

How To Make Your Old Clothes New Again

(NAPSA)—Whether you're a skilled sewist or a curious beginner, you can dramatically transform your entire wardrobe with a little imagination. To start, take a look at your closet and follow a few simple tips to restyle that old dress or T-shirt to make it look new again.

Take it from the refashioning experts at Compai, the green design studio whose work has been exhibited and published worldwide, including in its latest book "99 Ways to Cut, Sew, Tie & Rock Your Scarf." First, invest in quality equipment like a good, basic sewing machine that can help make difficult projects easier. Janome, for example, has a large selection of models with advanced features that make sewing and quilting time more productive. Any machine from its Magnolia line, starting at \$129, would make a great choice for a beginning sewist. Also, you may want to get yourself a good pair of scissors (have you ever tried to cut pumpkin with a butter knife?). In addition, avoid materials that are thick or fray easily. Instead, opt for working with garments such as T-shirts and sweatshirts, which are great for beginners and master recyclers alike. The stretch makes a nice fit easier. Here are a couple more tips from the experts at Compai:

Pin, Tuck and Cut

Make the best of what you've got. Figure out what it is that you like and what it is that you don't like about the garment. Is the fabric amazing and the fit hopeless? Put the clothing on and pin the clothes to the desired fit while looking at yourself in the mirror. Sometimes, cutting a couple of inches from the bottom of a dress, changing the buttons and accentu-



photo credit: Karen Evans

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ating the waist with a new belt can transform a former closet ghost into a prom queen.

Be Fearless

Don't be afraid to take garments completely apart. This is an excellent way to learn pattern making and get a better understanding of how clothing is constructed. Unleash your creativity and experiment. Thrift shops and garage sales are perfect for recyclers. Sometimes, a \$1 find can metamorphose into your most-prized item. For best results, avoid clothing made of fine silks, cashmeres and leather, or anything that is lined.

Waste Not, Want Not

Remember to keep scraps and leftovers. The scary gold buttons from your grandpa's blazer might be the cherries on the cake of your newly recycled sweatshirt jacket. Mix and match the accessories of your clothing. Switch buttons, belt loops and pockets around to add flavor to your garments.

For a great starter project from Compai that shows you step by step how to refashion an old sweatshirt for a cool new look, check out Threadbanger.com (http://www.threadbanger.com/threadheads/episode/THR_20080111).