

Our Clothes Are Shedding Microplastics. What Can We Do?

 **The Challenge** - Most clothes today are made from synthetic materials like **polyester** and **nylon** (plastic), which shed **microfibers**, tiny plastic threads released during wear, washing, drying, & disposal.

- Microfibers (MFs) make up **35% of ocean microplastic pollution**
- MFs are found in **our air, food, water — even our bodies**
- Just **one load of laundry** can release **millions of microfibers**

What We Can Do

1. Buy Less, Buy Smarter - The most sustainable clothing item? The one you already own!

- Choose **natural fibers**: cotton, wool, bamboo, hemp.
- Avoid **fast fashion** — it sheds more and creates more waste.
- Shop **secondhand** or host **clothing swaps** to reduce demand for new plastic-based clothing.

Buying secondhand can reduce your wardrobe's climate impact by up to 42% (2021 LCA study)

2. Wash Wisely

- **Wash less often** and only full loads.
- Use **cold water, gentle cycles**.
- **Line dry** to reduce shedding and save energy.
- Avoid plastic detergent pods — try **powder in cardboard boxes** or **refill at zero-waste stores** (like *Gaia Soap/Planet Refill*).

3. Filter Microfibers - Capture microplastics (MPs) **before they reach our waterways**:

- **Filtrol** — Reusable, external washing machine filter. filtrol.net
- **LUV-R Filter** by environmentalenhancements.com
- **PlanetCare** — cartridge with mail-back program. planetcare.org
- **Guppyfriend** — laundry bag that traps fibers. guppyfriend.us
- **Cora Ball** — laundry ball collects microfibers so you can remove and discard them. coraball.com

 **4. Recycle Worn-Out Clothes** - Too damaged to donate? Don't toss — **recycle!** These programs aim to keep synthetics out of landfills where they shed MPs and release greenhouse gases.

- **H&M's Close the Loop**: hmgroupp.com/sustainability/circularity-and-climate/recycling/
- **Retold Recycling** retoldrecycling.com
- **For Days** fordays.com
- **TerraCycle** terracycle.com

 **In Summary:** Microfiber pollution is a clothing issue — but it's also a **consumer power** issue based on:  **What we wear**  **How we care for it**  **How we shop**

Small changes = a big impact for our planet. 



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