



## Trash to Fashion

We buy, we use, we throw away. This trend seems to be getting the better of us judging from our constantly overflowing dumpsters and the Styrofoam and plastics that clog the drains and the quickly filling landfill. Is it that we have too much? Do we have too much money or perhaps too many things to buy? Whatever the reason, the fact is that we just have too much trash!

For many years we have been hearing of the *3Rs: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle*. Here in Guyana however, there is very little recycling being done. It is most practical for us to focus at this time on **2Rs - Reduce and Reuse!** Besides, we can reduce and reuse our trash in fun ways. Whenever you think of throwing something away, stop and think about ways that it can be used again. Plastic bottles, snack wrappers, newspapers, clothing, jewellery, household containers, etc., can all be reused to make useful items.

It is quite possible to have a fashion experience every time you step out in public by considering making clothing and accessories from ‘trash’— materials you would normally toss into a bin. By using a few smart techniques, you can turn your trash to treasure. Here are a few examples:

### Papier-mâché

Papier-mâché which literally means ‘chewed paper’ is a useful technique to make items that require rigidity and stability. This technique can be achieved through different methods, but one simple method is to use an adhesive like flour glue to attach paper strips to a form for support. The form, such as balloon or wire mesh, is used to give the desired shape to the created piece. This is a great idea for making hats, masks or even shoes!





### Weaving

Weaving is often used in fashion whether to style shoes, bags, scarves, belts or garments. In fact this year, bags with a woven design are the craze. It is a common thing to think that weaving involves tiny pieces of thread or yarn interlaced to make a piece of fabric. But weaving can also be done with bulkier materials such as straw, cloth, or even plastic bags. Getting this technique right may take a bit of practice but when it comes to saving the environment, no task is too great.

### Patchwork

The fashion magazine Vogue highlighted in March this year, that **patchwork** was one of the top designer fashion trends for the 2015 spring-summer season! You can get in on this trend by sewing together different pieces of material, usually cloth of different colours and patterns to get a larger design. You may be more familiar with this technique on quilts, but it is also very useful for hats, skirts, pants, dresses and almost any other garment you can think of. So think twice the next time you decide to throw out your old pre-washed denim jeans. It will make a great patch.



Giving yourself a practical experience will take your ideas of “*reusing*” to another dimension.

**You can share your ideas and questions by sending letters to: “Our Earth, Our Environment”, C/O EIT Division, Environmental Protection Agency, Ganges Street, Sophia, GEORGETOWN, or email us at [eit.epaguyana@gmail.com](mailto:eit.epaguyana@gmail.com)**