

Fast **Fashion**

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Fast Fashion

What Is Fast Fashion?

Fast fashion is cheap, **trendy** clothing that can quickly go out of style. This type of clothing is made in large amounts and comes in many designs so that fast fashion stores always have new clothes for sale. The companies that produce fast fashion use cheap fabrics and quick **manufacturing** methods to keep clothing prices low. These clothes are not made to last for a long time, so the fabrics can soon rip or become **pilled** and unattractive, buttons can fall off or zips can break.

Fast fashion has become popular in the twenty-first century. Many shoppers think it is easy to throw cheap clothes away and buy new ones. They do not want to repair their clothes or spend lots of money buying better-quality clothes that will last longer. Fast fashion companies have encouraged this “throw-away” attitude because they make more money when they sell more clothes.



Fast fashion clothes are thrown away in large amounts and can end up in landfill.



Zips can break easily on fast fashion clothing, making the clothes unusable.

Fast fashion is made in busy clothing factories by using quick manufacturing methods.

Selling Fast Fashion

Fast fashion is sold in stores and on the internet. The companies that sell fast fashion spend lots of money on advertisements to persuade people to buy more clothes.

There are many fast fashion **brands**. Their stores are usually located on city streets and in large shopping centres. The store windows will have attractive displays of the latest styles, and large signs with special offers. Inside the stores, which sometimes take up two or three floors, rows and rows of clothing racks hold a variety of styles. If any clothing is not selling, the price is soon reduced – the store owners need to sell the clothes quickly to make room for new styles.



Fast fashion stores have rows of fashionable clothes for sale.

Shoppers can find even more fashion brands, advice and special offers online, where they can easily buy clothing with just the tap of a finger. The clothes are then delivered to shoppers' homes.



Shoppers can browse for new clothes from their own homes by using the internet.

This is how fast fashion works today, but buying clothes wasn't always like this. So, how did fast fashion come about?

Before Fast Fashion

A Home Handicraft

In the last 250 years, methods of making clothes have sped up. But before then, making clothes was very slow work. It was a **handicraft** that people did at home.

Most people had to produce the natural materials for their clothes themselves. They kept sheep to get wool and grew crops to make other threads, such as cotton and linen. Then they had to **spin** the wool or remove the **fibres** from the plants to turn them into yarn or thread for knitting and weaving. They also prepared leather and fur from animal skins to cut and sew into clothing.

Only royalty and wealthy people could afford fashionable clothing. Most people wore basic clothes for practical reasons: to cover themselves, to keep warm or be protected from the sun, and to look neat and tidy when they went out.



a cotton plant that is ready to be picked and turned into thread



This painting from the 1600s shows a woman and a boy wearing simple clothes, made with thread from a spinning wheel.



Royal fashion from the 1600s was full of rich colours and expensive fabrics.