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Kind: captions If you've ever seen a shopping haul or unboxing video, you know that America loves to shop. I did some shopping. You know, I haven't really uploaded a haul on this channel in a really long time, but to be honest, the shopping never stopped. Shopping has never been easier. We no longer have to go to a store during limited hours, stalk the aisles looking for a product, and then wait in check-out lines. Now with the click of a button, we have the freedom to shop for anything, anywhere, and at any time. Every day is Christmas if you buy yourself stuff online. Products are cheaper than ever, despite having to travel across the world to get to us. Which means we often buy things without a second thought. These are three dollars. Uno, dos, tres. I will buy one, because why the hell not. What's the last thing you bought online? The last thing I bought online was a milk frother for my Nespresso coffee machine. I think I bought five pairs of jeans, leggings and sweatpants. Shoes, a pair of shoes. So, you get a dopamine hit when you buy something; it's kind of this pleasure of 'oh i'm buying something, that's fun', but with online shopping you get that dopamine hit when it arrives too, and when you open it, so it's kind of this double benefit. And so it's actually more fun, in some ways, biologically than buying things in the store. This biological compulsion to shop is partly due to the way humans are wired. So, there is an evolutionary aspect to this... The people that had the most stuff were most likely to survive, so you gather a lot of food for the winter, you gather a lot of wood for your shelter, and we still have that innate desire to get enough stuff, to make sure that we're going to survive. Today, despite being surrounded by abundance, Americans are still collecting ever more stuff. In 2017, we spent 240 billion on goods like jewelry, watches, luggage, books and phones, twice as much as in 2002, even though our population only grew by 13% during that time. Our spending on personal care items like lotions and makeup also doubled over that time. So we're spending 20% more on clothes than we were in 2000. The average American buys 66 garments a year, which is insane. And we're even spending more on electronics, which is really interesting, because electronics are actually cheaper than they used to be. So the dollar amount that we're spending is going up, even though the cost of things is going down. And now that we do a lot of our shopping online, returning things has become more of a hassle. One survey found that nine out of ten shoppers said they never or rarely return online purchases. And part of this is because things are so cheap, you think, is it really worth \$5 of my time to print out the label and go to the post office and send it back when I'm really not gonna get that much money back? Why not just keep this and maybe I'll use it eventually. Most things that I buy online I feel like I don't wind up using. A waffle maker, yeah, for college. And I never used it. It's probably still in the box in my basement at home. Yeah, I mean, like lipsticks. I buy clothes a lot, and a lot of times I'm too lazy to return them. So where does all this stuff go? Well, a lot of it just becomes clutter in our ever-expanding homes. The average square footage of houses in the U.S. rose by 23% in the last two decades, while the number of storage facilities doubled. It's become very easy to donate our unwanted goods to thrift stores, which makes us feel better about getting rid of our stuff. But it's estimated that most of the clothes we donate actually end up in landfills. The average American throws away an estimated 81 pounds of clothes and textiles each year, nearly 5 times more than in 1980. We collectively threw away 26 million tons of plastics in 2015, and only 9% got recycled. Consumers continue to want cheaper goods. This means that manufacturers have to cut costs and create lower quality products So you know, you'll buy cheap clothes from H&M and they'll lose their shape after a wash or two, or you'll even buy

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appliances and where they used to last for 10 years, they last for 3 years. This can't continue. In 20 years, the global middle class is expected to grow by 3 billion people. And we're on track to double the material resources we use by 2060. We're running out of places to put all this trash. By the middle of this century, the amount of plastic items in our oceans will be greater than the number of fish. And this is actually becoming a problem because China is starting to say 'we're not gonna take your junk anymore', So all these landfills across America are going to have to figure out what they're going to do with all this stuff that people are throwing away. Where does that leave us? The movie Wall-E predicted a bleak future where humans filled their planet with so much trash that they had to abandon it for another one. Some consumers are trying to reverse this trend, taking part in growing movements like zero-waste households. To me, living zero-waste means that I don't make any trash. Or capsule wardrobes. The rule of thumb is to go down to about 36 items in your closet. Or doing a 'year-of-no-shopping'. It was just about not buying things, unless I absolutely needed it. Or minimalism. Some consumers are using their buying power to encourage companies to create more sustainable products. I should pay people a fair wage, and support companies that like. But beyond individual choices we could look for a more encompassing solution. Right now we make, use and then trash all of our materials, which can take a thousand years to biodegrade. Companies could design all of our goods for re-use and to have multiple life-cycles before finally composting back into the earth. We could start with clothing: nearly 100% of our fabrics could be recycled into pulp and turned into new textiles. Otherwise, if nothing changes, let's hope we can make it to Mars in time.