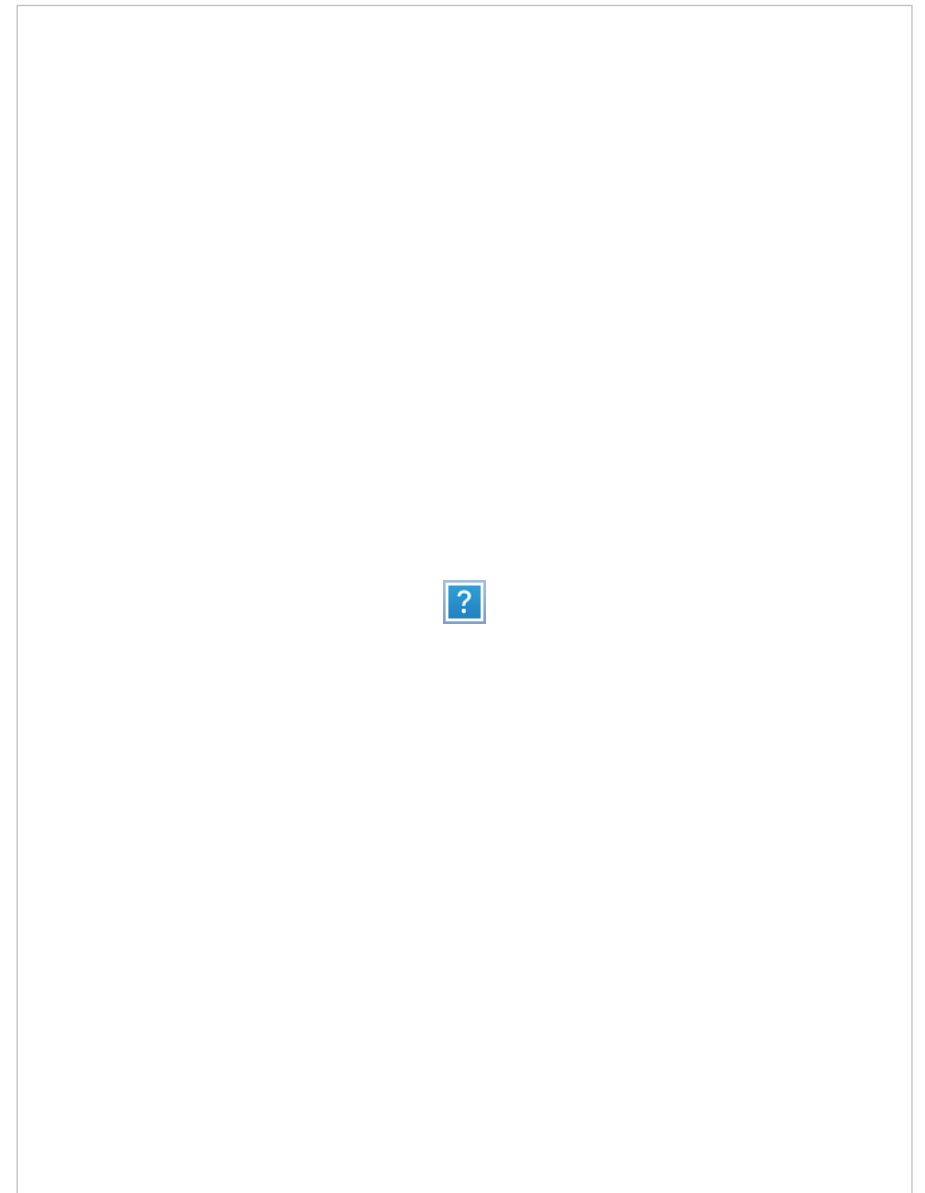
Fast fashion is a term used to describe the **fashion industry** of today – one where lightning fast production cycles and inexpensive clothing are the norm. Fast fashion is essentially the fast food of the clothing industry. Consumer demand for cheap, constantly changing style has arguably created the single most influential movement in fashion of the past fifteen years. The planet and the humans working in the industry are paying the consequences of this speedy, low-cost industry.

Fast fashion started with the idea of fashion democracy: everyone deserves fashion. Everyone should be able to purchase the fashion they see in the magazines. A wide range of fashion must be available now and cheaply. Inexpensive, quickly-changing fashion must be available to everyone. Today, fast fashion is so normal that most consumers believe this is how fashion was meant to be created.

Yet the poor quality techniques, lack of attention to detail, and limited regard for human rights and environment protection creates fashion at the cost of everyone. Consumers suffer with poor quality goods that fall apart in short periods of time, workers throughout the value chain suffer because of low wages, and the planet suffers because of a disregard for sustainability. We may not pay much at the till for fast fashion, but we reap the consequences of it in so many other ways.

Thankfully, there is an alternative: slow fashion. This movement – which is essentially a return to old world ways of creating fashion – is experiencing a resurgence, and none too soon.

“Fashion is such a powerful vehicle for exchanging and sharing environmental issues and social causes.” That’s what Stephanie (our creative director) says when you ask her about why slow fashion is so important. Intentional, quality design and construction touches almost every aspect of the value chain, resulting in ethical fashion that makes a statement about your values. At Hearts, we’re proud to be part of the slow fashion movement and hope you’ll join us, too.



## Quick Guide: Fast Fashion Industry and the Slow Fashion Movement

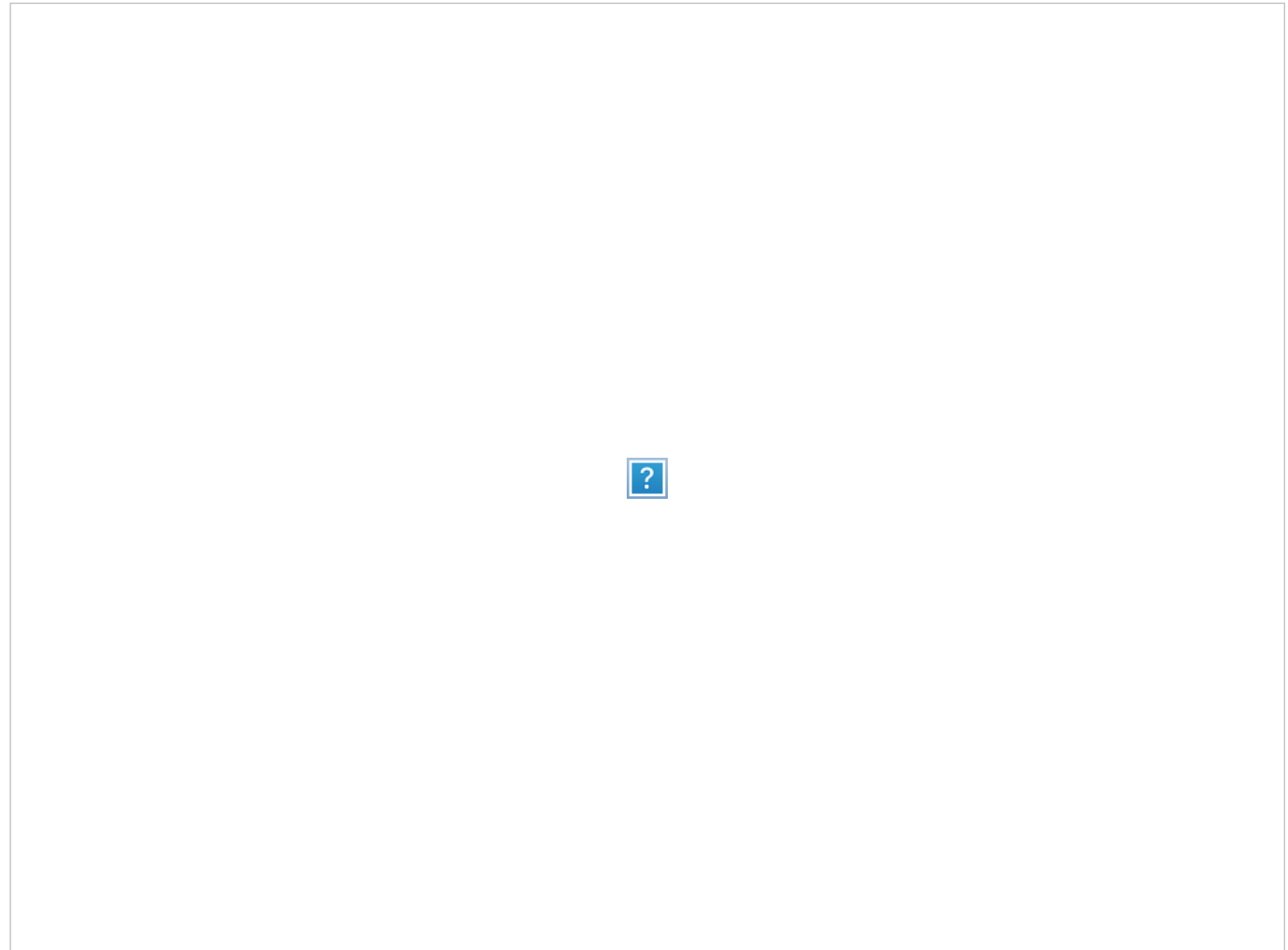
- **How is fast fashion made so cheaply?** Fast fashion cuts corners throughout the value chain in order to sell the cheapest possible garments. The fast fashion industry doesn’t test or fit garments; they use quick, poor quality single seams; they do not line garments for durability; and they often use less fabric (one example is the low cut jean hailed in the fast fashion phenomenon in the late 90s). The fast fashion industry also cuts corners in environmental care by producing in countries without eco standards. For example carcinogenetic chemicals are handled by untrained workers without equipment and waste is flushed into the major rivers systems in Asia. Then of course there is cheap labor. Workers in Cambodia and Bangladesh as well as other poor Southeast Asian countries are now the largest source of workers who earn about \$2 per day.<sup>[1]</sup>

- **Average time from concept to production:** A fast fashion brand simply takes photos of a designers’ work and tweaks details enough to avoid copyright lawsuits. These photos are then emailed to the production facilities overseas where technicians create patterns and print them out using specialized software. The machines then get to work churning out the look in massive quantities in sweatshops. This is all done in poor nations without labor laws and environmental laws that are basic to Western countries.

- **Average life of a fast fashion piece:** According to the International Fair Claims Guide for Consumer Textiles, the average

casual dress lasts only one year, foundation garments only one year, and cotton or synthetic suits only 2 years.<sup>[ii]</sup> The reality for most consumers is that these clothes which are made for one season or less and priced to buy in bulk are thrown out after only a few washes because of stretching, pilling, faulty seams, and fading. It's a terrible consumer experience.

- **Average American's clothing budget:** The average American spends \$1,881 on fashion, which is equivalent to \$157 per month.<sup>[iii]</sup> This amount goes a long way at fast fashion stores where you can purchase 10 dresses for that price. By comparison, \$157 spent at a midrange store like FUKC gets you only about two dresses per month (between \$60 and \$99 each) and buys almost nothing at a designer store like Diana Von Furstenberg (where dresses are about \$600 each). Of all these options, the Diana Von Furstenberg is the only one likely to be wearable in 10 years because of its quality construction.
- **Textile waste every year:** 12 million tons of textile waste is generated each year in North America amounting to around 68 pounds of waste per household each year. Five percent of all landfill production is textile waste, and 90% of that textile waste is perfectly recyclable, yet 85% of it goes directly to landfills.<sup>[iv]</sup>
- **What is slow fashion?** Slow fashion, in contrast to fast fashion, is made slowly, with intention, and with longevity in mind. You can see this in many practices of the slow fashion industry. For example, sheep raised for wool are allowed to grow normally without steroids, and are permitted to graze on crops that grow without chemical manipulation. Slow fashion uses traditional weaving and sewing, quality seaming techniques, and encourages the protection of ecological, social, and cultural diversity. Slow fashion is created using quality methods and provides the people who make it a fair wage. Slow fashion costs more but lasts longer. Slow fashion is collectable not disposable.



## Take Action! Support the Slow Fashion Movement

1. **See more than the price tag:** We all fall for the lure of a good buy, but we need to look beyond the price tag. See the big picture of fast fashion as we've explained here to recognize the true cost of your cheap purchase. Remember that *someone* has to bear the costs of manufacturing cheap goods. If you, the consumer, don't pay the price with your wallet, someone else will pay – either in low quality of life, hazardous working conditions, and even exploitation. Recognize that what you wear is connected to larger environmental, social, and economic system that includes thousands of people along the chain from crop to wardrobe. Your purchasing power matters.
2. **Save up and collect quality pieces:** Instead of buying 10 disposable items for \$15 each, buy one quality piece for \$150. When you buy one item per month for \$150 dollars rather than 10 items each month for \$15 each, at the end of the year you could have 12 designer pieces instead of adding more than a hundred pieces that will likely land up in a dump in less than a year. Plus, when you love your fashion and can wear it for years, you'll take better care of it. The higher upfront cost will not only ensure a more ethical fashion system, it'll save you money over the long run.
3. **Buy only what you love:** If you aren't going to feel great and keep it for years, leave it in the shop. This will help to reduce the number of pieces you chuck or give away, thereby reducing your **textile recycling**, and it'll save you money in the long run. No sense paying for something you'll never wear.
4. **Read labels and study the garment:** Use your common sense. If it is made in a third world country from synthetic fabric and is poorly constructed, leave it in the shop. Recognize quality garments as those with fair trade labels, those handmade in the USA, and those that have quality textiles, stitching, and details.
5. **Learn about seams and fabric:** Learn how to recognize well-made. Are the seams double reinforced or French hem? Is the fabric well woven and natural? This [Technical Bulletin to Seam Engineering](#) is a great introduction to the subject.
6. **Buy diversely:** Slow fashion supports handmade fashion techniques, vintage fashion, recycled and upcycled fashion, fashion leasing, your local knitting club, clothing swaps, and traditional artisans.

## Dig Deeper: Slow Fashion and Fast Fashion

- Get informed about sustainable fashion through the [Ethical Fashion Forum](#).
- Follow the latest news in the slow fashion world by subscribing to Tweets from [Slow Fashion Forward](#).

Image By [justinerkelly2011](#) and [cloneofsnake](#).

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