

Behind the Label



Where is your clothing made? Fill this table in with clothes that you are wearing, from your own closet, or share information with class-mates.

Type of clothing	Brand Name	Country where made	Continent

Ideal Working Conditions
If I worked in a factory making clothes or shoes...
 I would be paid: \$ _____/hour (be realistic)
 I would work ____ days a week
 I would work ____ hours a day

Look at the table “Sweatshop Profiles” of factories in China.

List the names of companies or labels that you have heard of before:

What percentage of your ideal wage are workers in the Nike Shoe factory earning?

How many hours a week, are Nike Shoe workers working more than your ideal?

Let’s say that it takes a Nike worker 2 hours to assemble a pair of shoes. How

much does that worker get paid to make your \$120.00 pair of shoes?
Why do you think the shoes cost \$120.00?

What are some of the worst working conditions in the “Conditions” column?

1.	3.
2.	4.

Why do you think companies like *Nike*, *Wal-Mart* and *Adidas* choose to make their clothes and other products outside of North America, and then import them?

How do you feel about wearing products made in a “sweatshop”? Explain.



Table 9.3. Sweatshop Profiles

Company / Label	Factory in China	Wages per Hour	Hours per Week	Conditions
Wal-Mart/Kathie Lee handbags	Liang Shi Handbag Factory	\$0.13 to \$0.23	60-70; 10-hour shifts; 6-7 days a week	No factory fire exits; dirty, cramped dorms, 10 to a room; for 70 hours a week, warehouse workers earn \$3.44; no benefits; no legal work contract; workers have never heard of a Code of Conduct
Wal-Mart/Kathie Lee handbags	Ya Li Handbag, Ltd.	\$0.18 to \$0.28	60; plus overtime up to 16-hour shifts	Forced overtime—stiff fines for refusal; overtime premium of 2 1/2 cents an hour; some workers not paid 3-4 months; 12 to a dorm room; no benefits, no work contract; never heard of a Code of Conduct
Wal-Mart/Kathie Lee	Li Wen Factory	\$0.20 to \$0.35	84; 12-hour shifts; 7 days a week; mandatory 24-hour shifts during rush times	Forced overtime, severe fines for refusal to comply; no benefits, no overtime rate; no fire exits in dormitories; no work contract; workers have never heard of a Code of Conduct
Wal-Mart	Tianjin Yuhua Garment Factory	\$0.23	60	Wal-Mart is pulling out of this factory and other large publicly owned plants in the north to relocate its work to unregulated lower-wage privately owned sweatshops in the south of China
Ann Taylor and Preview	Kang Yi Fashion Manufacturers	\$0.14	96; 7 days a week; 7 a.m. to midnight	Workers have never heard of a Code of Conduct; 6 to 10 workers in dorm rooms
Ralph Lauren, Ellen Tracy/Linda Allard	Iris Fashions	\$0.20	72-80; 12- to 15-hour shifts; 6 days a week	No union; workers paid a \$0.06 an hour premium for overtime; paid \$0.02 for each shirt collar sewn
Esprit Label (Esprit Group)	You Li Fashion Factory	\$0.13	93; 7:30 a.m. to midnight; 7 days a week	No overtime pay; no benefits; sometimes employees need to work 24-hour shifts; 6 to 8 people to a dorm room; dorm is dark and dirty; workers afraid; under constant surveillance; never heard of a corporate Code of Conduct
Liz Claiborne and Bugle Boy	Shanghai Shirt 2d Factory	\$0.25	66; 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.; 6 days a week	Employees fined if they don't work overtime; no union
Liz Claiborne	Shanghai Jiang District Silk Fashions Ltd.	\$0.28	60-70; 11.5-hour shift; 6 days a week	
J.C. Penney	Zhong Mei Garment Factory	\$0.18	78; 11-hour shifts; 7 days a week	No union; no benefits; workers have never heard of J.C. Penney Corporate Code of Conduct
Kmart	Shanghai No.4 Shirt Factory	\$0.28	70	
Cherokee Jeans	Meiming Garment Factory	\$0.24	60-70	No benefits; workers have never heard of monitoring; 8 to a dorm room
Sears	Tianjin Beifang Garment Factory	\$0.28	60	Sears is pulling out to relocate its production in lower-wage, unregulated sweatshops in the south
Structure/The Limited	Aoda Garment Factory	\$0.32	70	No union; 6 workers to a dorm room
Nike Athletic Shoes	Wellco Factory	\$0.16	77-84; 11- to 12-hour shifts; 7 days a week	Workers fined if they refuse to work overtime; overtime rate not paid; most had no legal work contract; humiliation, screaming, some corporal punishment; arbitrary fining of pregnant women and older (25 years old and up) women; fines if talking at work; approximately 10 children in the sewing section; most workers have never heard of Nike's Code of Conduct
Nike and Adidas Athletic Shoes	Yue Yuen Factory	\$0.19	60-84	Forced overtime, no overtime premium paid; excessive noise pollution, fumes in the factory; no worker had heard of Nike or Adidas Corporate Code of Conduct
Adidas Garments	Tung Tat Garment Factory	\$0.22	75-87.5; 12.5-hour shifts; 6 or 7 days a week	Employees fined if late/resting/found talking; forced morning calisthenics; 8 workers to a dorm room

Source: "Company Profiles/Working Conditions: Factories in China Producing Goods for Export to the U.S.," "Made in China: Behind the Label," Charles Kernaghan of the National Labor Committee, March 1998. Wages are in U.S. dollars.