Ref's Circular Design Guide

Reformation 2023

We believe the future of fashion is *circular*. That's why we're committed to losing our virginity by 2030. Hear us out.

Making something new shouldn't have to mean using virgin materials. We'll design out waste, keep materials in use, and regenerate nature along the way.

Circularity has always been a big part of Ref—from our business model, to our love for vintage and deadstock, to recycling things we make. And we're continuing to build in foundational processes and programs to enable circularity for all our stuff.

Specifically:

Design
Release limited collections

Sourcing
Fiber Standards

Clean Chemistry program

Manufacturing
Marker efficiency

Manufacturing waste recycling

Quality & durability standards

Include extra trims for repair

Post-Consumer
Customization & repair program

Resale partnerships

RefRecycling program

But we know there's a lot more we can do to incorporate circular design criteria at the style level and make sure this is something we are considering from the very start. So we've created this circular design guide. We'll use this to hold ourselves accountable and keep circularity top of mind in the design process by tagging and tracking these at the style level. By 2025, all products will have at least one of these circular attributes.

Better Materials

Made from deadstock, regeneratively grown, renewable, recycled, or next generation materials

Deadstock: Deadstock is old, leftover, and over-ordered fabric from other designers and fabric warehouses.

Regeneratively grown: Animal- and plant-based fibers that are produced using farming practices that help reverse climate change. There are lots of different ways to do this, but our the focus is on increasing ecosystem health and combating global warming through carbon sequestration.

Renewable: Natural fibers that are not finite, either plant- or animal-based (AKA non synthetic).

Recycled: Something that used to be something else. There are two main types of recycled materials: pre- & post-consumer recycled. Pre-consumer recycles waste that was created during the manufacturing process, while post-consumer recycles something that has previously been used by someone. Like your ex's sweater.

Next generation materials: Innovative materials designed to replace animal-based or conventional materials. They include more sustainable versions of existing fibers, like synthetics and cellulose, plus new, science-y innovations in plant-based and lab-grown materials. We also use next-gen to talk about innovations happening outside of the finished product, like using recycled raw materials.

Made from materials with clean chemistry certifications

Products are processed in facilities with a clean chemistry certification like bluesign®.

Better Materials

Reformation

Wear
it a lot

Pre-tested style

A style that was released in a limited collection first to inform how much we make.

Multi-occasion or classic style

Design that focuses on versatility and timelessness: clean lines, simple silhouettes, neutral colors, and minimal embellishments. Basically, these things won't go out of style in 3 months.

Designed for low impact care

Things that are hand or machine washable and can be hang dried.

Wear it a lot

Made for recyclability

Designed for disassembly

Things that are made all, or mostly from, the same material, as well as in a way that's easier to disassemble.

Designed for textile-to-textile recycling

Things that are made with a material accepted by RefRecycling (aka it has an existing textile-to-textile recycling solution).

Made for recyclability

Let's get circular