



Aotearoa's

# Circular Economy Report

## Trade Me and the circular economy

Everytime you buy, sell, swap, rent or give away a secondhand item, you're contributing to the circular economy.

Over the past 24 years, Trade Me has helped millions of Kiwi buy and sell in a way that's profitable for both their wallets and the planet.

The circular economy is at the core of our DNA. Legend has it that our site was born when our founder, Sam Morgan, couldn't find a secondhand heater for his chilly Wellington flat in 1999. A lot has changed since then, but one thing that has remained is Aotearoa's love of listing, selling, bidding and buy now-ing their way to a bargain.

Today, there are 1.2 million secondhand items on Trade Me at any one time, with 650,000 Kiwi from all around the country wheeling, dealing and turning trash into treasure every single day.

Lisa Stewart, Head of Trade Me Marketplace



### What is the circular economy?

According to New Zealand's Ministry for the Environment, a circular economy - or ōhanga āmiomio, "keeps resources in use for as long as possible, extracting the maximum value from them and then recovering, and regenerating their products, and materials at the end of their life."

1.  Design out waste and pollution
2.  Keep products and materials in use
3.  Regenerate natural systems

We're proud to provide Aotearoa with a safe and trusted platform that gives items a second chance, and keeps products and materials in use. From sneakers to spa pools, in 2022 we helped give over **six million** secondhand items a new lease on life.

What is it?

## Our Circular Economy Report

In 2019 we released our first report on New Zealand's circular economy, looking at where, how, and why Kiwi were buying, selling and trading their secondhand items.

We're now in our fourth year of developing this report. Over time we've seen the market grow immensely, with millions of Kiwi embracing buying and selling preowned to save money and look after the planet.

This year we have made the decision to change the name of our report, from Trade Me's Secondhand Economy Report, to **Trade Me's Circular Economy Report**. We believe this better reflects the breadth and depth of our report as it stands today.

Survey methodology: This survey was conducted by Trade Me's UXR (User Experience Research) team during November 2022 and collates answers from 4,003 individual New Zealand-based respondents. Respondents were externally recruited (via Dynata) to avoid any potential Trade Me membership bias and the survey was written from a platform-agnostic perspective (not 'from Trade Me'). The survey was also sent out via a third party (Dynata).

4,000 New Zealanders



This report brings together the responses of over 4,000 Kiwi to capture what Aotearoa's Circular Economy looks like today.

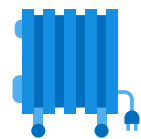


# Our circular economy today

**\$5 billion\***

## \$5b hiding in NZ households

Our research shows that there is around **\$5 billion** worth of preloved items that could be sold across Aotearoa.



**3 out of 4** Kiwi have items they could sell, and on average they have **21 items**



Based on the average selling price of used items on Trade Me, every Kiwi could make **\$1,400** by offloading their preloved goods



There are approximately **80 million items** around the country that could be sold for cash



**86%** of Kiwi have bought something secondhand in the past six months



That's **466** bottles of milk



**127** blocks of cheese



**A year's worth** of takeaway coffees

## Kiwi could make \$1,400

According to our survey findings, three out of four New Zealanders have at least 21 items they no longer use or need. Based on the average selling price of items sold on Trade Me, that means Kiwi could make approximately **\$1,400** by selling the unwanted stuff sitting in their cupboards, wardrobes and garages. That's up \$200 since 2019!

**\$1,400**

\*Based on the average value of unwanted items respondents to our survey had, multiplied by the NZ population.

## What exactly do we have to sell?

In the past six months, almost half of us (46%) have sold at least one used item. And overall, we're pretty pleased with the outcome. 90% said they were happy with the price they got.

So, what is it that we've got to sell?

Kiwi say that clothing, shoes & accessories, home & living, and books, CDs & DVDs are the most common things they have around their house to offload.

On average Kiwi have:



Clothing items



Books, CDs & DVDs

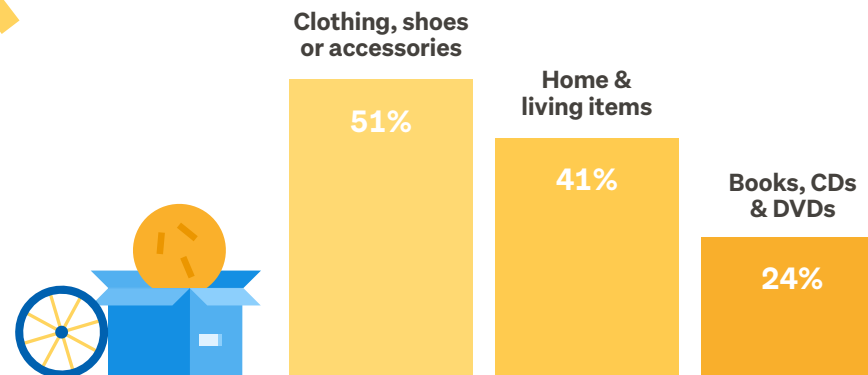


Home & living items

that they no longer use or need.

# Up for grabs

The most common items Kiwi have to offload are:



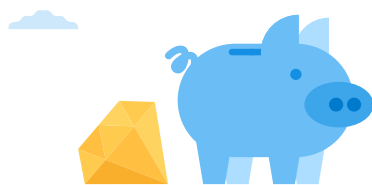
\* Based on the 75% of respondents that said they have items to sell

## Turning trash to cash

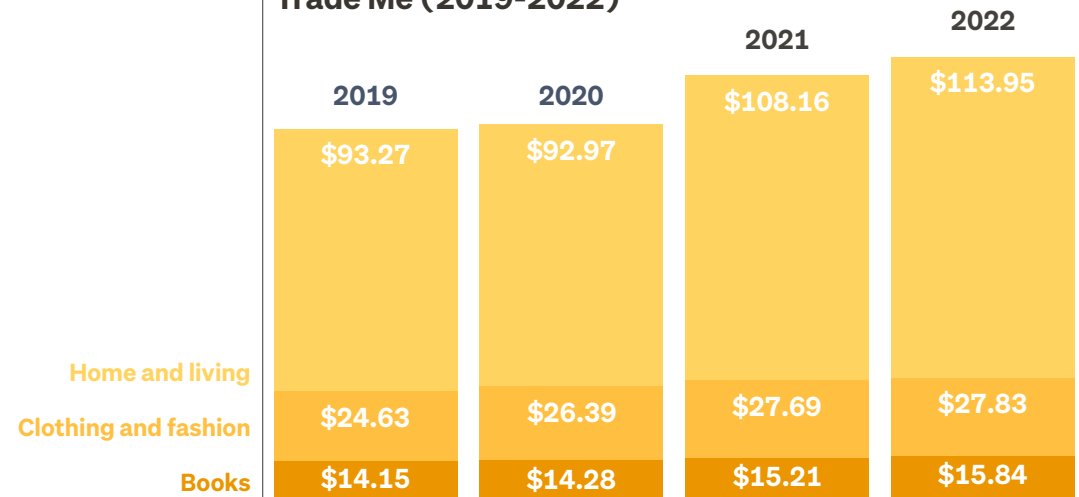
Kiwi now stand to make more when they sell their secondhand stuff. The average sale price of preowned items on Trade Me has seen a marked increase over the past few years.

Based on the average selling price of used items on Trade Me, Kiwi could make \$1,400 by offloading their secondhand goods.

**\$1,400 better off**



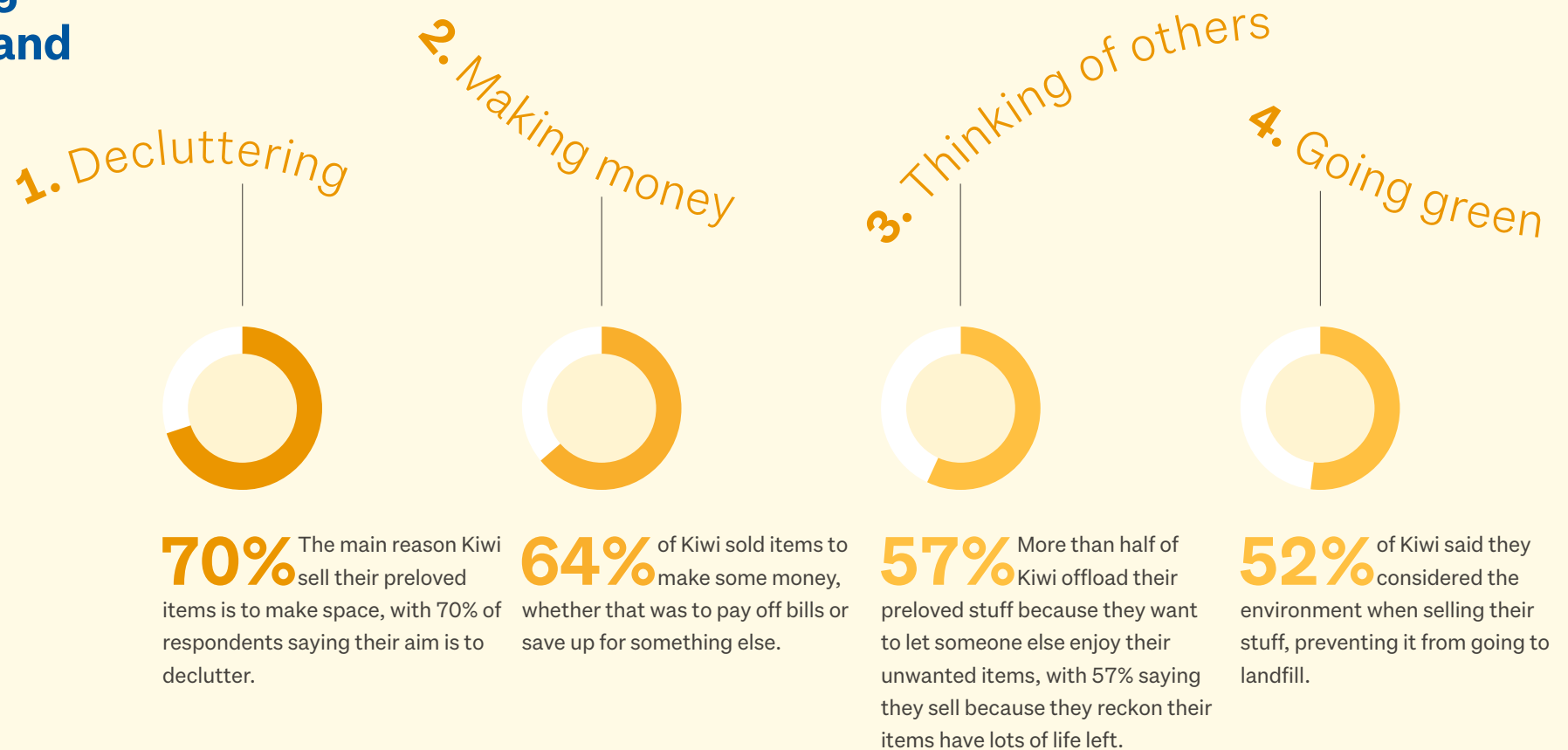
Average sale price of used items on Trade Me (2019-2022)



## Our motivations for selling secondhand

When it comes to why we sell our items, our research shows a number of factors come into play.

The top four reasons Kiwi said they sell their secondhand stuff:



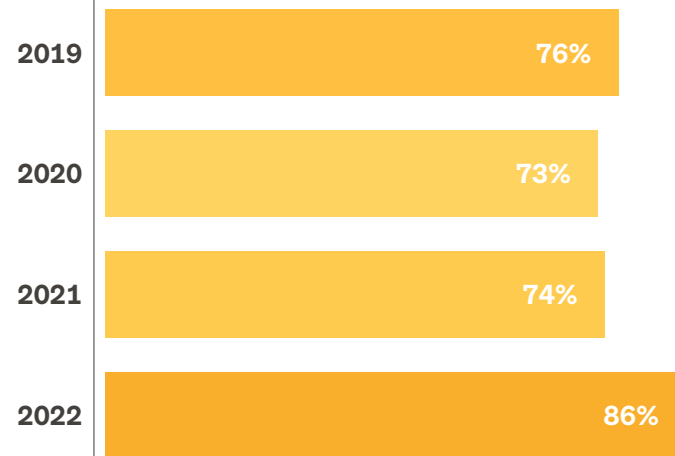
## How do New Zealanders feel about buying secondhand?

Our research shows the majority of Kiwi are big fans of the circular economy, with 86% of respondents saying they've bought something preloved in the last six months. This marks a 10% increase when compared with 2019.

Kiwi say they are stoked with these purchases, too. 84% of respondents told us they feel proud of their secondhand stuff, compared with just 7% who said they feel embarrassed about not buying new.

Just 2% of respondents said they definitely wouldn't buy secondhand.

Percentage of Kiwi that have bought secondhand items in the past six months:



Stoked!



84% of Kiwis are proud of buying secondhand





## Why do we buy secondhand?

Our research found Kiwi shop secondhand for many reasons, but there were a few themes that stood out for them:

### 1. Finding something unique



The thrill of the chase is alive and well. **65%** of Kiwi reckon that buying secondhand lets them get something unique.

“I really like buying something with character which you only get by buying something secondhand.”

### 2. Shopping green



More than half of Kiwi (**54%**) say they consider the impact of their purchases on the environment, and shopping secondhand is a more sustainable option.

“I’m mindful of what I bring into my house, to save money and to reduce waste.”

### 3. Saving money



**40%** of Kiwi say they’re buying more secondhand items than they did before to combat the rising cost of living.

“Items can be found cheaper and there are some gems you can find!”

## Who buys and sells secondhand the most?

A growing number of Kiwi are getting behind the circular economy, but our research shows there are some who are more into it than most.

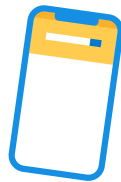
# Top buyers



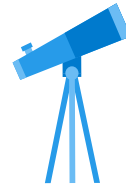
**Women** were more likely to have bought secondhand in the last six months, with 88% saying they had compared with 82% men.



**South Islanders** were slightly more likely to buy used, with 75% saying they would consider it compared with 73% in the North Island.



**Kiwi in the regions** are more likely to consider secondhand (81%) than city dwellers (72%).



Age comes into play in a big way, with 93% per cent of **Gen Zers** having shopped secondhand in the past six months, compared with 65% of those 75 years+.

# Big sellers



**50%** of Kiwi **under 40-years-old** said they sell their preowned items, while of those aged over 40, just 37% said they would.



**49%** Half of the **women** we surveyed said they would sell their used items compared with just 39% of men.



**48%** of those **living in cities** sell their used items, which is 5% higher than the percentage living in the regions.

# The circular economy and the rising cost of living

2022 was a tough year for many, with rising costs seeing Kiwi tighten their belts and cut costs wherever they could.

Our research shows that the rising cost of living is seeing more Kiwi get involved in the circular economy to help combat inflating expenses.

“It’s cheaper and in these times it makes sense to save where I can”



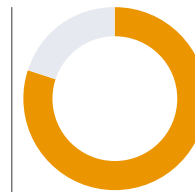
**40%** of people agree that the rising cost of living has made them buy more secondhand items than they did before



**57%** of people agree that the rising cost of living has made them consider buying or selling secondhand more often



**74%** of respondents would consider buying secondhand which is a **2% increase** when compared with 2021



**80%** of respondents agree that saving money is a key reason they would consider buying secondhand. That's **up 8%** on 2021

Home truths

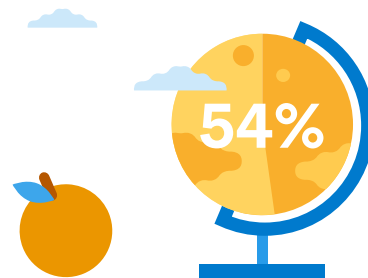


## Full circle for the planet

As we've seen in previous years, going green continued to be a huge motivator to buying secondhand in 2022, with 54% of Kiwi saying that they consider the environmental impact of their purchases. When we compare that to 2021, that's up 6%.

Caring for our planet is also a big reason why Kiwi sell their preloved items, with 52% of respondents saying they sell these items to avoid them ending up in landfill.

47% of Kiwi say they've changed the way they shop to be more environmentally friendly, while 62% are more likely to reuse or repair items now than they were two years ago.



54% of Kiwi say they consider the environmental impact of their purchases, up 6% on 2021.

Aroha ki te whenua

“I give far greater thought to the environment and sustainability now than I ever used too.”

“I am more aware than ever of my actions on the planet. If I can buy something secondhand it is better for all.”



South Islanders are slightly more concerned about the environmental impact of their shopping, with 56% saying it's on their mind compared with 53% in the North Island.

More than half of females have changed the way they shop to be more environmentally friendly, compared with 38% of males.

## Trade Me's commitment to sustainability

We're proud to have been offsetting our carbon emissions since 2014.

In 2022 we took this a step further by completing [Oxygen Consulting's Carbon Neutral Accreditation programme](#). To do this we went through the vigorous process of identifying and measuring our key emissions sources. We then set our sights on the future and made carbon reduction targets for the next few years in line with international standards. We have also committed to offsetting any of our remaining emissions at the end of each year.

We did this as we believe it's important for us to do our part to make sure Aotearoa is a great place to live for generations to come.



Kaitiakitanga

## Conclusion

Since we opened our virtual doors nearly 24 years ago, we're proud of the part we have played in enabling Aotearoa's circular economy by providing Kiwi with a safe and trusted online marketplace.

With our circular economy now valued at a whopping \$5 billion, it's clear that New Zealand is serious about extending the life of their items.

In recent months, the rising cost of living has seen a growing number of Kiwi opt for secondhand to offload the things they no longer want to make some cash.

And with the added benefit of looking after the planet, buying and selling preowned is a no-brainer. From what we're seeing, we reckon the circular economy is only going to grow in years to come.

If you haven't already, we encourage you to jump onboard and join the vast majority of Kiwi getting involved in the circular economy.

Round round, baby



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