

GARAGE SALES

Breathe New Life Into Old Clothes

Vintage clothing is having a moment right now, and it's not just for the retro looks of the clothes in their original form. Plenty of people are getting crafty and transforming old clothes into great new looks with just a little skill and some time.

WITHOUT A SEWING MACHINE

You also don't need a sewing skill or just a little time with a needle and thread. Look for tees that you can crop into new, trendy looks or pants or skirts that just need a new hemline. You can do that with something as simple as hem tape and an iron (this works best on heavier fabrics). Also consider changing out buttons, clipping sleeves and collars that have seen better days or adding patches and other embellishments with an iron and fabric glue.

WITH A SEWING MACHINE

Of course, if you have the skill, the world is your oyster. The internet is full of patterns



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for turning old men's dress shirts into dresses, rompers and even pillowcases. You can also stitch jeans into skirts, adjust dresses to a more modern, flattering fit and much,

much more, depending on your skill level with the machine. Garage sale clothes are a great way to learn, too, as they're generally pretty inexpensive. You may even be

able to negotiate bulk deals with sellers to maximize your budget.

HOME DÉCOR

Clothing can be trans-

formed into curtains, the aforementioned pillowcases, quilts and more. If you break down the average shirt or pair of pants, you're looking at yards of beautiful fabric at a steep discount from off-the-bolt prices. Cotton broadcloth, used in things like dress shirts, can make a smart pillow or, when quilted together, patchwork curtains or the tops for quilts.

Speaking of quilts, graphic tees are excellent — and fun — quilting material, especially when they're already worn down to peak softness. If you're not handy yourself, there are services that specialize in T-shirt quilts if you send them the material to work with. Look for band tees, school tees and more for those special fans in your life.

CHANGING COLOR

Feeling extra brave and crafty? Then consider changing the color of your garage sale finds with clothing dye. You can find speciality dyes in most craft and even grocery stores. Follow the instructions carefully, though, as clothing dyes are quick to stain surfaces you didn't necessarily want dyed. When you're learning, try using light-colored cloth to make it easier on you. As you become more experienced, you can try darker colors, which are harder to dye effectively.

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BUYER’S TIP

Look For Designer Labels

While most garage sale clothing isn’t worth much on the open market, there are some truly priceless vintage pieces. Keep an eye out for designer labels while you’re shopping and before you start snipping to make sure you’re not butchering something worth a lot of money. If you do find a treasure in the rough, entrust it to a consignment store that specializes in vintage or designer labels to make sure you get the best value for your lucky find.

AD SPACE