

# CANADIAN VIEWS ON FAST FASHION



For Earth Day Canada

April 2026





## Canadian Views on Fast Fashion Clothing

- Fast Fashion clothing fills a need for affordable, fashionable and convenient clothing despite the widely held worries about its impact on the environment and workers.
- For many Fast Fashion purchases overlap with the pre-owned and recycled clothes movement. Both are seen to address affordability pressures. Most shoppers aren't mutually exclusive to either option.
- Fast Fashion purchases are more likely to be driven by parenthood than income levels. For parents, Fast Fashion is an affordable way to clothe children who quickly outgrow their clothes.

# Overall perception of the Fast Fashion clothing industry is split

**51%**


of Canadians say that the industry meets a need by providing low-cost clothes aligned with the latest trends

**49%**

saying that industry takes advantage of people who are concerned about affordability

**Eight in ten, feel people buy more clothes than they need to.  
Half feel that buying pre-owned clothes makes them part of a broader movement.**

**81%**



of Canadians agree with the statement  
**“I think people buy more clothes than they need to”**

**50%**



of Canadians agree with the statement **“Buying and selling pre-owned clothes makes me feel like I’m part of a broader movement, not just making a personal choice.”** This sentiment is held more strongly by Canadians with household incomes under \$40K (58% agree).

# Buying New Clothes is still the Norm and the Preference

On average **81% of Canadians buy most of their clothes new**, while 19% say most of their clothes are pre-owned/recycled or rented.

- This aligns with their purchasing preferences as 85% would prefer to purchase new clothes either in a store or online.
- Canadians with household incomes under \$40K are twice as likely (26%) to say most of their clothing purchases are pre-owned/recycled or rented vs. Canadians with household incomes over \$100K (13%).



This shows the impact of affordability concerns, and the role pre-owned and recycled clothes play in helping Canadians address these challenges.





## Almost Three Quarters of Canadians Make Fast Fashion Clothes Purchases

**74%** purchase at least some clothes that they consider to be Fast Fashion

**38%** of Canadians say that they consider 50% or more of their clothes to be Fast Fashion

- Among households with children under 18 years old, 57% say that they consider 50% or more of their clothes to be Fast Fashion (vs 34% for households without children at home).
- Household income levels do not have a significant impact on Fast Fashion purchases. Among those who consider 50% or more of their clothes to be Fast Fashion (less \$40K = 37%, \$40K to \$60K = 40%, \$60K to \$100K = 39%, \$100K or more = 42%) an indication that the appeal of Fast Fashion cuts across income levels.

# Fast Fashion Clothes are a Hit with Parents

Among Fast Fashion shoppers:

**45%**

spend **\$250 or less/year**

**43%**

spend **\$251+/year**

**11%**

**Don't Know** or say they  
**don't spend anything**

Among Fast Fashion shoppers, the biggest spenders are households with children (58% spending more than \$251 per year vs. 38% for households without children) and the lowest spenders are households with incomes under \$40K with 31% spending more than \$251 per year.



# Why Fast Fashion Wins

Fast Fashion wins based on its **convenience** (74%), **affordability** (66%), helping Canadians **keep up with trends** (64%) and allowing people to **express their personal style** (60%).

**Households with children are most likely to agree that Fast Fashion is:**



**82%**

**convenient when they need clothes quickly**

*vs 71% for households without children*

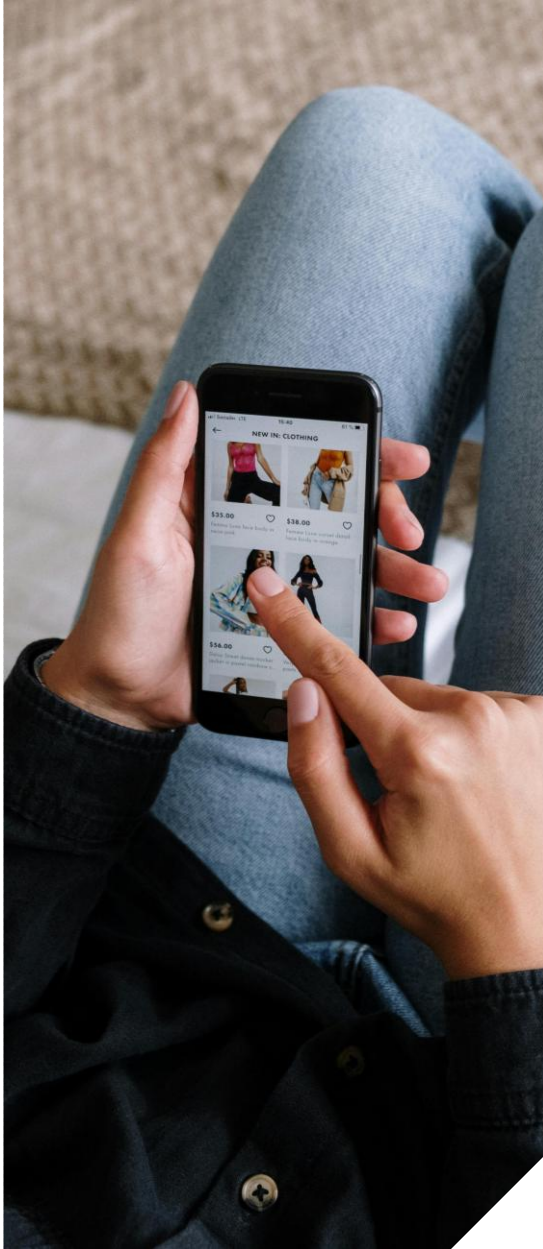


**75%**

**the most affordable way to buy clothing**

*vs 63% for households without children*

A majority of Fast Fashion purchasers see cost as a barrier to “better” clothing options with **73% agreeing that more sustainable or higher-quality clothing often feels out of reach.**



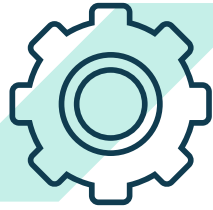
# Fast Fashion Fault Lines

- There is tension among Fast Fashion purchasers with **79% agreeing that they would prefer to buy fewer clothes that last longer** and **66% agreeing that Fast Fashion is often of lower quality than they want.**
- Another tension emerges along ethical concerns with **47% of Canadians agreeing that they try to avoid Fast Fashion for environmental reasons** and **51% of Canadians agreeing that they try to avoid Fast Fashion due to their concerns about the working conditions in the industry.** The concerns around working conditions are most likely held by households without children (53%).
- Despite the large number of Canadians who are purchasing Fast Fashion clothing there is a stated willingness on the part of Fast Fashion purchasers to spend more (58% agreeing) for clothing that is made more responsibly.
- Many Fast Fashion shoppers are also participating in the used and recycled clothes movement with **44% of Fast Fashion purchasers agreeing that they also try to shop second-hand or repair their clothing rather than buying new.**
- Like Fast Fashion clothes people see pre-owned and recycled clothes (76% agree) as a practical response to the cost of living.

## What about pre-owned and recycled clothes?

- **54% of Canadians trust pre-owned and recycled clothes just as much as new clothes** when it comes to getting value for money.
- **48% of Canadians have lower quality expectations of pre-owned and recycled clothes.**

# Methodology



These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between February 22<sup>nd</sup> to February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026, on behalf of Earth Day Canada. For this survey, a sample of 1,001 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within  $\pm 3.8$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18+ been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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<https://canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca/standards/>

# THANK YOU



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