



## FEBRUARY CHALLENGE: WHAT WE WEAR

This challenge is all about working on the fine art of "intentional buying" which is just a fancy way of saying "think before you buy". There are loads of reasons to avoid accumulating a load of clothes you don't need, but the two most compelling ones are to avoid contributing to child labour and large-scale pollution.

### PART 1: WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH CLOTHES?

#### *CHILD LABOUR*

"Fast fashion has engendered a race to the bottom, pushing companies to find ever cheaper sources of labour," says [this report](#) in The Guardian. This means that small kids are working in appalling conditions that are tantamount to modern day slavery.

#### *POLLUTION & WATER WASTE*

2 billion pairs of [jeans](#) are produced every year, and a typical pair takes 7,000 litres of water to produce. That's the amount of water an average person drinks over the course of 9 years. Then, there's the dyeing process using 1.7 million tonnes of various chemicals, not to mention the [hazardous chemicals](#) like PFCs.

#### *TOO MANY CLOTHES ARE BAD FOR YOU*

Think of the time you waste managing your clothes - doing laundry, picking up kids' clothes, sorting through clothes each season... And then there's the negative effect of clutter on our mental capacities. Clutter makes you feel [fatigued, stressed and guilty](#). So why do so many of us accumulate so much of it?



## **PART 2: HOW TO DOWNSIZE YOUR WARDROBE**

### *UNDERSTAND*

Learn about what our mindless consumption does to the planet and other people. It's horrifying. Watch [The True Cost](#) or learn more about the damage our shopping does via the [Resources](#) section below. It'll make doing the challenge much easier as you'll really understand the 'why' behind it.

### *DE-CLUTTER*

Get rid of the stuff you don't need - try to re-purpose, sell or donate instead of tossing it. Be absolutely ruthless. If you really can't part with something at the moment, put it in a box under your bed and wait. If you find you still want it weeks later, then FINE, you can keep it.

### *SHOP LESS*

Aim to only buy when absolutely necessary. Buy secondhand or try to find a socially & environmentally conscious company to buy from. Find out exactly what you're buying and what kind of company and behaviour your purchase is supporting.

## **PART 3: FURTHER RESOURCES**

John Oliver's explanation of fashion's dirty secrets is pretty top-notch:  
<https://youtu.be/VdLf4fihP78>



If you want something other than John Oliver's take, you could watch [this one](#) from Save The Children. If you prefer to read about it, try these articles from: [The Guardian](#), [Triple Pundit](#), [Somo](#), or [Raconteur](#).

Christina Dean gives a great talk about the pollution caused by fashion:  
<https://youtu.be/cduGLWhm1LM>

Aside from Christina Dean's TED talk, you can also have a look at the videos [here](#). If you prefer to read about it, try these articles from: [The Economist](#), [Ecowatch](#), [Alternet](#) or [Greenpeace](#).

Here's a great talk about how having less makes you happier:  
<https://youtu.be/L8YJtvHGeUU>

In addition to that video, you could visit [The Minimalists](#) to see how they live with less, hear from a couple who [sold everything](#) and now live out of two suitcases, or read these articles about why you should de-clutter from [Goodnet](#) or [Makeuseof](#).