ISSUE
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Make It Yourself

THE UPCYCLING ZINE

8 PROJECTS FROM OLD CLOTHES

KNOTTED HANDBAG



NO SEW · 20 MIN

MADE FROM
ONE OLD T-SHIRT

DIY ZINE

HOW TO MAKE IT

LEVEL ★☆☆ 20 MIN

Knotted handbag

YOU NEED

- ☐ an old T-shirt (size M or bigger, thicker jersey holds its shape best)
- ☐ fabric scissors
- ☐ ruler and tailor's chalk

1. Lay the tee flat and smooth it out. Cut off both sleeves just inside the seams. The shoulder straps that remain become the handles.



2. Cut the neckline into a deeper U, about 8 cm lower than the original front neck, through both layers. This is the bag opening, so make it wide enough for your hand.

3. Turn the tee inside out. With chalk, draw a line straight across, 10 cm up from the hem. Everything below this line will be fringe.



4. Cut strips from the hem up to the line, 2 cm wide, through both layers at once, so every front strip has a matching back strip.

5. Tie each front strip to its back strip in a tight double knot. Work from one side to the other; the bottom is now closed.



6. There are small gaps between knots. Close them by tying one strand from each knot to a strand from the neighbouring knot, making a second staggered row.

7. Turn right side out so the fringe is hidden inside, or leave it out for a boho look. Stretch the handles once to curl the edges.

PSST Jersey does not fray, so no hemming. Wash cold, lay flat to dry.

ONE SHOULDER TOP



NO SEW · 15 MIN

MADE FROM
FITTED T-SHIRT

DIY ZINE

HOW TO MAKE IT

LEVEL ★☆☆ 15 MIN

One-shoulder top

YOU NEED

- ☐ a fitted T-shirt (loose tees gape at the cut shoulder)
- ☐ fabric scissors
- ☐ tailor's chalk
- ☐ optional: needle and thread or a sewing machine

1. Put the tee on. Decide which shoulder stays. With chalk, mark a diagonal from the neck seam of the keep shoulder down to 3 cm below the opposite armpit.



2. Take it off and lay it flat, front up. Join your marks into one smooth line with a ruler, curving slightly as it crosses the chest.

3. Pin the front and back together along the line so they do not shift, then cut through both layers. The sleeve on that side comes off with the cut.



4. Try it on and check the back. If it dips too low, trim the back a little higher than the front so it sits flat against the shoulder blade.

5. Optional: remove the remaining sleeve too for a tank shape, cutting just inside the seam, or keep it for an asymmetric look.

6. For a clean edge, fold the raw diagonal 1 cm to the inside and stitch with a zigzag or a loose hand backstitch so it still stretches.



7. Cut a 4 cm strip from the scrap, pull it so it curls into a cord, and tie it in a bow at the shoulder or use it as a thin second strap.



PSST Stretch the cut edge gently: jersey rolls inward and hides the raw line on its own.

TIE-FRONT CROP TOP



20 MIN · OPTIONAL SEW

MADE FROM T-SHIRT OR BUTTON-UP

DIY ZINE

HOW TO MAKE IT

LEVEL ★☆☆ 20 MIN

Tie-front crop top

YOU NEED

- [ ] a T-shirt (or a button-up shirt)
- [ ] fabric scissors
- [ ] ruler and chalk
- [ ] pins

1. Try the tee on and mark with chalk where you want the knot to sit, usually just above the navel. Add 6 cm below that mark: the knot eats length.



2. Lay the tee flat and draw a straight line across at the lower mark. Cut through both layers along it.



3. Flip the front layer only. From the centre of the hem, cut straight up 14 cm to make the front slit. Do not cut the back.

4. Taper the two front tails: trim each one so it narrows to about 5 cm wide at the hem. Round the ends so they tie without bulky corners.

5. Try on and tie the tails in a double knot or a bow. Adjust the slit higher by 1 cm at a time if the knot sits too low.

6. Optional hem: fold raw edges 1 cm to the inside and zigzag stitch. Skip it for a raw, rolled jersey edge.



7. Button-up version: cut the shirt across at the same height, leave the button placket as the tails, and knot them with the bottom two buttons undone.

PSST Do not cut on the body. Mark, take it off, then cut flat on a table.

HALTER TOP



NO SEW · 15 MIN

MADE FROM
ANY T-SHIRT

DIY ZINE

HOW TO MAKE IT

LEVEL ★★☆ 15 MIN

Halter top

YOU NEED

- ☐ a T-shirt (a slightly loose one gives longer neck straps)
- ☐ fabric scissors
- ☐ chalk

1. Lay the tee flat, back up. Cut straight across the back from armpit to armpit, removing the whole upper back. Keep this piece for ties.



2. Flip to the front. Cut off both sleeves inside the seams, then cut the armholes deeper, angling in toward the neck, so only two shoulder strips remain.

3. Cut off the neckband so the front neckline is a soft V. The two shoulder strips are now your straps.

4. Trim the straps to about 5 cm wide and stretch them hard so the jersey rolls into cords. Tie them together behind the neck.



5. Try it on. The straight back edge sits across the shoulder blades. If it gapes, cut two small slits at the side seams, 5 cm down.

6. From the saved back piece, cut a 4 cm strip, stretch it into a cord, thread it through the slits and tie it across the back for a snug fit.

7. Crop or trim the hem if you like, then stretch all cut edges once so they curl.

PSST Thicker jersey gives a cleaner halter; thin tees need the back tie.

FABRIC PATCHES



30 MIN · HAND OR MACHINE

MADE FROM SCRAP FABRIC

DIY ZINE

HOW TO MAKE IT

LEVEL ★★☆ 30 MIN

Fabric patches

YOU NEED

- ☐ scrap fabric (denim, canvas or quilting cotton)
- ☐ fusible interfacing or double-sided fusible web
- ☐ paper, pencil, chalk
- ☐ embroidery floss and a sharp needle, or a sewing machine
- ☐ iron, pins or a fabric glue stick

1. Iron fusible interfacing onto the back of your scrap (dry iron, 10 seconds, no steam). This stops fraying and keeps the shape flat.



2. Draw your shape on paper: a heart, a star, a moon, a word. Cut the template out and trace it onto the interfaced side with chalk.



3. Cut the patch out slowly with sharp scissors. Round any tight inner corners a little so they do not fray.

4. Position the patch on the garment. Pin it, or swipe a fabric glue stick on the back and press for 30 seconds so it stays put while you sew.



5. Hand version: blanket stitch around the edge with 3 strands of floss, stitches 4 mm apart. Machine version: a wide, dense zigzag over the edge.

6. Add detail inside the patch with a running stitch outline, a few French knots, or a second smaller patch layered on top.



7. Iron-on shortcut: use double-sided fusible web per the packet, iron the patch down, then still stitch around it. Glue alone will not survive the wash.

PSST Wash the garment and the scrap before you start so nothing shrinks later.

SASHIKO MENDING



45 MIN · HAND SEW

MADE FROM
JEANS WITH A HOLE

DIY ZINE

HOW TO MAKE IT

LEVEL ★★★ 45 MIN

Sashiko mending

YOU NEED

- ☐ a cotton or denim patch 4 cm bigger than the hole all round
- ☐ sashiko thread, or perle cotton no. 8
- ☐ a long sashiko or darning needle
- ☐ chalk or a water-soluble pen
- ☐ pins or basting thread
- ☐ a thimble

1. Trim loose threads around the hole but do not cut it bigger. Slide the patch inside the garment behind the hole and pin or baste it flat.



2. On the outside, draw parallel lines 8 mm apart with chalk, covering the whole patch area, not just the hole. Straight lines guide even stitches.

3. Thread the needle with about 60 cm of thread and knot the end. Start from the inside so the knot is hidden.



4. Run a line of running stitches along the first line, loading 4 or 5 stitches onto the needle before pulling through. Stitches go through both layers.

5. Keep a 2:1 rhythm: a 5 mm stitch on top, a 3 mm gap. Pull just until flat, never tight, or the fabric puckers.

6. Offset each new row by half a stitch so the stitches brick over each other. For a grid, stitch a second set of rows crossing the first.

7. When the hole is fully covered, knot off inside, trim the patch to 1 cm beyond the stitching and rinse out the chalk.



PSST Leave a tiny loop of slack at the end of each row so the stitching stays soft after washing.

JEANS REDESIGN



40 MIN · RAW HEM + KNEES

MADE FROM OLD STRAIGHT JEANS

DIY ZINE

HOW TO MAKE IT

LEVEL ★★☆ 40 MIN

Jeans redesign

YOU NEED

- [ ] an old pair of jeans
- [ ] fabric scissors and a ruler
- [ ] chalk
- [ ] tweezers or a seam ripper
- [ ] sandpaper or a pumice stone
- [ ] a piece of cardboard
- [ ] optional: fabric paint

1. Put the jeans on. Mark the new length at the ankle with chalk and add 1 cm, since fraying eats length. Mark the centre of each knee too.



2. Take them off, lay flat, legs lined up at the inseam. Cut across one leg with a ruler, then fold it over the other leg and cut to match.



3. Fray the hem: pull the horizontal threads out with tweezers for 1 to 2 cm. A wash later fluffs the fringe.



4. Slide cardboard inside one leg. At the knee, draw two horizontal lines 3 cm apart, as wide as the knee cap, and cut along them.

5. With tweezers, pull out the blue vertical threads between the cuts, one at a time, leaving the white horizontal threads to hang across the gap.



6. Rub sandpaper over the knee edges, pocket corners and thighs for a worn look. Go lightly; it works faster than you expect.

7. Optional: paint or embroider the back pocket. Heat-set paint with a dry iron over baking paper. Wash cold, inside out, and hang dry.

PSST Cut less than you think. You can always take more off; you cannot put denim back.

TIE-DYE TOP



1 HR + OVERNIGHT

MADE FROM
WHITE COTTON TEE

DIY ZINE

HOW TO MAKE IT

LEVEL ★★☆ 1 HR + OVERNIGHT

Tie-dye top

YOU NEED

- ☐ a white 100% cotton T-shirt, pre-washed
- ☐ fibre-reactive dye (Procion MX type) in 2 or 3 colours
- ☐ soda ash
- ☐ squeeze bottles, rubber bands, gloves
- ☐ a plastic bag and a covered work surface

1. Soak the tee in soda ash solution (1 cup per 4 litres of warm water) for 15 minutes. Wring until damp, not dripping.



2. Lay it flat. Pinch the fabric where you want the spiral centre and twist clockwise, keeping the folds low and flat like a cinnamon roll.



3. Hold the disc with 3 or 4 rubber bands crossing the centre like pizza slices. You now have 6 to 8 wedges.



4. Mix the dye in squeeze bottles per the packet, gloves on. Apply colour wedge by wedge, alternating colours. Push the nozzle into the folds.

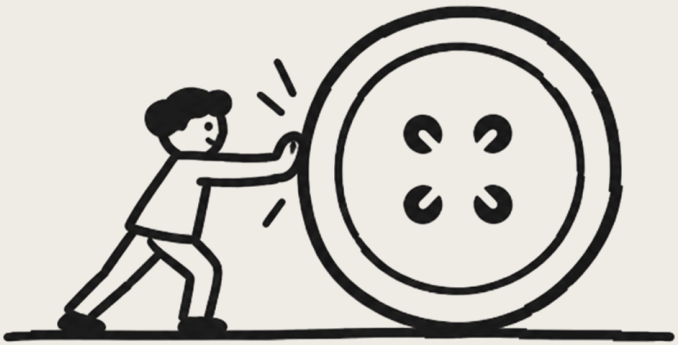


5. Flip the disc and repeat on the back, matching the colours to the same wedges. Saturate, but do not pool dye underneath.

6. Seal in a plastic bag and leave somewhere warm for 8 to 24 hours. Longer means deeper colour.

7. Rinse cold with bands on until the water runs mostly clear, remove bands, rinse warm until clear, then machine wash hot on its own. Dry and wear.

PSST Leave white gaps between colours or let them touch: neighbours blend into a third colour.



NOTHING GOES TO WASTE