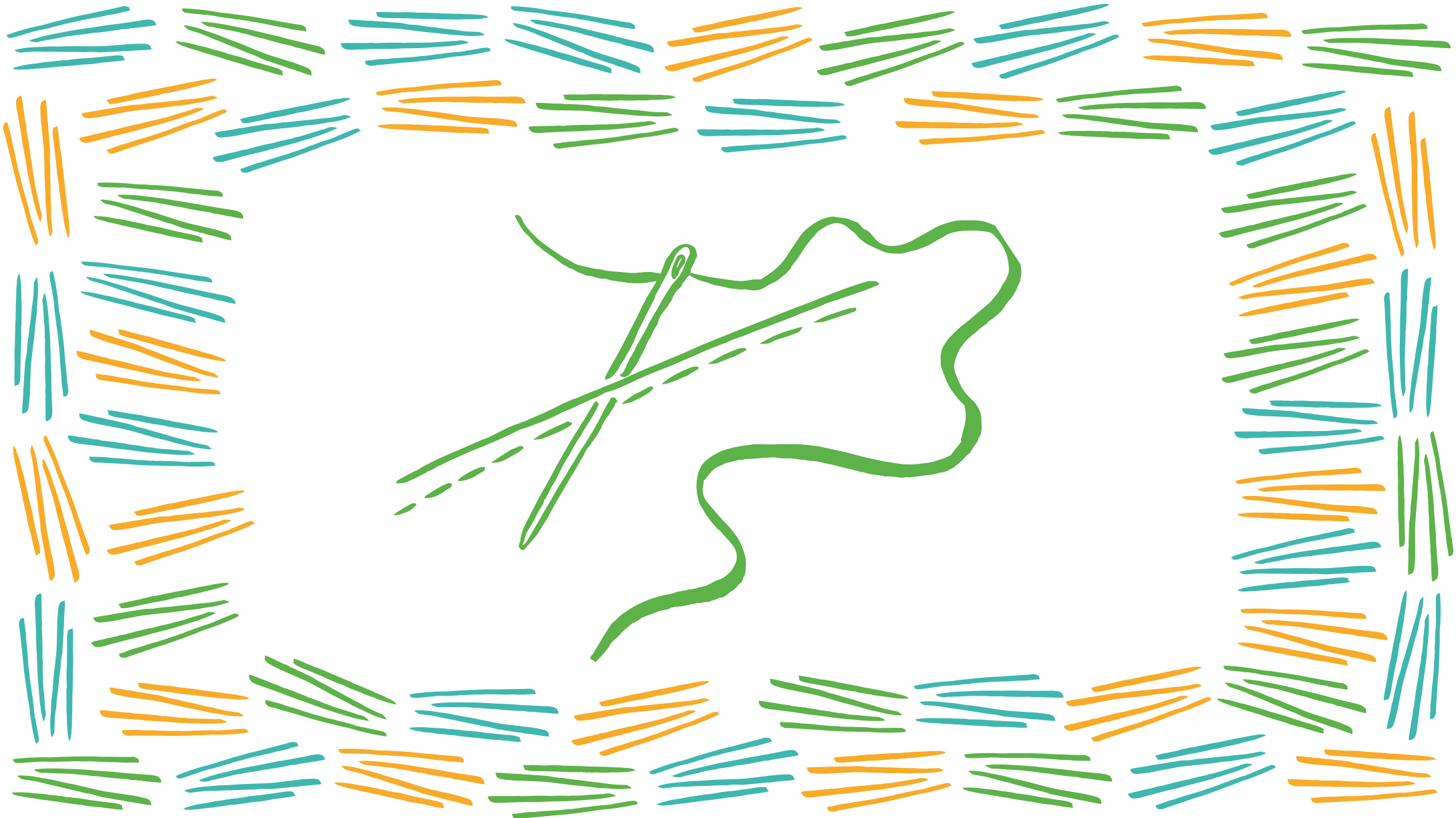




CARE NOT CONSUME

by Deirdre Nelson





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About this activity:

A series of workshops about repairing our clothes so that we can keep them for a long time!



This activity will take around two to three hours and is split into three sessions.



Watch the **film with Deirdre** before you begin.

The Circular Economy

Mending textiles

What is the Circular Economy?

Humans produce FAR too much waste. We make products, consume them and then chuck them away, littering our planet in the process. This is described as a linear way of thinking. Linear means progressing from one stage to the next in a single series of steps, or in a straight line. But what if there was a different way to do things?

In the natural world, there isn't any rubbish or landfill. Energy is provided by the Sun, one species' waste is another's food and when things die, their nutrients return to the soil — **in a circle of life**. Unfortunately, humans do things in a more linear way... That's why we need to move to a **circular economy**, inspired by the natural world where everything has value and nothing is wasted.

The circular economy recognises that the world's resources are finite and need to be protected. In clever design and craft there is no waste. The circular economy turns waste into a resource. Raw material can be fully recovered, redesigned and reused in new products.

Question!

Can you think of anything that gets thrown away that you could repurpose or redesign and use for something else?

Let's think about the clothes we wear

What is fast fashion?

Fast fashion is a term used to describe a highly profitable business model based on imitating catwalk trends and high fashion designs, and mass-producing them at low cost.

What are textiles?

Textiles are a type of cloth or woven fabric. Textiles are used to make clothes. When new clothes are made for each season (Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter), every year, this is described as fashion.

The fashion industry is responsible for about 8% of global CO₂ emissions. Global consumption of clothes is expected to almost double from 62 million to 102 million tonnes by 2030. Textile waste (the clothes or material we throw away) is measured at over 92 tonnes per year, which ends up thrown in landfills, mostly in poorer countries. Such a large amount of material can take hundreds of years to break down and while it is decomposing it releases the toxic gas methane into the atmosphere.

Prevent, Reduce, Repair, Reuse, Recycle

Would you like to be part of the circular economy?

Let's think of what can you do to support the circular economy in fashion:

- Encourage your family or carers to buy less clothes
- Encourage your family or carers to buy from circular fashion brands making long lasting clothes from recycled materials
- Shop in second-hand clothes stores or try swapping clothes with your friends
- Repair your favourite clothes so that they last longer



Mended jumpers by Deirdre Nelson
on Ben (top) and Stephen (bottom)

Session 1

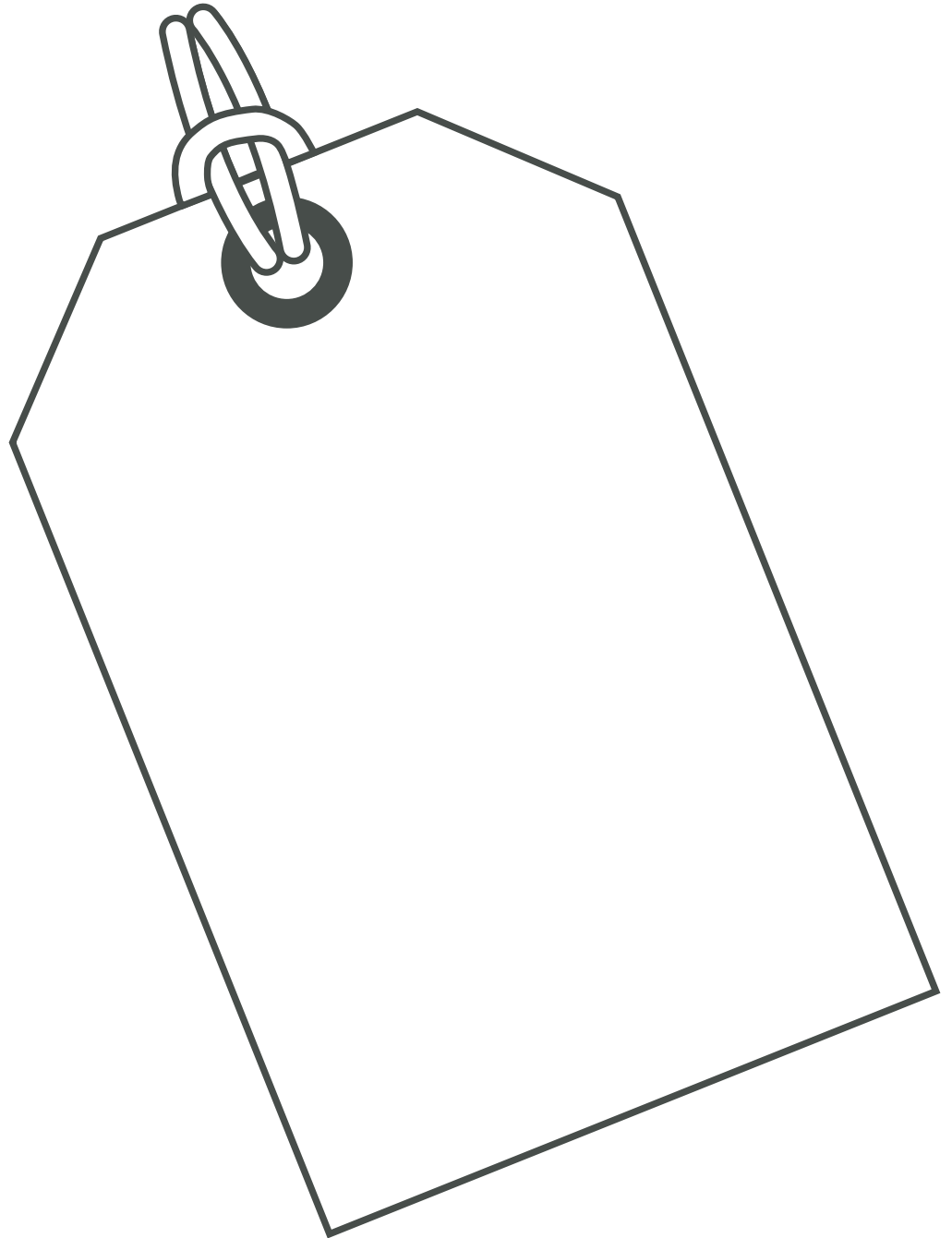
Creating a story for your clothing

What you'll need

- A piece of clothing you love
- Pens or pencils
- Scissors
- Needle and cotton thread
- Scrap fabric
- A holey sock
- Darning needle or tapestry needle
- Fine yarn
- A ruler/measuring tape
- Darning mushroom (you can also use a light bulb, apple, potato etc.)
- Piece of clothing you are sewing a patch onto
- Patch – recycle fabric if you can!
- Embroidery needle
- Pins

Part 1

- 1 Find a piece of your own clothing you love. This could be a t-shirt, shirt, sweatshirt, trousers or jeans.
- 2 Let's create a story about the piece of clothing. Think about why you like it? Where did you buy it? Where was it made? Do you know anything about who made it or which country it was made in? What is it made from? What type of material? To help you answer these questions do some research. Can you find information on the clothes label, does the shop or brand website tell you anything more?
- 3 Write or draw the story on your label. If you don't have a printer, draw your label on a piece of paper.

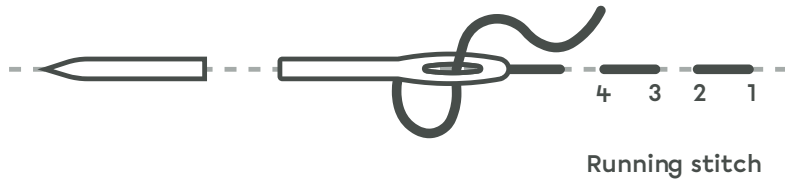


Part 2

It's time to practice some stitching.

Running stitch

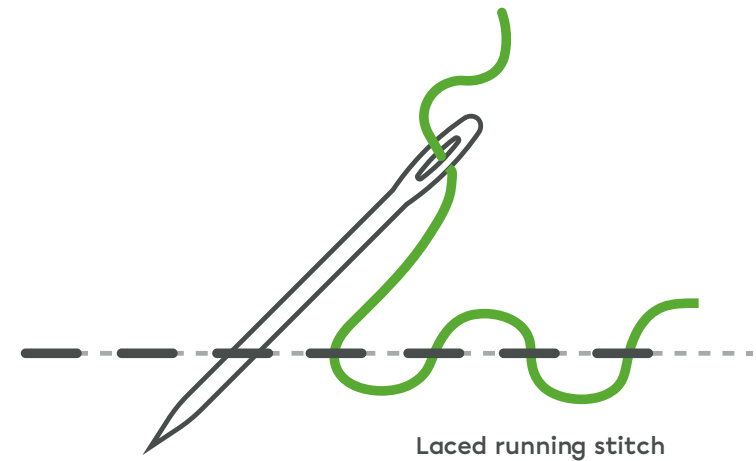
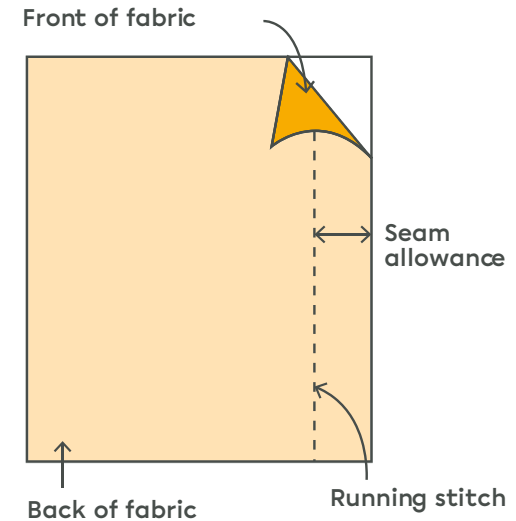
This is a very important stitch to learn as a running stitch can be used to attach two pieces of fabric together or to attach fabric such as a patch onto another piece of fabric. It can also be used to decorate the surface of the fabric.



Tip

Make sure that you know where you want your running stitch to go. To help you, mark a line to follow using pencil, which can easily be rubbed off once you have finished sewing.

- 1 Thread your needle with either a double or single thread.
- 2 Insert your needle from below. Put your needle in the back or inside side of the fabric and come up to the top.
- 3 Now put the needle back down through the fabric a short distance away – you have your first stitch!
- 4 Repeat.



Tip

If you want to add to your running stitch you can put another coloured thread in and out through your first stitches. This is called laced running stitch and makes it look more colourful and decorative.

Session 2

Darning a sock

1 Turn your sock inside out and put a darning mushroom (or light bulb, apple or potato) inside. This will make your job much easier.

2 Choose a thread to match your sock. You can also choose a different colour to make your mend visible. Thread the thread through the eye of the needle, and then pull the thread through so that most of it is on one side and the other side only has about 5cm. Grip the needle at the eye to prevent the thread from coming undone as you sew. Thread the darning needle without tying a knot in the end. Knotting it will make the repair bulky.

3 Starting within the intact portion of the sock, sew a running stitch starting 2cm above, and on either side, of the hole.

4 Continue sewing back and forth, moving towards the hole.



Tip

Do not pull on the thread to tighten the stitches. Doing this will cause puckering.

5 When you reach the hole, push the needle into one edge of the hole and continue making long, running stitches over and back across the hole.

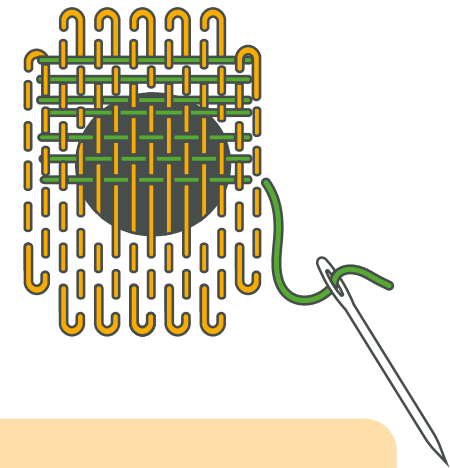
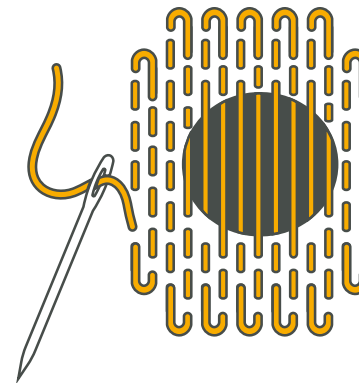
6 Continue sewing until the stitches go past 1cm on the other side of the hole.

7 Turn the sock around to begin a row of stitches in the opposite direction. Begin your running stitches, this time weaving them under and above the first threads.

8 Continue back and forth until you have completely filled the hole. Trim excess thread. Nice one! You have mended a sock!

Tip

Think about the size of your needle. It is important to choose a needle that will work for your project and that will work with the thread you are using.



Tip

Darn items as soon as you notice a hole in them! A small hole can become BIG over time.



Darning a sock using a darning mushroom



Long darned socks

Session 3

Patching our clothes

Mending with a patch

We have learned to do running stitch and have darned a sock. It is now time to try to repair clothing with a patch. Find a piece of clothing that has a rip or a hole in it. Let's think differently about the rip or hole in your garment. Think of it a bit like a scar that shows the history of your garment. It tells us more about what adventures you have had wearing the clothing! How did the rip or hole happen? Does it have a funny story?

First of all, let's think about our patch.

Do we want to draw or write something on it that tells the story of your piece of clothing? You could write or draw onto your patch and use your drawing as a guide to decorate it with running stitch.

How shall we mend it?

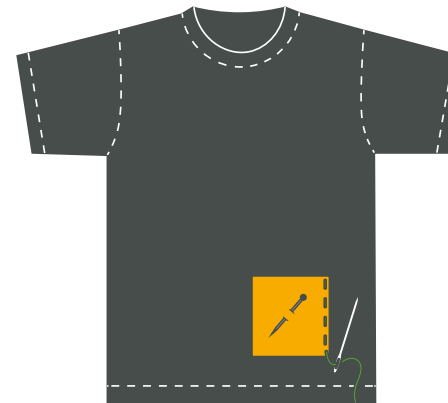
We can mend clothing using the same colour of thread or fabric or we can use different colours and let everyone see our mending. This helps us tell the story of the piece of clothing. It also makes our clothing different to everyone else's!

- 1 Decide where you would like your patch to be on your clothing. Measure and set your patch over the rip or hole. Check to see if there are any folds and creases in the fabric.

Tip

Try the piece of clothing on with the patch pinned to it to make sure the patch will be in the correct place.

- 2 You can pin the patch to hold it in place. This is optional because some people would prefer to hold it as they sew and can keep a tight grip on it.
- 3 Cut a length of thread about 35cm long. Thread the needle with your thread and knot the end. You can double up the thread to help strength.
- 4 Hold the patch down with a finger and thumb on top and bottom if needed. Push the threaded needle through fabric and patch from the back.
- 5 Slowly sew around the patch using a running stitch.
- 6 Finish stitching around the patch. Knot and trim excess thread on the backside of the fabric once the patch is completely sewn.



About the Maker

Deirdre Nelson

Deirdre Nelson is a maker creating textiles which explore humour, place and social history. She partners traditional techniques with contemporary processes such as digital print to create work which is not only exhibited but presented through artist residencies and within education and community projects. Resulting works cross over art, design and craft. Deirdre works with communities to explore social and environmental issues through making, whilst also working to commission for arts and healthcare organisations.

Website

deirdre-nelson.co.uk

Social Media

[instagram.com/map_making](https://www.instagram.com/map_making)



From the project 'Guild of Commoning'
by Deirdre Nelson

Appendix

Additional resources

- Find out more about the circular economy
 - [Explaining the Circular Economy and How Society Can Rethink Progress | Animated Video Essay - YouTube](#)
 - [Creating a circular economy for fashion | Rethink Sustainability - YouTube](#)
- Find out more about sustainable fashion brands
 - [Ellen MacArthur speaks on circular fashion](#)
 - [Make fashion circular](#)
 - [Been London – sustainable bags](#)
 - [MUD jeans](#)
 - [Fashion designer Stella McCartney](#)
 - [Growing shoes at Reebok](#)
 - [Who made your clothes](#)
 - [Fixing Fashion](#)



From the project 'Made in Easterhouse'
by Deirdre Nelson



MAKE | Learn is a partnership between MAKE and Craft Scotland, designed to strengthen Scotland's craft sector through a review of craft education within Scotland's primary and secondary schools and beyond.

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Find out more:
makemanifesto.com

