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Snip. Snip. Thread this piece through the holes. Alright, what do I do next? Step 7: Pull the ends of the strings to gather the fabric and tie them in a bow. Repeat, repeat, and we have a perfectly deconstructed t-shirt. Thank you, Generation T: 108 ways to transform a t-shirt, for tons of ideas to save the environment one t-shirt at a time.

Holding up my new and improved t-shirt, I smile. That looks pretty cool, ties to die for. It just needs a pin here and a patch there. Sweet, we are all set to rock a new fad. My mind flashes back to the boring tank top that I had an hour ago to the lovely top that I have in front of me to the pile of old clothes on the ground. My room is my workplace; my medium is clothing, and my favorite tool is a pair of scissors. It is where creativity meets individuality and earth friendly. Instead of buying new clothes, with a pair of scissors and a pile of old tees, I transform old stuff into new. It's fun, unique, and saves the planet. It's recycled fashion.

Long sleeve shirt ruined with a spaghetti sauce stain, I draw a design. Got jeans with a few too many holes, I patch them up. Style is out of fashion, I take the scissors to it. By transforming my old t-shirts, I combat fast fashion, the "buy more" mentality that intoxicates the earth. They say that, "Millions of tons of clothing are tossed each year into garbage landfills where they rot and produce methane gas". Talk about waste when all we want to do is reduce, reuse, and recycle just from consumer fashion. By deconstructing t-shirts that is just what I do, reduce the amount I buy, reuse what I already have, and recycle all my clothes. My motto: save a tee, save a tree.

But the buck doesn't stop at fashion. I bike to school every day. I take the bus as much as I drive. I like to shop at my favorite used clothes store. I use organic deodorant and I love to visit the farmer's market. I bring a bag when Mom and I do groceries. We reuse Ziploc bags and grow veggies in the backyard. I do laundry only twice a month, turn off water when I brush, and boil organic tea instead of turning up the heat. When asked why, my answer is to minimize my carbon footprint upon the path of life. I know that every mile I ride counts, every bottle I recycle matters, and every action, regardless of how small, makes a difference.

This fall, I will be attending California Polytechnic State University to study architecture. In five years, armed with my degree, I plan to be designing eco-friendly, "green" buildings. There was a list published last year of the most "green" buildings in America that save considerably amounts of energy. My life goal is to be the architect behind a green building on that list. "Green" architecture is an alternative way of designing buildings using eco-friendly designs to conserve energy. My goal in life is not to make the most "green" but design the greenest building.

Checking out my revamped t-shirt and patch jeans in the full length mirror, I skip out the door and onto my bike. Throwing a canvas bag in the baskets, I pedal down the street to check out old stuff at the vintage store down the street. Cycling through tree-lined streets passing the farmer's market, I know that I'm doing my part to help the earth. The formula to save the planet: save a tee, save a tree.



Me in my deconstructed prom dress made from band t-shirts



A tire swing and me