

Small Changes, Big Impact

Simple steps to reduce your footprint

Questions to ask yourself before purchasing something new:

- Is it used? If it's new, is it necessary to buy it new?
- Do I need it?
- How long will I need it for?
- Can I borrow it from someone else?
- Is it reusable?
- Is it package free?
- Can I find a replacement that's cheaper or more sustainable?
- What does its end of life look like? Is it compostable?
- Is it made well? Is it high quality and not likely to easily fall apart and become trash? Does the company stand behind its quality by offering a guarantee?

Online zero waste shops:

[Packaged Free Shop](#)
[Wild Minimalist](#)
[Zero Waste Store](#)
[Eco Roots](#)
[No Tox Life](#)
[Life Without Plastic](#)
[...and more](#)

From Hope Armstrong's project, [Earth Lover](#)

In the kitchen

Instead of...	Try...	✓
Paper towels	Cloth rags (even old tshirts!). Recycled paper towels packaged without plastic. Unpaper towels . Reusable paper towel rolls that are compostable. A sponge cloth .	
Dish sponge	Natural sponges that can be reused countless times and are 100% biodegradable. Dish brush made of wood with a replaceable head. Reusable dish rags that can be thrown in the laundry and reused.	
Harmful kitchen cleaners	Make your own cleaning spray or purchase one that EWG recommends . (Beware of "greenwashing" from brands like Method and Green Works that claim to be eco friendly yet receive poor ratings from EWG.)	
Harmful dishwashing detergent	If You Care Dishwasher Tablets or Dropps Dishwasher Detergent Pods that are plant-based and biodegradable and come in recyclable boxes.	
Dish soap in plastic	Vegan Solid Dish Washing Block from No Tox Life with a biodegradable scrub brush or pot scrubber .	
Hand soap in plastic	Bulk liquid soap from a bulk store in a foaming glass/metal dispenser , or soap bars such as Dr. Bronner's castile soap bars .	
Throwing out tons of food	Buy your food intentionally and freeze food or leftovers when you've over-purchased. Instead of tossing unused food in the trash, compost your food.	
Kcups or disposable coffee filters	Try a percolator, French press, or Chemex with a Coffee Sock . If you have a Keurig, opt for their reusable plastic / mesh pods and add your own coffee grounds.	
Plastic trash bags	Biodegradable trash bags.	
Sandwich bags	Reusable silicone bags that are dishwasher safe and heat safe.	
Plastic wrap	Reusable bee's wax food wraps (vegan options are available, too).	
Tea bags	Loose leaf tea (bought in bulk) with a tea infuser or compostable tea bags.	
Packaged snacks	Make your own snacks! Granola, Chips, Chickpeas etc.	

On the go

Instead of...	Try...	✓
Straw	Reusable metal or bamboo straw or avoid a straw all together. There are even bubble tea straws .	
Plastic water bottle	Bring your own reusable water bottle.	
Coffee cups, lids and sleeves	Bring your own reusable mug or thermos.	
Plastic single-use cutlery	Bring your own utensils or try to find compostable disposables whenever possible (although these come with their own problems).	
Take out containers	Bring your own Tupperware or stainless steel container .	
Throwing out tons of food	Buy your food intentionally and freeze food or leftovers when you've over purchased. Instead of tossing unused food in the trash, compost your food.	
Take out bags or grocery bags	Bring your own reusable bag.	

Grocery shopping

Instead of...	Try...	✓
Packaged foods	Shop in the bulk section whenever possible (there's no packaging, less food waste, it's generally cheaper); shop at a local farmer's market	
Plastic bags on produce	Bring a reusable bag or don't bag your produce at all (you're going to wash it anyways!) Stores like Trader Joe's are notorious for wrapping vegetables in plastic unnecessarily	
Grocery bags	Bring your own reusable bag. A tote, string bag , or mesh produce bag does the trick.	

Clothing shopping

Instead of...	Try...	✓
Buying new	Buy secondhand: thrift or consignment stores, or online on websites like ThredUp, Tradesy, Depop, Ebay, Etsy and Poshmark.	
Synthetic fibers such as polyester, rayon, nylon, acrylic, spandex	Natural fibers such as cotton, hemp and linen, or purchase from a brand who uses recycled materials (such as Girlfriend who up-cycles water bottles and fishing nets into activewear, Sunki who turns recycled plastic into sunglasses, and Patagonia who's been using recycled materials in their gear for years.)	
Tossing old clothing	Find recycling programs (Marine Layer's ReSpun , Madewell's partnership with Blue Jeans Go Green , etc.). Donate to a local shelter (look for women's shelters or homeless shelters). ThredUp's Clean Out Bag program will let you send in your old clothing for free, pay you up front or once your clothing sells, and will send unaccepted items to their textile recycling partners to repurpose into new products. Revitalize clothing you have by mending or tailoring it. While donating clothing is great, many places like Goodwill are at max capacity for donations. Only about 20% of Americans' used clothing ends up being sold at secondhand retail outlets or thrift stores!	

In the bathroom

Instead of...	Try...	✓
Toilet paper wrapped in plastic	<u>Recycled toilet paper</u> packaged without plastic.	
Deodorant	<u>Schmidt's Natural Deodorant</u> in glass, <u>Meow Meow Tweet's</u> compostable deodorant stick or <u>glass jar</u> , or <u>make your own</u> .	
Face toner	<u>Make your own</u> from essential oils.	
Face wipes to remove makeup	<u>Reusable facial cleaning pads</u> .	
Makeup remover	Coconut oil or jojoba oil package in glass jars.	
Face wash	<u>Olive oil soap bars</u> .	
Tissues	Old-fashioned handkerchiefs. <u>Recycled paper tissues</u> packaged without plastic.	
Disposable razor and blades	<u>Stainless steel safety razor</u> .	
Shaving cream in plastic	<u>Homemade shaving cream</u> .	
Shampoo and conditioner bottles	<u>Shampoo and conditioner bars</u> or try the <u>apple cider vinegar and baking soda method</u> .	
Body lotion	<u>Shea butter bars</u> .	
Pads and tampons	<u>Menstrual cup</u> or <u>washable pads</u> .	
Toothpaste	<u>Solid toothpaste</u> in glass or make your own.	
Floss	<u>Biodegradable floss</u> in a <u>refillable glass container</u> .	
Drug store makeup	A makeup brand with strong ethics and an environmentally friendly mindset and sustainable packaging such as <u>Elate</u> (and donate old mascara wands to <u>Wands for Wildlife</u>).	
Plastic makeup brushes	Bamboo brushes.	

In the laundry room

Instead of...	Try...	✓
Laundry detergent in plastic	<u>DIY laundry detergent</u> , <u>Dropps detergent pods</u> in compostable packaging, or <u>Biokleen Laundry Liquid</u> . Wash with a <u>GuppyFriend bag</u> , <u>CoraBall</u> or another <u>microfiber helper</u> to trap microplastics and microfibers.	
Washing with warm water	Wash your clothes with cold water which lessens the amount of microfibers released.	
Dryer sheets	<u>Wool dryer balls</u> — they soften laundry and reduce drying time!	