
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

Lingohack

Clothing and the environment



The story...

Clothing and the environment

Learn language related to...

Waste

Need-to-know language

junked – discarded or destroyed

scrapped – disposed of because it's no longer useful or wanted

incinerated - burned

sustainable – good for the environment because it lasts a long time

throwing away – getting rid of something no longer useful or wanted

Answer this...

What percentage of clothes in the UK end up in landfill?

Watch the video online:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/lingohack/ep-181226>

Transcript

Fashion is worth £28 billion a year to the UK economy. MPs (Members of the British Parliament) say British shoppers buy far more new clothes than any nation in Europe.

Mary Creagh, Member of Parliament

Clothing production has more than doubled globally over the last 15 years, and in the UK we're buying twice as much as we were buying 15 years ago. What that means when we have more clothes is that we're using them, we're wearing them less.

But what happens to all these clothes that are loved and then **junked**? This warehouse in North London sorts some of them and sends them to charity shops for resale. That saves the environmental impact of making new clothes. But it's only a tiny proportion of garments and shoes that get recycled. Most are **scrapped** with around 80% ending up in landfill - around 20% getting **incinerated**.

Andrew Opie, British Retail Consortium

We as retailers have a really big responsibility in making sure that those clothes are as **sustainable** as possible, and we know from the figures that we've been looking at, working with government, how we have cut things like energy and water use. There's much more we can do.

The MPs welcome the move but say there is a fundamental problem with an industry that relies on people **throwing away** good clothes because they're last year's colour. They say fashion firms must try harder.

Did you get it?

What percentage of clothes in the UK end up in landfill?

80% of clothes in the UK end up in landfill (a place where rubbish is buried).

Did you know?

£44 billion is spent annually on clothes in the UK. 30% of clothes in an average wardrobe have not been worn in a year. [Source: Wrap UK]