

RETAIL

Selfridges aims to reinvent retail with Project Earth sustainability strategy

August 17, 2020



Selfridges is launching its Project Earth initiative. Image courtesy of Selfridges

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

British department store chain Selfridges is building on its reputation for sustainability with a bold new initiative.

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Through "Project Earth," Selfridges hopes to change how shopping is done by 2025 by focusing on environmentally-impactful materials and circular retail models. The project is also guided by Selfridge's commitment to science-based targets and achieving net-zero carbon by 2050, under the guidelines of the Paris Agreement.

Project Earth

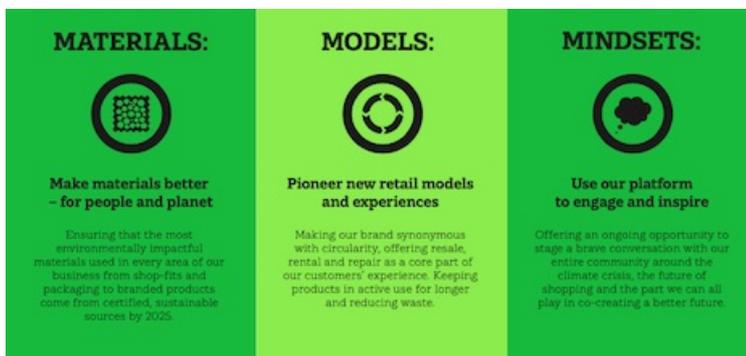
In the last 10 years, Selfridges has implemented a range of strategies centered around sustainability concerns.

The retailer's Buying Better, Inspiring Change strategy, launched in 2016, is working towards the 2022 goal of having 50 percent of all products be better for people and the environment.

Selfridges is currently phasing out materials such as crocodile, alligator, lizard and python, and plans to only sell agricultural leather in the future. This is part of the retailer's broader sustainability push, as it seeks to offer eco-friendly products that align with consumers' ethical values ([see story](#)).

The retailer is also one of 32 fashion companies which signed onto the Fashion Pact in 2019, which aims to enact environmental change through united goals ([see story](#)).

Now with Project Earth, Selfridges is addressing sustainability through a broader strategy.



Project Earth has a three-pronged approach: materials, models, mindsets. Image credit: Selfridges

"For the last decade we have taken groundbreaking steps to put people and planet at the heart of our business, embedding sustainability alongside creativity," said Alannah Weston, chairman of Selfridges Group, in a statement. "Project Earth is not only our bold, new commitment to stretching environmental targets, it is about imagining new ways to do business, within the next five years."

From a materials standpoint, the retailer will work to ensure the materials with the most impact on the environment will come from certified, sustainable sources by 2025.

According to Selfridges, this approach refers to materials used "throughout the business," including properties, and is not limited to end-products for consumers.

To support this goal, Italian fashion label Prada will launch its Prada Re-Nylon collection at Selfridges Corner Shop. The retailer will also continue to reduce plastic packaging, including encouraging shoppers to return their beauty packaging for recycling through an in-store partnership with Terracycle.

Furthermore, thousands of products will receive "Project Earth" labels, replacing Selfridges' "Buying Better" labels. Specific designations will include Reducing Waste, Organic and Vegan.

Selfridges will also further promote circular retail models, including repair, resale, refill and rental.

Previously, Selfridges hosted a temporary shop by mobile marketplace Depop, which showcased sellers who promote a more circular or eco-friendly take on fashion ([see story](#)).

Now, the retailer is launching Resellridges, which allows customers to shop pre-loved or archival apparel and accessories. After a 6 week-launch at the Corner Shop, shoppers will be able to sell their own accessories for store credit.

Selfridges is also introducing a rental service through Hurr Collective. Shoppers will be able to rent pieces from brands including Zimmermann, Cecilie Bahnsen and Emilia Wickstead for 4, 8, 10 or 20 days.



Selfridges is introducing its own rental service as part of Project Earth. Image courtesy of Selfridges

Finally, Selfridges has created a new Repairs Concierge, which will be available for in-store and virtual consultations. This service will allow Selfridges experts to identify what repairs are needed to bring life to shoppers' favorite, well-worn pieces.

The final component to Project Earth is "mindsets," through which Selfridges will work with partners and customers to continue to keep sustainability at the forefront of the business.

As part of this goal, Selfridges will encourage employees to volunteer on environmental causes and host talks this fall covering sustainability issues. Selfridges' partners include the World Wildlife Fund, Global Fashion Agenda and Positive Luxury.

A summary for Project Earth goes into further details about the climate benchmarks Selfridges hopes to achieve. The retailer also expands on its commitments on specific materials, including cotton, feathers, palm oil and plastic.

"Selfridges has the platform to change how shopping is done wrapped up in the destinations, experiences and inspiration customers want from us," said Anne Pitcher, global managing director of Selfridges Group, in a statement. "And the tough, stretching targets we have set ourselves underpin our commitment to change our business and our ambition to imagine and create a sustainable future for our customers."

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