THE REPAIR REVOLUTION

Fix it or buy a new one?

CEFR: A2 · Elementary | **Speaking goal:** Name problems, talk about simple repair skills and choose what to do with a broken item.

01 TALK FIRST

1. What is the oldest thing you use every week?

2. Can you sew on a button or fix a small problem at home?

3. What skill do you wish you knew?

02 READ / Can we fix it?

Mia has an old blue jacket. She likes it, but the zip is broken. A new jacket costs 65 euros. A new zip costs 12 euros. What should she do?

Many years ago, people often repaired clothes and household objects. They sewed buttons on shirts and fixed chairs. Some people still do these things, but others buy something new when an object breaks.

Today, new things can be cheap. Repairs sometimes cost a lot of money. People are also busy, and not everyone knows how to repair things. Some broken objects are difficult or unsafe to fix at home.

In a Repair Café, people bring broken things and volunteers try to help. They can also show visitors how to use tools or sew. Not every object can be repaired, but people can learn useful skills.

What about old clothes? A small hole does not always mean the end of a T-shirt. You can sew it or ask for help. Using a favourite shirt for longer can save money and reduce waste.

Mia decides to repair the zip. She wants to wear her jacket again. What can you repair? What would you like to learn?

03 VOCABULARY / Match the words and meanings

The definitions are mixed. Write the matching letter beside each word.

1. broken	**A.** things we throw away or do not use
2. fix	**B.** a person who helps without being paid
3. repair	**C.** an object you use to make or repair something
4. zip	**D.** use a needle and thread to join cloth
5. sew	**E.** the part that opens and closes a jacket or bag
6. tool	**F.** fix something that is damaged
7. volunteer	**G.** make something work again
8. waste	**H.** not working or damaged

USE THE WORDS / Complete the sentences

1. My coat has a _____ that does not close.

2. This chair is _____; one leg is missing.

3. We can _____ this shirt with a needle and thread.

4. The café has a _____ who helps people for free.

Make it yours: use two expressions in your own opinion.

04 READ BETWEEN THE LINES

1. What is wrong with Mia's jacket?

A) It is too small

B) The zip is broken

C) It is dirty

2. How much is a new jacket?

A) 12 euros

B) 25 euros

C) 65 euros

3. Who helps people at a Repair Café?

A) Volunteers

B) Only shop owners

C) Only teachers

4. Why might people buy something new?

A) Repairs can cost a lot

B) Nothing can be fixed

C) Old clothes are illegal

05 WATCH / Optional short classroom video

How to sew on a button · seweeasy

Watch a short excerpt (up to 3 minutes). Stop and predict the next step.

Open the original video

Before: Look at your clothes. Can you see a button? Have you ever lost one?

During: Watch how the person uses the needle, thread and button. Name three things you see.

After: Would you like to try this? Tell a partner one skill you want to learn.

If video is unavailable: A shirt loses a button. A person uses a needle and thread to sew it back on. The shirt is ready to wear again.

06 SAY WHAT YOU REALLY THINK

1. Do you repair clothes or buy new ones?

2. Who is good at fixing things in your family?

3. Which broken things should you never try to repair without an expert?

4. Is it better to buy one strong bag or three cheap bags?

5. Would you visit a Repair Café?

6. What skill do you wish you knew?

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07 GROUP DECISION / The repair-or-replace shop

Your group has 80 euros. A jacket zip costs 12 euros to repair or 65 euros to replace. A chair costs 20 euros to repair or 45 euros to replace. Choose what to do and explain why.

Customer

You like your old things. You want to save money.

Repair helper

You can repair the jacket and chair. Explain the prices.

Friend

You want things that are safe and work well.

Final outcome: Agree on a plan for both objects. Say how much money you spend and give two reasons.

Useful expressions

• It is broken.

• We can fix it.

• It costs ... euros.

• I prefer ... because ...

• Let's repair / replace ...

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08 KEEP EXPLORING / Read & Watch More

These are optional resources to explore after class, not compulsory homework.

READ · A2+ · 5 min: Repair Café International

Explore a community approach to sharing practical repair skills.

WATCH · B1+ · Short video: BBC News: a Repair Café

Meet volunteers keeping small household objects in use.

Think about it: What could you learn to fix?

SOURCES BEHIND THE READING

Original English reading, informed by these primary references. The legal measures cover specified products, not every item.

European Commission - right to repair (2026)

Council of the EU - repair rights explained

US education statistics - Home Economics history

More ideas? Suggest a topic at https://bilingually-curious.pages.dev/suggest/

TEACHER NOTES / THE REPAIR REVOLUTION

A2 · Elementary · Complete 60-minute plan

TEACHING GOAL

Name problems, talk about simple repair skills and choose what to do with a broken item.

SEQUENCE / 60 minutes

Warm-up and useful skills	7 min
Read and identify problems	10 min
Vocabulary and sentences	9 min
Comprehension	6 min
Very short video or mime activity	5 min
Partner discussion	11 min
Repair-or-replace group task	10 min
Exit sentence	2 min

ANSWER KEY / Comprehension

1. B) The zip is broken. The first paragraph says the zip is broken.

2. C) 65 euros. The new jacket costs 65 euros.

3. A) Volunteers. The text names volunteers.

4. A) Repairs can cost a lot. The article explains that repairs may be expensive.

ANSWER KEY / Vocabulary

Matching: 1H, 2G, 3F, 4E, 5D, 6C, 7B, 8A

1. zip

2. broken

3. sew

4. volunteer

DIFFERENTIATION & FACILITATION

Support: Pre-teach zip, needle, thread and broken with objects or pictures. Keep prices visible. Model 'I can fix ...' and 'I wish I could ...'. Students may say 'I want to learn ...' instead.

Stretch: Ask students to compare total costs and explain when safety or quality matters more than price.

No-video option: A shirt loses a button. A person uses a needle and thread to sew it back on. The shirt is ready to wear again.

Extra ten minutes: Draw a broken household object and label the problem, a possible repair and a safe person to ask.

FACT CHECKING & CULTURAL NOTES

The EU right-to-repair measures apply to specified covered products, not all goods. The product-duty repair need not be free; legally defined warranty remedies are separate. Requirements concerning misleading durability claims came into application in September 2026.

Traditional US Home Economics and Shop classes varied by place and period. Comparable modern subjects still exist. Spain has Technology and vocational education, but no universal identical subject.

SOURCE LINKS / Primary and official

European Commission: right-to-repair rules (31 July 2026)

Council of the EU: what the right to repair covers

European Commission: durability, green claims and consumer rights

European Commission: smartphone repairability and software rules

US education statistics: historical Home Economics & Industrial Arts courses

Spain's Ministry of Education: secondary curriculum

External videos are linked for optional classroom use, not copied or redistributed. Review availability, captions and running time before teaching.