

# The fashion of the future

Autumn is here and us consumers are encouraged to buy new clothes, preferably the 'latest fashions'. But what sustainable alternatives are there? Två Dagar's fashion journalist Anna Blom investigates a possible solution.

Are you, like me, just back from panic-buying a top for tonight's dinner/party/date, that you'll only use once before leaving it hanging in your closet for months or even years?

According to Myrorna (second-hand shops run by the Swedish branch of the Salvation Army), nine out of ten Swedes have clothes hanging in their wardrobe that they never use. And still we buy an average of one new garment per week. Over the past 15 years the world's clothing production has more or less doubled. The consequence is a huge waste of resources: more and more collections of low price clothing with drastically reduced useful lives. Production is also a massive environmental issue.

Circular fashion is a possible way forward: a fashion system where everything has a value. Put very simply, it means that clothes are recycled or biodegradable so that they can be turned into compost when they are no longer useful, made from either an organic fabric (like organic cotton) or a technical fabric (like polyester).

What are the advantages of a circular system?

"Most of all the fact that we can enjoy fashion with a clear conscience," says Elin Larsson, Head of Sustainability at Swedish fashion brand Filippa K, which plans to be completely circular by 2030.

So far there are no national targets for a circular economy in Sweden. While waiting for directives, progressive fashion brands are taking matters into their own hands.

Filippa K wants to make it easier for customers to get help with updating their wardrobe with the season's looks without having to buy brand new pieces. They do this by offering a rental service and also selling second-hand clothes, for example. Elin Larsson thinks that this will act like a 'carrot' to encourage people to take care of their clothes, so that they get paid well when they sell them on. It also means that we 'save' on the dirty production stage behind a newly-made garment.

This is because, as Sandra Roos, researcher at Mistra Future Fashion, has discovered: the largest part of a garment's negative climate impact occurs during production and when us customers travel to and from the shops. Clothes that are used for twice as long cut the negative environmental impact in half.

**TODAY, LOTS OF BRANDS** have circularity on the agenda. For example, Swedish sportswear brand Houdini has had a system for collecting used products for recycling since 2007.

H&M is also working on becoming entirely circular and renewable. By 2030 they only want to sell products made from sustainable materials.

Gothenburg-based Atacac uses digital clothes sketches in 3D, and only produces the clothes once they have been bought.

American brand For Days offers a subscription service for ordinary t-shirts. Once they get irrevocably stained and sweaty customers send them back to For Days, who recycle them and send fresh new t-shirts back in return, closing the circle!

So what will a sustainable fashion wardrobe look like in the future? Elin Larsson believes that the fashion industry needs to change. Together with Mistra Future Fashion and University of the Arts London, Filippa K is investigating how 'fast fashion' can become more sustainable.

The results are prototype dresses on the one hand, with a planned short lifespan, and men's and ladies' coats on the other hand, designed to last for generations. These will be out in the stores from November 2018. For all garments, the environmental impact during production has been minimised, and there is a plan for how to recycle the garment once it 'dies'.

"We have been able to make use of the latest research to help in the design process, while researchers have been able to test their findings in real life," says Elin Larsson.

**REBECCA EARLEY** is professor of sustainable textiles and fashion design at University of the Arts London, and is one of the people leading the project. She thinks that the clothing consumer of the future will use a mix of garments with different lifespans: like rented clothes, or pieces with really short lifespans.

"Instead of having a cheap polyester top you might have a few colourful paper garments. It's about finding new ways," she says.

"It's like when the cherry trees blossom every spring, it's a thing of beauty which we only see for a short time. But no one goes around thinking that it's a waste of resources, in fact everyone looks forward to it. In a similar way we're trying to find new ways of looking at 'fast fashion', because we don't think that people will only have pieces that last a long time in their wardrobes," she says.

**"Instead of having a cheap polyester top you might have a few colourful paper garments. It's about finding new ways."**

REBECCA EARLEY, PROFESSOR OF SUSTAINABLE TEXTILES

Now, what can I do about my overflowing closet, to make it more sustainable? Here is Elin Larsson's vision for the future:

"We choose clothes from a minimal wardrobe that has two types of clothes. There's the basics with carefully selected garments in sustainable materials. Basics include second-hand treasures, newly-purchased items and also a few ultra-modern pieces that use the latest technologies, to change colours and shapes.

The other category is for clothes only intended to be worn for short periods or special occasions, like wedding or party clothes. They might be hired or borrowed, or pieces with a short lifespan that can be turned into compost or recycled alongside newspapers."

You read this right, jumpers could be recycled alongside newspapers in the future!

**AS DIGITALISATION INCREASES**, the forest industry is looking for new uses for pulp. The search for a more sustainable – and cheaper – alternative to resource-greedy cotton and oil-based polyester is in full swing, and fibres of cellulose from the forest are an interesting alternative. The almost 12,000 litres of water necessary to produce a kilo of cotton could produce over 26 kilos of wood-based viscose. For example, British fashion designer Stella McCartney procures the raw materials for her viscose clothes from Swedish forests.

"Sustainability is important, recycling is important. I think it is a mind-set: everyone can do really simple things to make a difference," she said when I interviewed her in 2017. But even if we have more possibilities to enjoy fashion in the future, it's a good idea to use both your heart and your head when deciding what to buy. That's because the clothes you really love are never at risk of hanging unused at the back of your closet.

**New rules on how textiles are collected and managed**

Recently, the EU published a new waste directive, including the mandatory sorting of textile waste in its Member States from 2025. Us Swedes throw out an average of 7.5 kilos per person per year. Often, these clothes could have been reused, so it's a waste of resources. The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency suggests that we should reduce our fashion waste to 3 kg per person per year by 2025. Whether the municipalities will continue to bear responsibility for the collection, or the producers will take over that responsibility has not yet been decided. The question is now being processed at the Swedish Government Offices.

**Clothing for decomposing**

Streamateria is a Swedish digital service that offers biodegradable garments with short lifespans.

The dress in the picture on the left is made from a material developed by Streamateria last spring, a mixture of coated wood fibre and PLA (polylactic acid or polylactide).

# Lisa Lindqwister

**Does:** Stylist, creative consultant and Fashion Editor at Swedish Elle, stylist for Elle's global network (named Stylist of the Year at the Elle galas in 2018 and 2012).

**Lives:** Ålsten, Stockholm Municipality, Sweden.

**Family:** Photographer Eric Josjö and two grown-up children, Anna and Charlie.

**Inspiration sources:** Lauren Hutton, Charlotte Rampling, François Hardy. And Diana Vreeland is always a source of inspiration.

**Inspired by:** Art, food, films, exhibitions, travelling, music, new places and people.

**Best city for shopping:** Paris and London, but I actually shop mostly online. Stockholm is also a great place to shop.

**Best style tip:** Freshly-ironed white shirt with a stylish bag and shoes. Phoebe Philo designs my favourites. It will be interesting to see what happens now she's left Celine.

**Best fashion inspo on Instagram:** @C\_I\_o, @jonathan.anderson, @therow, @thelinenyc, @Alistermackie.

## Stylist's best choice for autumn: chilli and contrasts

**What are this autumn's best buys which will last for longer than one season?**

– A cashmere coat, a white t-shirt and a black polo.

**What will you be wearing this autumn?**

– Black, white, cream and rust red, layer on layer, contrasts between big and small. Wool, leather, tweed and silk. All of the autumn is about mixing materials and playing with lengths and layering, trousers under skirts, jackets over the top, and so on. Combining unexpected colours. Lion yellow and wine red, aqua marine and seaweed green, gold and red.

**Summarise autumn 2018 in one colour and silhouette!**

Colour: chilli red. Silhouette: contrasting oversize and tight. Either big coats and skinny legs, or tight tops and wider trousers.

**Which accessories, jewellery and shoes are your favourites this autumn?**

– Loafers, cowboy boots, sneakers, minimalist gold jewellery.

**What's your best advice for being confident about your own personal style and finding clothes that last season after season?**

– Invest in timeless pieces in good fabrics and take care of them. Think before you buy.

**What does good quality mean to you?**

– Sustainability.

#### **Does good quality have to be expensive?**

– No, it doesn't have to be. The big chains have got better at developing their technologies and becoming more sustainable. I'm not an expert, but I think Swedish people are good with sustainability issues.

#### **How do you motivate consumers to shop more consciously?**

– You should think about what you need before you impulse buy. Buy timeless classics in sustainable materials which become good investments. Think quality rather than quantity.

#### **What's the smartest way to dress in the transition from autumn to winter?**

– Layering. Use a thin down jacket under your jacket or trench coat. Or a jumper you can take off if you get too hot.

#### **Favourite shows for autumn 2018?**

– Acne Studios, Jacquemus, Miu Miu and The Row.

## Women's trends for autumn

### **Yellow tones**

Amber-yellow tones appeared in several designers' autumn collections. For example, Bottega Veneta's creative director Tomas Maier showed silky pyjamas in retro gold (Maier left his position in June after 17 years). But the colour first became a favourite in May at the British royal wedding. That's when international human rights lawyer Amal Clooney made an entrance at St. George's Chapel wearing a honey-yellow dress with floor-length sash designed by Stella McCartney.

### **Layering**

This autumn we'll enjoy layering clothes and experimenting by mixing different lengths, materials and silhouettes. Get inspired by Acne Studio's romantic layered collection. Try combining larger pieces with something tight-fitting for a contrasting look. A 90s trend which is back in style is combinations of skirts over trousers (leather skirts are one of the autumn's must haves).

### **Tweed**

Tweed checks continue to triumph this autumn. American fashion brand Altuzarra showed a feminine slim and straight silhouette with dainty 3/4 length sleeves, Miu Miu went for a loose houndstooth look with rounded puffy shoulders, while Calvin Klein 205W39NYC presented boxy menswear-inspired power jackets with oversized shoulders.

## Men's trends for autumn

### **Go hiking**

Awaken your inner-Scout, he's hotter than ever. This autumn we get ready for city adventures and deluxe outdoor activities. Layers of functional pieces meet the season's most stylish – and practical – footwear: hiking boots. Boots were seen at Louis Vuitton (including a pair in python snakeskin and a cowboy boot restyled à la hiking boot), and Giorgio Armani showed a pair of classic boots in high-gloss black leather.

### **Checks**

Wonderful checks! This autumn, the 'chexplosion' continues on the catwalk. Italian fashion house Versace matched tartan in a mix of different colours for both suits and coats. At British fashion house Alexander McQueen, head designer Sarah Burton went for shaggy red tartan mohair sweaters and knitted silhouettes in classic Argyle patterns.

### **Outerwear in tech fabrics**

The fitness trend is the biggest fashion marker of our time. And wearing the right exercise clothes has, in some cases, become as important as exercising. Today comfort fashion is happily mixed with luxury streetwear. Think technical materials in modern cuts with smart functional details. Top picks for autumn are down jackets (either ultra-short or super long) and light-weight, water-resistant raincoats/jackets and anoraks).

### **Cowboy**

Dreams of the prairie have inspired the catwalk's designers this autumn. Pointy cowboy boots, wild west shirts and retro-checked shirts are paired with raw and pale denims in a timeless mix by designers such as Calvin Klein 205W39NYC, Dries Van Noten and Dsquared2.