Managing Choice

Youth Activity Guide
A Style of Your Own

is a clothing decision project that explores consumer issues related to apparel and teaches the six steps of decision making. A Style of Your Own includes three publications:

- **Discovering Choice** for youth in Grades 6–8
- **Managing Choice** for youth in Grades 9–12
- **Helper’s Guide** for the adult leader and for use with groups

Youth Activity Guides

The youth activity guides are developmentally appropriate for particular grades but may be used by youth in any grade depending on their experience, skill, and interest. Each guide contains an achievement program, activities, a glossary, and a resource list.

**Helper’s Guide**

The Helper’s Guide provides additional learn-by-doing activities that can be adapted to families, home schools, classrooms, scouts, clubs and other educational settings. You will find a handy chart that lists supplies, special instructions, and answers for the activities in the youth guides. The Helper’s Guide also contains helpful hints for working with youth, developing life skills, and teaching experientially.

Oh, never mind the fashion.
When one has a style of one’s own, it is always twenty times better.

— Margaret Oliphant, English novelist, historian. 1866

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Participating States

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"Style is not neutral; it gives moral directions." —Martin Amis, British author, 1995
A Great Opportunity

A teen has asked you to be his/her helper for Managing Choice. In this important role, you will shape learning, offer encouragement, provide recognition, and enjoy the fun. Together you will tackle consumer issues related to clothing and work through the critical steps of sound decision making.

Your Responsibilities

- Become familiar with this guide and the Helper's Guide.
- Provide a safe, supportive, and non-judgmental environment.
- Understand and use the experiential learning cycle.
- Reinforce the clothing and decision-making skills.
- Assist the youth's efforts to set goals and complete the Achievement Program.
- Serve as a resource person who connects youth to related materials, community projects, and people with needs, interests, or expertise in clothing or decision making.

Your Challenge

Support teens as they explore the activities and develop conclusions. Resist the urge to provide or insist on "correct" answers. Instead, talk with teens, share their concerns, listen to their ideas, and promote follow up and follow through.

Experiential Learning Cycle

The five steps of the experiential model are incorporated into each activity. This ensures that youth will learn by doing and will develop skills for life-long learning and self responsibility.

Project and Life Skills

Each activity emphasizes a life skill that builds workforce and personal competencies and a project skill related to the subject matter. An icon on the first page of every activity identifies the skills being practiced and states what is expected of the youth (success indicator). Notice the hanger icon for decision-making skill, clothing skill, and success indicator.

Life skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, keeping records, planning/organizing, and self responsibility are part of this curriculum, but the life skill most emphasized is **decision making**. Thus, each activity highlights a decision-making skill:

- Define Problem
- Consider Alternatives
- Gather Information
- Evaluate Alternatives
- Make Decision
- Evaluate Decision

The project skill, **clothing skill**, addresses a consumer's need to acquire, manage, and dispose of clothing. Clothing skills include understanding self, clothing styles, fabric characteristics, wardrobe and money management, and laws related to apparel.
A Note to the Teen

Are you in high school? Do you want to make smart clothing decisions? Are you a little overwhelmed with labels, advertisements, and too many choices? Are you interested in organizing a community service project about clothing? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, Managing Choice is for you. It will help you figure out how to take charge of your clothing decisions and define your own style.

What's in Managing Choice?
Managing Choice has an achievement program, 16 activities, a glossary, and a list of additional resources. Each activity has these sections:

- Introduction - topic and expectations
- Stepping Out - instructions for doing the activity
- Suiting Up - discussion that helps you think about how the activity relates to your life
- Gearing Up - information
- Looking Good - extra challenges and fun
- Stocking Up - interesting or fun fact

Words written in bold type are defined in the Glossary on page 39.

What You Will Do
- Ask someone to be your helper
- Work with your helper to plan the year's activities
- Complete the required activities of the Achievement Program
- Try some extra activities if you have time
- Keep track of your progress

Your Activity Guide and More
In this activity guide you will make lists, answer questions, sketch designs, outline ideas, record observations, and make collages. The book is yours to keep. You might enter it in a fair or record book competition, add it to your keepsake chest, or keep it handy for easy reference.

This guide allows space for the basic program but you may want to do more. A journal, portfolio, or videotape are great for the extra challenges in Looking Good or for related experiences you dream up. Keep your journal in a sketch pad, notebook, or binder. Make a portfolio for things that don't fit into your journal. You can use a big envelope, manila folder, folded piece of cardboard or box. Capture your unfolding saga on a series of videotapes or create one project highlights tape. Involve your friends or make it your personal record.

Your Helper
Your project helper is an important part of your clothing decisions project. Choose a leader, parent, neighbor or older friend who is interested in clothing decisions and in working with you. Involve your helper as you set your goals and discuss the questions found in each activity. Sometimes you may work together on an activity.

Write the name and contact information of your helper below.

Helper's Name __________________________

Telephone __________________________

Email address __________________________

To me style is just the outside of content, and content the inside of style, like the outside and the inside of the human body—both go together, they can't be separated.

—Jean-luc Godard, French filmmaker, author. 1967.
Managing Choice

Achievement Program

To complete all 16 sessions is a big commitment. Most teens work in the project for 2-3 years. You are eligible for a Completion Certificate each year that you meet these achievement requirements:

- 6 Stepping Out Activities
- 2 Leadership/Community Service Experiences
- 2 Looking Good Activities

Your first year, select one Stepping Out Activity from each chapter so you learn and practice the six steps of decision making. For other years, select at least four new activities. You may want to repeat some activities to update your changing personal profile.

Place a check beside the activities you plan to do this year. Have your helper date and initial the activities when you complete them.

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### 1. Stepping Out Required Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Plan to Do</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Helper's Initials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1. Define Problem: What's Your Style?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. What (exactly) is the Problem?</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>16. Did You Get Stuck?</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### 2. Leadership/Community Service Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan To Do</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Helper's Initials</th>
<th>Experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Give a demonstration related to the project</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Prepare an exhibit about clothing decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct a workshop related to the project</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Encourage a friend to be a part of a Style of Your Own project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Invite someone to talk to your group about clothing decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Help someone with a Style of Your Own project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Volunteer for a charity activity related to the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Your idea)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Optional Activities
(Requirement: 2 each year)

Page # Date Completed Helper's Initials

Managing Choice Highlights
New and exciting things I learned:
Year 1
Year 2
Year 3

Managing Choice Review
Once you have completed what you planned, review what you accomplished with your parent or helper.

Managing Choice Completion Certificate
I certify that

Managing Choice Helper's Signature
Managing Choice Helper's Signature
Managing Choice Helper's Signature

Date (Year 1)
Date (Year 2)
Date (Year 3)
Define Problem: What’s Your Style?

Defining your clothing needs and your style is the first step in the clothing decision-making process. Although this series emphasizes taking charge of your wardrobe, the same skills will help you manage even bigger things.

What (exactly) is the Problem?

Have you ever had a hard time deciding what to wear for a particular occasion like that big football game or the prom? On the messy side, perhaps you flip hamburgers on weekends or your pal helps fix motorcycles. Are your clothes equal to the challenge?

Gearing Up

You deal with problems every day. Some are serious; most are just small stuff. No matter the size of the problem, finding a solution requires the same six steps:

- Define problem
- Consider alternatives
- Gather information
- Evaluate alternatives
- Make decision
- Evaluate decision

Although this sounds as easy as 1-2-3 (and 4-5-6), the process does not always follow a straight path. You will skip back and forth among the steps as new information comes along. You may redefine the problem and do the process many times. That’s okay. A decision-making icon on the first page of every activity will help you keep track of where you are in this process. Look at the icon for this activity. A button marks the first step in decision making, define the problem.

Stepping Out

Most clothing decisions come down to two issues, “function” and “fashion.” Your challenge is to identify the function and fashion characteristics of your wardrobe. Function depends on your actions—what, when, how, and where. Fashion depends on your sense of style.

- Read the list of sample activities and add your favorite at the bottom.
- List two clothing function characteristics for each activity.
- List one fashion characteristic for each activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>Function Characteristic #1</th>
<th>Function Characteristic #2</th>
<th>Fashion/Image Characteristic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: School</td>
<td>Comfortable</td>
<td>Pockets</td>
<td>Casual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend wedding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shovel snow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play basketball</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work at pizza shop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take long hike</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_________ (your favorite)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUITING UP

Share
Which of the listed activities have you actually done? What did you wear?

Process
Select one of the activities. List two additional clothing characteristics that match that activity. Which are fashion characteristics and which are function?

Generalize
How does listing more clothing characteristics help you better define your clothing situation or problem?

Apply
Rank the characteristics on the list in Stepping Out in order of importance to you. Then, write a sentence or two that defines the clothing problem for this activity.
(Hint: Focus on the characteristics you thought were more important. Example: My school clothing needs to be comfortable, have pockets to hold my lunch money, and make me look sophisticated in a casual way.)

Gearing Up
Function refers to the basic uses of a clothing item. Occupations, activities, age, climate, health, and geographic location determine how clothing is used. In cold snowy climates, clothing needs to protect us against cold and help retain body heat. In warm hot climates, clothing should fit loosely to allow air flow to carry heat away from the body. A hard hat is essential protection for a person in the construction business. A runner needs socks that absorb sweat and prevent blisters.

Fashion is an image or style that sets a visual mood. Colors, textures, and shapes are combined to create an emotional response. Clothing functions may not vary, but fashions can change weekly, daily, and hourly from activity to activity. Fashion uses clothing to reflect our moods, our passions, our personalities, and to experiment with different images.

Looking Good

1. Ask someone who wears a uniform (maybe a firefighter, nurse, student, football player or police officer) how the uniform meets their needs better than regular street clothing. Ask what they would wear if they could dress any way they want.
2. Visit a formal wear rental shop and compare styles. Which garment features are for fashion and which are for function?
What’s in Your Mind?

Do you feel your best wearing black leather, red silk chiffon or denim? Did you know that what you wear is a large part of your personal style, image, or “look”? Think about the last time you met someone for the first time...did you form an instant opinion of that person based on clothing and style? With models and movie stars, “look” is no accident. What about with you?

STEPPING OUT
Gather information about some current looks and then define the image they give.

- Clip pictures from newspapers and magazines of three looks (two that appeal to you and one you dislike).
- Arrange the clippings into a collage in the space below or on a separate piece of poster board or foamcore, then cover with clear contact paper to flatten and preserve.
- Create names for these looks like “The Sophisticate,” “Cool Dude,” or “Wannabe Royalty.”
SUETING UP

Share
What "looks" did you find? Which did you like best?

Process
Choose one of the styles in your collage. What are the different elements that contribute to the overall look?

Generalize
How does gathering information about how other people look help you more clearly define your own clothing style?

Apply
Draw or describe a "look" you would like to try for yourself.

Gearing Up
Your personal image, style, or "look" is a combination of your physical characteristics, personality, posture, clothing, and accessories. All of these together tell the world who you are, who you think you are, or who you want to be. Your style is as unique as you are and is shown in your choice of art, music, studies, movies, sports, friends, and dress. "Clothing Style" means that your unique personality is very clearly reflected in the way you dress. Style is dynamic, and changes with you as you change—physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.

Looking Good

1. Choose three looks from a costume history book. Discuss with your helper or friend what names you would give these styles and how they compare with current clothes.

2. Watch a period movie like "Grease," "Casa Blanca," or "Star Wars." On a separate piece of paper, list three characters, describe their clothing and note the messages the clothing sends.

Stocking Up
In the 16th century, the fashionable male wore petticoat breeches and boots lined with stockings cuffed with lace. Some even added colorful ribbons to their "look."
What's in Your Mirror?

Before you (and your wallet) head for the store, give some thought to the customer—you yourself. It is not enough to know what clothes you like. You also need to know what styles fit the real you. Gathering information about your body shape will help define your clothing needs and choose clothes that fit properly.

STEPPING OUT

Begin with the basic question of body shape. If this topic is personal for you, do the activity alone. If you want company, invite your best friend to join you. In any case, try to put aside your uncomfortable feelings and think like an engineer or an artist. Look at the combination of your curved and straight lines as well as proportion and balance.

1. Find a standing, head-to-toe photo of yourself, preferably facing the camera with arms at your sides.
2. Attach a piece of tracing paper over the photo.
3. Place dots at the following points:
   - the outer corners of your shoulders
   - the corners of your waist
   - the widest part of your hips/thighs.
4. Connect the dots with a marker or pencil.
5. Draw that “body shape” three times in the space below.

Decision-Making Skill:
- Define Problem
- Consider Alternatives
- Gather Information
- Evaluate Alternatives
- Make Decision
- Evaluate Decision

Clothing Skill:
- Relate body contour to clothing fit

Success Indicator:
- Understand how body shape affects clothing choices

- Draw the six basic clothing silhouettes below on solid colored paper (size the silhouettes to fit your body outline):
  - rectangle
  - oval
  - figure-eight
  - hourglass shape
  - triangle
  - inverted triangle

- Cut out these “garment” shapes.
- Superimpose the garment shapes over your body drawings.
- Note how the different silhouettes change your body shape.
- Paste the three garment shapes you like best on the three body outlines.
SUITING UP

Share
Describe the shape that you drew from the photograph.

Process
How did the differently shaped garments change the visual shape of the body drawing?

Generalize
How does knowing your body shape help you define your clothing issues?

Apply
Select a person in a fashion magazine or catalog and describe the silhouette of the clothing that is worn.

Gearing Up

Which line is the longest? The shortest?

You might be surprised to learn that all these lines are the same length. You can use these same principles of line and form to select clothes that give you a different appearance.

Lines in clothing are classified as silhouette, structural, or surface. The silhouette is the shape of the body or garment—the shadow it throws when caught in the light. Structural lines are provided by the construction details of pockets, pleats, collars, and so on. Surface lines are in clothing materials such as a spongy fleece jacket or ribbed corduroy pants.

Tips to Remember

Straight lines express strength and movement. Curved lines suggest grace and flexibility. Vertical lines lengthen. Horizontal lines widen. Diagonal lines appear dynamic. Pleats, darts, seams, and tucks divide a large space into smaller spaces. Collars, cuffs, and decorative trim create shape and divide space. Fabric pattern, color, and texture provide interest and affect size and shape.

To Widen Silhouette

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shoulders</th>
<th>To Narrow Silhouette</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add dimension with shoulder pads, big collars, scarves, puffed sleeves, or horizontal patterns on upper body.</td>
<td>Break up space with sleeveless top, <strong>raglan sleeves</strong>, or vertical patterns on upper body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waist</td>
<td>Add dimension with bulky fabrics or layered garments at waist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hips</td>
<td>Add dimension with pleats, pockets, or layers at hipline.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fashion history is littered with devices intended to produce a fashionable body shape. Do bustles, hoops, and foot bindings sound familiar? Can you believe that men and boys, as well as women and girls, have worn corsets!

1. Color can change a perceived shape or size. The next time you purchase shoes, try on several colors of one style. Note whether the different colors make you feel longer, shorter, wider, or more narrow.

2. Observe how people walk and sit. Record in a journal or sketchbook how posture affects their visual shape.
What’s in Your Data Profile?

People come in unique packages. In the last activity you began to look at the contents of your package. Now, you will build your personal data base. Understanding your personality and knowing your size will help you identify clothes that are right for you.

STEPPING OUT
You will gather three types of data:
1. personality traits
2. physical characteristics, and
3. body measurements.
Take the time to respond honestly and measure carefully. You might want to ask a friend or family member to work with you.

Date ____________________________

1 Fill in the blanks with the personality traits that best describe you in different settings.
(Examples: happy, quiet, courteous, funny, anxious, outgoing, shy, assertive, etc.)

At school I am ____________________________
At home I am ____________________________
At work I am ____________________________
When relaxing I am ____________________________
I wish I could stop being ____________________________
Others think I am ____________________________

2 Look in the mirror and describe some of your physical characteristics.

Eye color ____________________________
Hair color and texture ____________________________
Skin tone and texture ____________________________
Face shape ____________________________

3 Collect and record the following body measurements. (Refer to How to Take Measurements, Helper’s Guide, page 33.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Circumference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>height</td>
<td>weight</td>
<td>neck circumference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>top of back (base of neck) to waist</td>
<td></td>
<td>bust or chest circumference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shoulder width</td>
<td></td>
<td>waist circumference</td>
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<tr>
<td>outside leg length</td>
<td></td>
<td>hip circumference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inside leg length</td>
<td></td>
<td>upper arm circumference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arm length</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUETING UP

Share
Which data did you know already?
What information was new?

Process
Why is a date important for your data sheet? How might the same data differ next year?

Generalize
Why is it important to keep key information about yourself? How could this data be useful for things other than clothing decisions?

Apply
Choose three data measurements and describe how you would use them to make a clothing decision.

Gearing Up
Clothing manufacturers have their own sizing systems. That’s why you wear one size in Brand X and a different size in Brand Y. Manufacturers follow these general descriptions for figure types.

Boys/Teen Boys — Average proportions for boys who have not reached a mature build. Height 4’ to 4’10”. Sizes 7–20.

Husky Boys — Fuller body in proportion to height. Height 4’ to 4’10”. Sizes 8–20.

Men — Average build. Height 5’10”. Sizes 32–52.

Big/XXBig — Fuller body in proportion to height. Height 5’8”. Sizes 48–66.

Big/Tall — Taller, fuller body than average. Height 6’0”–6’4”. Sizes 52–66.

Girls — Not yet begun to mature. Height 4’2” to 5’1”. Sizes 7–14.

Girls Plus — Fuller body in proportion to height. Height 4’2” to 5’1”. Sizes 8½–16½.

Young Jr./Teen — Developing figure with small bust and proportionally larger waist. Height 5’1” to 5’3”. Sizes 5/6–15/16.

Junior — Well-developed figure with shorter waist length and higher bust than Misses. Height 5’4” to 5’8”. Sizes 1–13.

Misses — Well-developed figure with average adult proportions. Height 5’5”–5’8”. Sizes 2–20.


Women — Mature figure, proportionally larger in all areas than Misses. Height 5’5”–5’8”. Sizes 18W–32W.

Half-Size — Shorter, fully developed figure. Shoulders are more narrow and hips and waist are larger than Misses. Height 5’2”–5’3”. Sizes 10½–24½.

Looking Good

1. This activity used the U.S. Customary System of weights and measures. Use a metric measuring tape to collect the same measurements in centimeters. If you don’t have a metric tape, use your math skills to convert inches to centimeters (1 inch = 2.54 centimeters).

2. Research the change in body size through history:
   • Compare the height of your family members over three generations.
   • Gather information about the size of basketball players over the past 50 years.
   • Visit your local historical society or museum and compare the size of the furniture and clothing on exhibit to what you have in your home.

If Barbie had a 22-inch waist, she would have to be 7 feet 2 inches tall with about a 12-inch neck to be proportionate!
**What's in Your Budget?**

Getting clothes may mean spending money, possibly even your own. Do you have enough money to go shopping? Check your budget before dashing to the mall.

**STEPPING OUT**

If you are surprised to find your pockets empty, you'll want to know where your money goes. If your pockets are full, you'll want to invest those dollars. Before investing in new clothes, take a look at your clothing allowance and how it fits into your monthly budget. Track your income and expenses for a month.

(Hint: if your income is seasonal such as shoveling snow or helping on the farm, you might prefer to make a budget for six months or one year.)

- Record the month.
- List additional income and expense categories in charts below.
- Complete the amount columns.
- Calculate your balance. (Hint: it may be negative. Ouch!)
- Note how much you spent on clothing and calculate the percent of your income that is spent on clothing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month of</th>
<th>Income (What you earn or receive)</th>
<th>Amount ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash on hand (balance from last week)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest from savings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL INCOME</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense (What you spend)</th>
<th>Amount ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Put into savings account</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School supplies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snacks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity/church/temple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Let's see...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your turn!</th>
<th>$_________ minus $_________ equals $_________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INCOME</td>
<td>EXPENSES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$_________ divided by $_________ multiplied by 100 equals $_________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLOTHING EXPENSE</td>
<td>INCOME</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Decision-Making Skill:**
- Define Problem
- Consider Alternatives
- Gather Information
- Evaluate Alternatives
- Make Decision
- Evaluate Decision

**Clothing Skill:**
- Assess dollars available for clothing

**Success Indicator:**
- Record monthly income and expenses
SUITING UP

Share
What did you do to gather information on your expenses and income?

Process
Most people spend 5–6% of their income on clothing. How much do you spend? Why do you spend more or less than the average?

Generalize
How does knowing income and spending patterns help you make a clothing decision?

Apply
If your income and expenses stay the same as those in your chart, how long will it take you to save $50 to buy a new coat? What will happen if you get into a habit of buying clothes on credit before you have the money to pay for them?

Gearing Up

A budget is more than a list of income and expenses. It’s a tool to help you make spending decisions so you can get what you want most. It’s an opportunity to plan ahead. Use your budget to set goals for how much you want to save, what you want to buy, and how you will get the money to do both. Here are five tips for becoming a financial wizard.

1. Find ways to make money.
2. Pay your savings account first.
3. Think before you spend.
4. Make smart purchases.
5. Avoid debt.

For financial information, check out the Internet. Type the word “finance” into the search of any online index and you’ll see a huge choice of links. If you are in a hurry, try these sites:
- A Young Spender’s Profile <www.nfle.org>
- Making Sense Online <www.makingsense.com>

Looking Good

1. Plan your budget for the next three months. Keep it handy on your bulletin board or computer for easy reference.
2. Compare the cost of three colleges. College information is available at your school’s guidance office, the public library, local bookstores, and on the Internet.

Stocking Up

High school girls spend 42% of their expendable money on clothes. Guys use only 24% of their cash for clothing.
Consider Alternatives:

Like it? Want it? Need it?

After defining the problem, you're ready to consider clothing alternatives. This involves critical thinking about your personal experiences, values, beliefs, attitudes, and resources.

**Activity 6**

What Do You Really Need?

Have you ever been overwhelmed by desire for something new? If so, you may be among the zillions of folks who have spent money on items they didn't need and couldn't afford. You may have gotten a kick out of those stiletto heels and somehow justified owning 38 T-shirts, but did you really need them? How do you distinguish between need and want?

**STEPPING OUT**

- Find one or two clothing catalogs.
- Cut out pictures of garments and paste into the "Want" or "Need" space below.
- Preview your groupings and define what "want" and "need" mean to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Want</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Define need</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Define want</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUITING UP

Share
Choose one item from each category and explain why you put it there.

Process
How can the same item be a “want” at one time and a “need” another time?

Generalize
How does comparing clothing needs and wants help in choosing among clothing alternatives?

Apply
To help you avoid impulse buying, create a list of questions that you can ask yourself to evaluate clothing needs and wants.
(Example: Do I have other clothes that I can wear for the same purpose or activity as this item?)

Gearing Up
Did you know clothing helps fill your need for protection, safety, modesty, role identification, self-expression, and social status? It’s easy to determine that you need a warm coat to wear during the cold winter, but deciding what kind of coat to buy and how much to pay is more complicated. Is your desire for the latest fashion an important emotional need or is it just a two-day whim? Remember, it is okay to add some spice and fun to your wardrobe— as long as you recognize what you are doing and understand the consequences.

Hints for Avoiding Spur-of-the-Moment Spending
- Set goals for something you want and save toward it.
- Keep money in the bank (not your wallet) or allow a parent to keep it for you.
- Consider the idea overnight before purchasing.
- Keep a note that reads, “Are you sure you need or really want this?” with the bills in your wallet.
(Hint: Photocopy Test of Need, Helper’s Guide, pages 31 and 32.)

Looking Good

1. Think of a garment you purchased recently or requested as a gift. Apply your list of questions for evaluating clothing needs and wants to this garment. Was it a need or a want? How is your definition of need or want different from your friend’s? Your parent’s or another adult’s? Discuss your thoughts with a friend or write them in a journal.

2. What would you do if you needed a type of clothing that could not be found? Some people need clothing that can be removed easily, is made of non-allergenic material, or is shorter in front than in back. Develop an exhibit for your 4-H fair on clothing adaptations for persons with special needs.

Stocking Up
Confusion about needs and wants can lead to impulse buying and debt. About 15% of teens with first-time credit cards end up in a debt management program.
—Consumer Reports, December, 1997
What's in Your Wardrobe?

How often have you made a really great buy only to have it huddle unworn in the dark corner of your closet collecting cobwebs? Your purchases will better meet your needs if you know what clothes you already have and their condition BEFORE you shop. You need an up-to-date wardrobe inventory so you can consider your existing alternatives.

STEPPING OUT

You will count, evaluate, and create a visual record of what's in your wardrobe. Check your closet, bureau, laundry basket, gym bag, and bedroom floor. Remember to include those items you loaned to a friend.

- Trace or photocopy page 38 as needed. Date pages.
- Adapt garment designs or sketch additional garments to better represent your clothes.
- Count the number of each type of garment.
- Note the color of each garment.
- Note the condition of each garment. (E = excellent; G = good; W = worn out)
- Record the number, color, and condition on the appropriate garment illustration.

(Hint: You may prefer to show the number and color by simply drawing lines with a colored pencil.)
SUETING UP

Share
How many colors are in your wardrobe? What is your most frequent color? What is the condition of most of your clothes?

Process
What clothes did you find that you had forgotten? How often should you update your inventory?

Generalize
How does having a clothing inventory help you consider clothing alternatives?

Apply
What are other times or situations in life when an inventory would be helpful?

Gearing Up

The word inventory was derived from the Latin word inventus, meaning to find. Inventories help owners keep track of their possessions. Inventory methods include: photographs, videotapes, audiotapes, drawings, slides, and lists of text/numbers in ledgers or on computer programs.

Sophisticated computer systems keep accurate counts of current inventories so clothing retailers know which garments are selling. They can reorder the best sellers quickly and track seasonal trends. The apparel industry calls this Quick Response sourcing. It cuts costs by reducing the number of garments stores must stock and improves customer service by replenishing merchandise faster.

Looking Good

1. Choose an occupation. Plan a wardrobe for a person in that line of work.

2. Ask an office manager, service station owner, or teacher how they use inventories in their jobs.

A young lady in the 1800s owned 6-12 chemises that were initialed, numbered, and intended to last a lifetime. No inventory problems there.
Gather Information:

Who's Pressuring You?

You have already collected data to define the problem and to identify alternatives. The next step of the decision-making model is gathering information about your alternatives. Activities in this chapter will help you identify types of information, explore information sources and evaluate source credibility.

What's in the Package?

Are you intimidated by choice? Do you fade into a denim daze as you approach the miles of jeans on display? Can you easily distinguish acidwashed from stonewashed? Relaxed from reverse fit? Twill from plain weave structure?

STEPPING OUT

You have decided to purchase a pair of jeans. Ads, garment labels, and sales clerks use special terms to describe their products. Test your JJE (jean jargon expertise).

- Review the clothing information categories. Think about the type of information found in each.
- Match the jean jargon terms with a clothing information category by placing the category number in the blank beside the terms (numbers may be used more than once).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clothing Information Categories:</th>
<th>Jean Jargon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Fiber content</td>
<td>acidwashed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>baggy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fabric construction</td>
<td>bar tack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bell bottom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Fabric finish</td>
<td>cotton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Garment construction</td>
<td>cowboy cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>designer label</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Closure</td>
<td>discount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Style and fit</td>
<td>enzyme washed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Care requirement</td>
<td>flat fell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Cost</td>
<td>indigo dyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Brand</td>
<td>loose fit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Decision-Making Skill:
- Define Problem
- Consider Alternatives
- Gather Information
- Evaluate Alternatives
- Make Decision
- Evaluate Decision

Clothing Skill:
- Identify information needed to purchase clothing
- Understand information needed to purchase jeans

Success Indicator:
- Understand information needed to purchase jeans
SUITING UP

Share
Which terms in the jean jargon describe the jeans you are wearing (or last wore)? In which information categories did you place those terms?

Process
List the three clothing information categories that are most important to you. How does your list differ from your parent's, brother's, or friend's list?

Generalize
How can you apply the information you gather about the construction of jeans (Category #4) to other clothing purchases?

Apply
Write the clothing information categories and jean characteristics that are important to you on an index card. Keep this checklist in your wallet, adding information about other garments as you shop.

Gearing Up
Hints for finding the best jeans:

- Try on jeans for fit.
- Purchase jeans one inch longer than needed to allow for shrinkage.
- Check that back and side seams are secure. Flat fell or serged seams are stronger than plain seams.
- Look for bar tacks and rivets that reinforce pockets and seams.
- Note that waistband ends are folded under and stitched and that the bottom of the waistband is double stitched.
- Look for four or five belt loops.
- Buy metal zippers that "lock" shut when pull tab is pressed down.
- Select heavy weight cotton (14-16 oz.) cotton/polyester or cotton/nylon for durability.
- Choose fabric with spandex for stretch.
- Select twill weave for softness, wrinkle resistance, and durability.
- Know that bleaching and abrasion lighten color and also weaken fabric.
- Check for strong pocket fabric and double-stitched pocket seams.
- Expect indigo-dyed jeans to fade after repeated washings.

Looking Good

1. Prepare a presentation about indigo dyeing or try dyeing with natural or synthetic indigo. Remember to follow the safety instructions when using dyes. (See resources for references and dye sources.)

2. Organize a seam-ripping contest. Purchase sale garments at a used clothing store that have flat fell, plain and serged seams. Give each participant a six-inch swatch of the three types of seams and a seam ripper. Time them as they take apart each type of seam. The longest seam-ripping times identify the strongest seams.

3. Create a rubbing. Flatten jeans and other pants on a hard surface and cover a portion of the pant leg with a piece of paper. Rub a colored pencil back and forth across the paper pressing hard enough to trace the fabric's texture. Can you see the diagonal lines of the twill weave? Do you own pants in a jeans style whose fabric is not a twill weave?

Studies have shown that jeans in the same brand, style, and size can vary as much as three inches at the hip measurement and that even prewashed jeans shrink about one inch in length.
**Whom Can You Trust?**

What is your GQ—gullibility quotient? Do you believe everything you are told? Fall for every prank? Sign up for every special offer? Do you make your own decisions? Others influence our choices by what they say and do, the information they provide, and the services they offer—even with something as personal as the clothes you wear. It's up to you to dissect the media blitz, challenge your friend's advice, and research important issues. Ever wish for a crystal ball?

**STEPPING OUT**

Lacking a crystal ball, look for evidence that the claims you read and hear can be trusted.

- Read the information sources listed below.
- Rate the credibility of each source as 0 (none), 1 (little), 2 (some), 3 (average), 4 (good), or 5 (very credible).
- Note your reason for trusting or mistrusting the information source.
- List, rank, and comment on other information sources you have encountered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Source</th>
<th>Credibility/Trust Rating (0-5)</th>
<th>Why trust/mistrust?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clothing label</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Reports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen magazine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your best friend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your favorite musician</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fashion expert</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store clerk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your dad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television ad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUITING UP

Share
How many information sources did you rate a three or higher for credibility?

Process
Which information sources do you use when making a clothing decision? Why?

Generalize
How does knowing the dependability of the source help you evaluate different alternatives? How does your need for accurate information differ when purchasing socks? Formal attire? Sports equipment?

Apply
Name one item (clothing or non-clothing) you want to purchase and list two trustworthy sources of information for that product.

Gearing Up

Trustworthy, dependable, credible, reliable—these are the characteristics you want in consumer information. But how do you know who to believe? One criteria is credentials. What is the reputation of the magazines you read? Have your family members a long record of giving you good advice? Is the clothing label backed up by U.S. law?

Some consumer protection has been enacted by the U.S. government. Important textiles laws reflected in clothing labels are:

- Wool Products Labeling Act, 1941, prohibits substitutes or mixtures in wool products.
- Fur Products Labeling Act, 1952, prohibits mislabeling or false advertising of furs and fur products.
- Flammable Fabric Act, 1954, prohibits use of dangerously flammable apparel or fabrics.
- Care Labeling Rule, 1972, requires care information.

The Consumer Information Catalog is a free listing of federal consumer publications. For a free copy, send your name and address to: Consumer Information Catalog, Pueblo, CO 81009 or check the website: <www.pueblo.gas.gov>

Looking Good

1. Interview a parent or friend who just made a clothing purchase. Ask about the different information sources they consulted. Compare their sources to yours. Record the interview and your reflections in your journal.

2. Develop an exhibit about one of the textile laws in Gearing Up. Read carefully for exceptions or exemptions. Information available at library or <www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/pubs/buspubs/thread.htm>
What's Between the Lines?

You may have heard of the historic traveling medicine shows where a bottle of ordinary water was sold under a fancy name as a cure-all for everything from hangnails to consumption. Today, you are more likely to believe in the miracle promises on TV or be lured by a two-for-the-price-of-one sale. Persuasive advertising has gone high tech, but the tricks of the trade haven't changed.

STEPPING OUT

Clothing advertisements and promotions are everywhere. To make good clothing decisions you must separate useful information from deceptive claims. In this activity, you will analyze an advertisement of your choice.

- Describe or sketch a favorite clothing advertisement featured on television or clip one from a magazine.

- Note the time of day it airs and what programs it accompanies on television. Or, name the magazine and list the kind of articles in the magazine.

- Write the explicit message.*

- List any implicit messages.*

- List the advertising techniques used.*

*See Gearing Up, p. 25
SUITING UP

Share
Which product does the ad promote? Have you or someone in your family purchased this product?

---

Process
Explain why this ad is (or is not) convincing to you. How does your reaction to the ad differ from that of your parents or siblings? Why do people react differently to ads?

---

Generalize
Why was this ad paired with this television show (or magazine)? To whom is the ad targeted?

---

Apply
How would people decide what products to buy if advertisements did not exist?

Looking Good

1. Borrow a video camera and shoot an ad for a product of your choice. Plan the explicit and implicit messages you want to send to the viewer.

2. Telemarketing is big business and, for some consumers, a big nuisance. Check out the topic on the internet and discuss what you learn with your helper or a friend.
Evaluate Alternatives:

How Do Your Options Stack Up?

You know the problem. You've thought of several ways to solve it. You've looked for information about alternatives. Now you're ready to evaluate which alternatives best solve your clothing problem.

Collar Clues

What do Peter Pan, Buster Brown, and Nehru have in common? All three are collar styles. Almost 100 different collar names are listed in fashion dictionaries. Evaluating such a selection can be overwhelming. Try this method for finding your most flattering collar styles.

STEPPING OUT

You will explore and evaluate collar alternatives to select the styles most becoming to you.

- Visit a thrift shop or revisit your or your friend's closet.
- Name or sketch in the boxes as many types of collars as you can find.
- Measure the distance from your hairline (or the point where your hair falls across your brow) to the tip of your chin. (Stand before a mirror or ask a friend to help.)
- Measure that same distance from your chin down to your chest. This position is your first balance point, the place where your collar or neckline should fall.
- Try on garments with different collars and note whether the collar length or neckline opening falls at your balance point.

Decision-Making Skill:
- Define Problem
- Consider Alternatives
- Gather Information
- Evaluate Alternatives
- Make Decision
- Evaluate Decision

Clothing Skill:
- Identify collar styles

Success Indicator:
- Match collar styles with body features
**SUITING UP**

**Share**
How many different collar styles did you find? Which two do you wear most often?

**Process**
Where is your first balance point located (inches from chin)? Which collar styles match your balance point? Which collars were most flattering on you?

**Generalize**
You evaluated collar styles based on your unique proportions. List two other criteria you could use to evaluate collars.

**Apply**
How can you use accessories to draw the eye to your balance point even though the collar you wear does not?

---

**Gearing Up**

In The Triumph of Individual Style, Mathis and Connor advise readers to balance the head and upper body with necklines, collars, and accessories. They note that your most flattering collar style will be at least as wide as the widest part of your face. Also, some feature of the collar should coincide with your unique first balance point. This balance point is based on the length of your face. It is the point on your chest where your most flattering neckline will fall. If you want to wear a collar that does not match your balance point, you can get the same affect by adding a necklace, pin, scarf, corsage, or other accessories.

**Looking Good**

A balance point is simply a mathematical expression of your unique proportions. Artists use these formulas to create expression and design. You practiced using one balance point to select flattering collars.

1. Borrow an art book from the library and look for portraits. Find the subject’s balance point and note how the artist uses clothing and accessories to highlight the subject’s proportions.

2. You evaluated collars in terms of your first balance point. Discuss with your club or helper other evaluation systems.

   (Hint: grades in school, awards at fairs, trophies at sporting events, etc.)

---

In the 1600s, men and women wore large pleated collars (ruffs) that had to be supported by a frame.
Purchase or Something Else?

Should you buy, borrow, fix-up, or sew something to wear? Buying clothes is not the only way to dress in style. In evaluating whether to purchase or do something else, you need to weigh the costs and benefits of each choice.

**STEPPING OUT**

Compare the skill, time, and money needed to purchase a ready-to-wear item with the cost of sewing it.

- Select a ready-to-wear garment you would like to own and fill in the first chart.
- Browse your local fabric store for a pattern style and fabric similar to the ready-to-wear garment. Fill in the second chart.

### Chart 1: Cost of Buying Ready-to-Wear Garment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation (bus fare or car mileage at 30¢ per mile)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation time (hours x average wage for teens in your area)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping time (hours x average wage for teens in your area)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cost of Your Purchase</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chart 2: Cost of Sewing Similar Garment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pattern</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabric</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notions (thread, zipper, buttons, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation (bus fare or car mileage at 30¢ per mile)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation time (hours x average wage for teens in your area)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping time (hours x average wage for teens in your area)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing time (hours x average wage for teens in your area)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cost of Sewing Garment</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUING UP

Share
Did it cost more money to buy or to sew? How does shopping time for purchasing compare to the time it takes to find supplies and sew the item?

Process
What other factors should you evaluate before deciding to buy or to sew? (Hint: Sewing skills, access to a sewing machine, need for special sizing, pleasure of creative expression, etc.) Which factors cannot be evaluated in terms of dollars?

Generalize
Assume you are a whiz at the serger and sewing machine. Name one garment you would prefer to sew and explain why.

Apply
Name two other ways (besides buying and sewing) to get new clothes.

Looking Good

1. Visit a clothing manufacturer, professional tailor, or home sewer to observe how they manage expenses and time.

2. Invite friends to a clothing exchange. Each participant brings one or two unwanted garments or accessories. Take turns trying on the items. Each participant leaves with something new.

3. Use Chart 1 to evaluate similar garments from three types of stores (discount, consignment, used clothing, department, or outlet).

The majority of today's home sewers sew for fun and creative expression or because of special sizing needs.
Make Decision:
What Do You Say?
Some call it "stepping up to the plate" or "putting yourself on the line." However you say it, choosing a solution is the high point of the decision-making process. Remember... TO NOT MAKE A CHOICE IS ALSO A CHOICE.

Activity 13

Keep or Toss?
What should you do about that jacket and those shorts that never quite matched? Will you ever wear those birthday sweaters from your aunt? Now is the time to decide what to keep and what to toss or give away.

STEPPING OUT
The only way to decide if a garment is a keeper is to look at it closely, try it on, and consider its place in your wardrobe. Whether you test all your clothes or just one garment, be honest and practical.

- Choose at least one garment that you have NOT WORN for one month.
- Examine the garment inside and out and answer questions 1–7.

Keep or Toss Test for ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example: Do you like the style?</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you like the style?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you like the color?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you like the fabric?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Is the garment stain free?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do the closures work?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Are the seams secure?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Will you follow the care instructions?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Does the garment hang smoothly?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Can you bend, sit, and walk with ease?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Can you lift your arms over your head with ease?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Is the neck opening comfortable?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Is the hem smooth and even?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Does it match at least two other garments in your closet?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Decision
☐ Keep as is
☐ Keep after making this change ________________
☐ Discard in this way ________________
SUATING UP

Share
Which garment did you test? What did you decide to do with it?

Process
If you are keeping the garment, what will you do to assure you will wear it more often? If you are getting rid of the garment, how can you best do so? Why is it important to recycle clothing that is still usable?

Generalize
What similarities did you notice among your comments? How can you use that information to make better purchase decisions?

Apply
Design a test that will help you decide which shoes to buy.

Gearing Up
Another test of a garment's usefulness is wearability or cost per wearing. The lower the cost per wearing the better the value.
Cost of garment/Number of wearings = cost per wearing
Example: If a jacket costs $50 and is worn 50 times, the cost per wearing is
\[
\frac{\$50}{50 \text{ wearings}} = \$1 \text{ per wearing}
\]
The formula can also be written to account for care cost.
Cost of garment plus cost of care/Number of wearings = cost per wearing
Example: If the jacket above was dry cleaned five times at a cost of $3 each cleaning, the cost per wearing is
\[
\frac{\$50 + 5(\$3)}{50 \text{ wearings}} = \$1.30 \text{ per wearing}
\]

Looking Good
1. Check the clothing care labels in your closet. How many say hand wash? Dry clean? Machine-wash?
2. Use the Keep/Toss Test to help you purchase new clothes.
3. Gather information about agencies in your community that accept used clothing for recycling. Publish your findings in a community newsletter, the school or PTA bulletin, a circular for area churches, or some other publication that serves your area.

Stocking Up
Benjamin Franklin often made decisions by drawing a line across a page. He listed the pros on one side and the cons on the other. The side with the most entries prevailed.
What's it Going to Be?

In previous activities, you practiced the decision-making steps one by one. Now it's time to put them together. Watch the sidebar to see how you step up and down the decision ladder before making a choice. Whether this is a real purchase or just a trial run, think seriously about your choice. The good news is that doing this on paper helps you make similar decisions on the run.

STEPPING OUT

Use the chart on page 33 to decide on a real or virtual clothing purchase and then make a visual record of your decision.

1. Complete Clothing Decision Matrix

   - Write a clothing problem statement. ......................................................... Define Problem
     (Example: I need to buy a jacket to wear to school.)
   - In column A, list at least five features you need/want. ............................. Consider Alternatives
     (Example: good fit, under $50, hood, blue color, warmth.)
   - In column B, rank the importance of each feature to you ............................. Evaluate Alternatives
     0 (not important) to 3 (very important).
   - Find and describe two garments that appear to meet your needs/wants (check out stores, catalogs, or internet sites). Gather Information
   - Examine the garments for the features you listed ..................................... Gather Information
   - In columns C and E, rank how well the garments provide the features 0 (feature not present) to 3 (feature present and of high quality). Evaluate Alternatives
   - In columns D and F, record the garments' scores for each feature. ................. Evaluate Alternatives
     Garment 1 (B x C = D); Garment 2 (B x E = F).
   - Add columns D and F for total scores of the two garments ......................... Evaluate Alternatives
   - Decide which garment to buy ...................................................................... Make Decision

2. Create a Visual Record of Your Choice

   (Choose one!)

   - Sketch the garment you chose; add accessories if you like.
   - Cut and paste a similar garment from a catalog or magazine.
   - Photograph an actual purchase as a still life subject or photograph yourself wearing the garment.
   - Illustrate your choice by using a computer drawing program.
   - Describe the garment in a poem or in a note to a friend.
   - Design an advertisement about your chosen garment.
SUITING UP

Share
List the six decision-making steps. Which steps did you use more than once? Which step did you not use?

Process
Which clothing item had the higher score? Which garment did you decide to buy? Why might you decide to purchase the garment with the lower score?

Generalize
What did you learn about yourself and how you select and evaluate clothing features?

Apply
List two future decisions in which using a decision matrix would be helpful.

Gearing Up
To review writing problem statements, see Activity 1.
To review clothing features, see Activity 8.

Looking Good
1. Write an acronym to help you remember the six decision-making steps.
2. Help a friend, younger sibling, or nursing home resident work through a clothing decision matrix.

Clothing Decision Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clothing Problem Statement:</th>
<th>Garment 1 (Describe):</th>
<th>Garment 2 (Describe):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Column A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing Features You Want/Need</td>
<td>Importance of Feature to You (Rank 0-3)</td>
<td>Garment 1 Ability to Provide Feature (Rank 0-3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example: good fit</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Score for Garment 1

Total Score for Garment 2

Color and comfort are more important to most consumers than the quality of materials or construction.
Evaluate Decision:

How Did it Go?

Have you experienced the thrill of victory after a big basketball game, spelling bee, or 4-H speech? What about that foggy numbness after a forgettable piano recital or a failed driver’s test? Among the ups and downs of life, most clothing purchases are small change, but learning to deal with the consequences of your clothing decisions saves money and builds confidence.

Did You Triumph?

Do you feel like a winner in your new garment? Are you having some doubts? Is it a quality garment or a major goof? How do you know?

STEPPING OUT

Place an item in your wardrobe under an imaginary magnifying lens. Figure out if it was a great choice or a big disappointment.

- Select a garment that you have worn and cleaned several times.
- Supply purchase information.
- Complete the satisfaction scorecard.

Purchase Information (staple receipt or fill in information)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clothing item:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approximate date purchased/received:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where purchased:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated cost:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thoughts After Wearing and Washing Several Times

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desirable Features:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undesirable Features:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Satisfaction Scorecard (check one)

- great choice
- good choice
- okay choice
- sort of a disappointment
- big disappointment
**SUETING UP**

**Share**
How often do you wear this garment? Where do you wear it?

**Process**
What is your overall feeling about this garment? Explain why you would (or would not) purchase it again.

**Generalize**
How does evaluating a garment after wearing and cleaning help you decide what clothes to buy?

**Apply**
What other purchases have you made that you should evaluate? How will evaluation help you make wiser purchasing decisions in the future?

---

**Gearing Up**
Consumer satisfaction depends on:
- prior product and brand experience
- expectation of how the item should perform
- evaluation of actual performance
- evaluation of the discrepancy between the expectation and performance.

If the performance surpasses expectations, the customer is very satisfied.
If the performance meets expectations, the customer feels okay.
If the performance fails to meet expectations, the customer is dissatisfied.

---

**Looking Good**

1. Sketch your favorite garment. Try to show all the scuff marks, wrinkles, and details of wear and tear. How do those details remind you why this item is a favorite? How do they help you evaluate whether it was a good buy?

2. Collect stories about "best clothing bargains." You might host a show-and-tell with a small group of friends, use this idea as an ice-breaker at the next 4-H club meeting, or interview your family members for fun.

---

Stocking Up
Color change is the number one complaint made by consumers about clothing.

—International Fabricare Institute
Did You Get Stuck?

No matter how carefully you shop, mistakes happen. That itchy scratchy sweater may not be yellow but it is definitely a lemon. What should you do?

STEPPING OUT

Each clothing disappointment has several possible resolutions. If you realize a button is loose, you might simply sew it on. If you discover a sweater is too small, you might give it to your little brother. In most cases, however, you need to deal with the retailer:

- Think of a clothing item that you found unsatisfactory.
- Write a letter of complaint and staple a copy to your book
  OR
- Role play with a friend what you will say when you return the item to the retailer.
- Check the points below that you remembered to include.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When Returning Merchandise...</th>
<th>When Writing a Complaint Letter...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Be courteous.</td>
<td>□ Include your name, address, telephone number.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Bring merchandise, tags, and receipts.</td>
<td>□ Date the letter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Explain what you want (refund, exchange, etc.).</td>
<td>□ Address to Consumer Relations Department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ If the salesperson cannot resolve the issue, ask to speak with the manager.</td>
<td>□ Note company name, address.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Describe product (style, size, price, color fiber, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Give date and place of purchase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Explain why you are disappointed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Explain any previous action (letters, calls, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Explain what you want (refund, exchange, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Indicate when you expect a reply.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Enclose copies of supporting documents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Photocopy letter for your files.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Share
What garment did you find unsatisfactory? Why?

2. Process
How do you decide when to repair a defective garment yourself and when to return it to the seller?

3. Generalize
How does knowing your consumer complaint alternatives help you decide what kind of action to take?

4. Apply
If the seller refuses to resolve a consumer complaint, what other action can you take?

Looking Good

1. Interview a store manager or customer service clerk about store guarantees and return policies.

2. Check out these consumer protection websites:
   - Federal Trade Commission <www.ftc.gov>
   - Consumer World <www.consumerworld.org>
   - National Institute for Consumer Education <www.emich.edu/public/coe/nice/nice.html>
   - Better Business Bureau <www.bbb.org>
Acidwashed - fabric finish that creates a worn appearance created by tumbling garments or fabric with pumice stones containing an oxidizing agent such as bleach.

Acronym - word formed from the first letters or parts of other words.

Attorney General - state law office that mediates individual consumer complaints and enforces state consumer fraud laws.

Balance point - a mathematical expression of body proportions.

Bar tack - close series of stitches for reinforcement at stress points.

Benefit - something that enhances well-being.

Better Business Bureau - organization of businesses concerned with their reputation and customer satisfaction. Some have local arbitration panels for mediating disputes.

Body shape - the width relationship between your shoulders, waist, and hips/thighs.

Budget - list of proposed expenses and expected receipts for a definite period.

Chemise - woman's loose, shirt-like undergarment.

Consumer Protection Office - local or state office that resolves consumer complaints and proposes consumer legislation.

Cost - an expense or expenditure.

Cotton - natural cellulosic fiber from the cotton plant.

Decision-making - a process for reaching a conclusion after considering options.

Denim - sturdy cotton or cotton blend twill fabric made of colored lengthwise yarns and white crosswise yarns.

Double stitching - two rows of stitching.

Enzyme washed - worn appearance created by washing garments or fabric in a cellulose-based solution.

Explicit - completely and clearly expressed.

Federal Trade Commission - federal organization that enforces legislation related to product marketing claims, warranties, and unfair business practices.

Flat fell seam - strong, double-stitched seam.

Implicit - not directly expressed and not readily apparent.

Impulse shopping - a sudden urge that prompts a purchase without careful thought.

Indigo dyed - colored with blue dyestuff originally made from the indigo plant; synthetics now available.

Inventory - detailed, itemized list, report, or record of one's possession (noun) or to make such a record (verb).

Matrix - a visual and mathematical comparison.

Metric - decimal system of units based on the meter as a unit length, the kilogram as a unit mass, and the second as a unit time.

Notions - small items for household or clothing use.

Nylon - strong manufactured synthetic fiber made from petroleum.


Personality - character, behavior, temperament, emotions, and mental state of a person.

Plain seam - single row of stitching through two layers of material.

Plain weave - fabric structure in which the lengthwise and crosswise yarns pass over and under alternate yarns. Common plain weave fabrics are broadcloth, chambray, duck, gingham, percale, and poplin.

Physical characteristics - features of the human body such as size, coloring, and shape.

Polyester - strong manufactured synthetic fiber made from ethylene glycol and terephthalic acid.

Problem statement - equation or sentence that clearly describes a problem or situation. It consists of a main idea plus any number of descriptive characteristics.

Proportion - the harmonious relationship of parts to each other and to the whole.

Quick Response - apparel merchandising sourcing strategy that provides apparel retailers with speedy delivery from suppliers.

Raglan sleeve - sleeve that extends from neckline to underarm to give a diagonal line.

Rivets - metal tacks for reinforcement at stress points.

Reverse fit - ankles are narrower and hips are wider than regular fit.

Serged seam - line of stitching with the seam edges overcast.

Small Claims Court - local court where individuals can sue a business or other individuals for minor injustices.

Spandex - manufactured elastic fiber.

Stonewashed - a fabric finish that creates a worn appearance by tumbling garments or fabric with stones.

Topstitching - stitching on the outside of a garment.

Twill weave - fabric structure in which the crosswise yarns pass over one lengthwise yarn and then under two or more lengthwise yarns to create a diagonal ridge on the fabric surface. Common twill weave fabrics are denim, flannel, gabardine, and serge.
Resources

Books

Natural Dyes & Home Dyeing
Rita Adrosko
Dover Publications, 1976
ISBN: 0486226883
Available from <www.amazon.com>
Includes recipe for indigo dyeing.

The Triumph of Individual Style
Carla Mason Mathis & Villa Connor
Timeless Editions, 1993
ISBN 0-9632223-0-97
Order from Helen Connor
650-583-5288 or <www.amazon.com>
Uses art to demonstrate each person's unique beauty. Written for a female audience.

Computer Program

Dollars & Sense, CD-ROM
C. W. Publications
Available from Meridian Education Corp.
236 E. Front St.
Bloomington, IL 61701
Tel: 800-727-5507
Fax: 888-340-5507
e-mail:meridian@meridianeducation.com
Users shop at four stores to spend a budgeted amount. They also practice math, view videos, and compete in Trivial Pursuit. Printed Teacher's Guide included. Windows or Mac.

Flash 'N Fashion
Diskette or CD-ROM
Media Motion Publications
PO Box 658
Cherry Hill, NJ 08036-0658
Tel: 609-273-8999
Users design clothing, explore color combinations, study fiber/textile properties, and learn construction terms. Lots of fun.

Cooperative Extension

Ask your land grant university county extension office for information. The resources below can be ordered from:

Cornell University Resource Center,
7 Business and Technology Park
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14850
Tel: 607-255-2080
Fax: 607-255-9946
e-mail: Dist_center@cce.cornell.edu
<www.cce.cornell.edu/publications/catalog.html>

Financial Fitne$$ for Young Adults 1998.
Workbook to help youth gain control of their money.

It All Adds Up 1998
Youth and teacher materials in eight teaching units on consumer rights and responsibilities plus basic money management.

Fiber Facts 1999
48-page bulletin that explains the unique properties of the 16 most common fibers on the market today.

Magazines

Consumer Reports
Consumer Union
Yonkers, NY
<www.consumerreports.org/>

Extra Money
Money Magazine Supplement for High School Students
Time, Inc.
NY, NY
<www.money.com/exma>

Mail Order Supplies

Dharma Trading Company
P.O. Box 150916
San Rafael, CA 94915
800-542-5227
Indigo dye source

Nasco Arts & Crafts
901 Janesville Ave.,
PO Box 901
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538
Tel: 920-563-2446
Art, drawing, and craft supplies

Web Sites

Care labels
Textile Industry Affairs <www.textileaffairs.com>
International Fabricare Institute Consumer Info <www.fii.org/coninf4.htm>
Soap and Detergent Association <www.sdahq.org>

Consumer Issues
Better Business Bureau <www.bbb.org>
Consumer Information Center <www.pueblo.gov>
Consumer World <www.consumerworld.org>
Federal Trade Commission <www.ftc.gov>
National Institute for Consumer Education <www.emich.edu/public/coe/nice/nice.html>
U.S. Consumer Gateway <www.consumer.gov>

Figure types and sizes and how to take accurate measurements
Butterick patterns <www.betterick.com>
McCall Patterns <www.mccall.com>
Simplicity Patterns <www.simplicity.com>
Vogue Patterns <www.vogue.com>

Textiles and clothing
Apparel Related Websites <einstein.human.cornell.edu/apparel_sites.html>
Costume History Index <www.mcn.org/R/RAGS/HTML/CTLinkG.html>
Cotton Incorporated <www.cottoninc.com>
Home Sewing Association <www.sewing.org>
Indigo Dyeing - A Brief History <www.indigodye.org/history.html>
Iowa State University Textiles and Clothing Extension <www.iastate.edu/~t-exit/>
Men's Fashions <www.dnr.com>Ohio State University OhioLine <www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~ohiolinks.html>
Pennsylvania State University PENpages <www.penpages.psu.edu/>
Women's Wear Daily <www.wwd.com>
Woolmark <www.woolmark.com>
Look for more than 140 publications, videos, CD's and audio tapes to support youth development programming.

Check the 4-HCCS website for complete product information, online ordering and 4-H project resources.

www.n4hccs.org
4-H Cooperative Curriculum System

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