



SIMPLE STEPS FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE LIFE

REDUCE

Our planet's resources are limited, so we need to use them wisely and reduce the amount of waste we produce. It is estimated that about one third of all food is wasted. Nearly 50% of all plastics are used just once. Only about 9% of plastic produced so far has been recycled, which means the remaining 91% litters the planet. You can have a real impact on the environment by reducing your consumption, wasting less food and cutting down on single use plastics.

REUSE

Try to limit the use of things that are only used once or just a few times. Make smarter purchases that will last longer. Repair or sell the things you do not need any longer or that are broken.



RECYCLE

Recycling is much better for the environment than sending waste to landfills. However, there is a limited number of times some materials can be recycled before they are incinerated or have to go to garbage dumps. Paper can be recycled 4-6 times. Glass, steel and aluminium can be recycled endlessly. Plastic can be recycled 7-9 times before it is no longer recyclable. Most black plastics and some other types of plastic cannot be recycled at all.

DO NOT WASTE FOOD

Between 33-50% of all food produced globally is wasted, and food waste is very bad for the environment. Huge areas of land are being deforested, and species are being driven to extinction to produce food that we just throw away. Apart from the wasted resources that were used to produce the uneaten food, when it goes to landfill, it decomposes and creates methane which contributes to global warming. Since more than 50% of food waste takes place in our homes, we can make a real difference by changing our habits. There are a number of steps we can take to stop wasting food.

BUY LESS

It is one of the simplest ways to reduce food waste. Check your fridge and cupboards and always make a shopping list to make sure you only buy the items that you need. Check the use-by dates when you buy food and eat it before it expires. Always think twice before throwing food away. Perhaps you can use a bunch of black bananas to make a banana cake, or cook soup using wilted vegetables? Today's dinner leftovers can be eaten the following day for lunch. Also, 'best before' dates can be confusing for consumers as many people assume these dates are expiry dates and throw out food that is still edible. It is estimated that up to 20% of food waste comes from the confusion over expiry dates.

ORGANIZE YOUR KITCHEN ON THE FIFO BASIS

It stands for 'first in, first out' and is a useful way to organize food at home. Place newly bought foods at the back of the cupboard or fridge and use the products in the front row first. Also, put the food that is closest to its expiry date at the front of the cupboard and use it first.

STORE FOOD PROPERLY

Most fruit and vegetables will last longer if you put them in the fridge. You can also freeze many food products and preserve them for later use.

EAT LOCAL AND SEASONAL FOOD

Choosing local and seasonal food helps the environment because transporting it from distant parts of the world contributes to carbon dioxide emissions and increases your carbon footprint.

USE REUSABLE SHOPPING BAGS

What if 7 billion people use only one plastic bag per day? Every day of the year? It's really a lot of plastic. It is estimated that around 1 million plastic bags are used every minute - and most of them are not recycled. Giving up plastic bags is a very easy thing to do and the benefits for the environment are huge. All you need to do is remember to take your reusable bags with you when you go shopping. Reusable bags are not just for groceries. Carry them for all your purchases, from electronics to clothing. Cotton or canvas bags are best!

REFUSE NEW BAGS AND REUSE THE ONES YOU HAVE

Make sure you really reuse your reusable bags. Even single use paper bags are not good for the environment because of their carbon footprint.

STOP BUYING BOTTLED WATER AND SUGARY DRINKS

The quality of tap water in Warsaw is very good, so there is no need to buy bottled water. This is one of the easiest ways to reduce plastic waste (and save money, too). And when you go out, keep a refillable bottle around. Choose reusable stainless steel bottles or stainless steel travel mugs as most plastic bottles may leak chemicals. Plus, it is not only about the plastic bottle. A lot of resources are used to produce and deliver the drinks to shops.

USE REUSABLE TEA/COFFEE CUPS

The paper cups sold in cafés are practically impossible to recycle because they contain a layer of plastic. Take your time and sit down in the café and drink your coffee from a porcelain mug. You can also bring your own cup if you are on the go.

SUPPORT BUSINESSES THAT CARE ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

Our shopping decisions make a difference, and it is said that we vote with our wallets. Thus make your purchases at stores which use less packaging and aim at reducing plastic waste. Spend your money at such places and recommend them to your family and friends. The more business they have, the more other companies will be motivated to change their business models.

BUY IN BULK

If you want to reduce the amount of unnecessary packaging, remember to bring your containers with you when shopping, and put your groceries directly in your cart or your own cotton bags instead of plastic bags.

STOP CHEWING GUM

Do you know that the chewing gum you buy is most likely plastic? The first gums were made from natural rubber. Then, synthetic rubber was created, and it replaced the natural rubber in most gums. So today you are probably chewing on toxic plastic.

CHOOSE CARDBOARD OVER PLASTIC

Look for items in cardboard boxes instead of plastic containers. This includes washing powder and dishwasher tablets. Pick pasta in a box instead of a plastic bag. Your choices can make a difference.

MAKE YOUR OWN HOUSEHOLD CLEANING PRODUCTS

They are easy to make, and a lot of recipes are available on the Internet. In most cases all you need to make them is salt, vinegar, baking soda and lemon juice or citric acid. The home-made products are also much healthier than the chemicals sold in stores.

SHOP WISELY

When you shop online, try to group your purchases to make sure they arrive in one delivery. Plan your meals in advance and only buy as much food as you really need. Avoid promo offers you will not be able to eat before they expire and end up in the bin.

EAT LESS MEAT

The world needs to cut down on meat consumption in order to be able to feed the growing population. It takes many kilograms of grain to produce one kilogram of meat, not to mention the carbon and methane emissions.

GO FOR PLASTIC-FREE GIFTS

Choose sustainable products as birthday presents. Experiences are more memorable than things.

PAY YOUR BILLS ELECTRONICALLY

Ask companies to send you electronic bills to reduce paper waste.

USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT, RIDE A BIKE OR WALK INSTEAD OF TAKING THE CAR

Whenever possible, travel by train instead of flying. Reduce inessential travel and spend your holidays domestically. There are lots of beautiful places in your country that are worth visiting.

SAVE ENERGY

Turn off the wireless router when you leave the house. Switch off the lights and electrical appliances when you do not need them. Use the lid on the pot while cooking - it saves around 60% of the energy. Use energy-saving light bulbs.

Pay attention to the energy rating of your household appliances such as the washing machine and dishwasher. When you buy new household equipment, check how much energy they use and choose the more economical options.

Turn down the heating and put on a sweater if you are a bit cold.

Do your laundry only when the washing machine is full. In most cases 30 degrees centigrade is enough to make sure your clothes are properly washed, and you can also save quite a lot of energy.

Open the window and air the room instead of turning on the air-conditioning.

REPAIR, SELL OR DONATE

Perhaps you can stitch up that hole in your sweater or have your shoes repaired?

Buy second-hand when possible. Sell furniture and equipment you no longer need instead of throwing it away. Donate clothes to charity. They can get a second life and be used by somebody else instead of going to a landfill.

BUY A BAMBOO TOOTHBRUSH OR ONE MADE OUT OF RECYCLED PLASTIC

Companies are starting to pay attention to the choices consumers make. Support and buy from companies that are doing their best to reduce plastics and use recycled materials.

USE NATURAL CLEANING CLOTHS AND SCRUBBERS INSTEAD OF PLASTIC ONES

Use natural cellulose sponges instead of synthetic ones, and cotton kitchen towels instead of paper towels. You can also use old clothing and towels to make cleaning rags. They are free and probably the greenest option of all.

SWITCH TO BAR SOAP INSTEAD OF LIQUID SOAP

Give up soap and shampoo in plastic bottles. You can also make your own natural hair conditioner. Egg yolk is said to be great for your hair and a lot of other ideas can be found on the Internet.

CHOOSE NATURAL FIBERS OVER SYNTHETICS AND AVOID FAST FASHION

Synthetic fabrics are made of plastic, and they are very difficult to recycle. Besides, as they are washed, they shed micro-plastics which are very bad for the marine life and may be harmful for humans. Avoid buying cheap garments that you are going to throw away soon and invest in quality clothes made of natural fabrics that will last longer.

BE A CITIZEN RATHER THAN A MINDLESS CONSUMER

We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we actually borrow it from our children. So get involved and help preserve the planet for the future generations.



**YOU DO NOT HAVE TO
DO EVERYTHING AT ONCE,
BUT YOU CAN GET STARTED**

Begin with the ideas that seem easy and doable
and that will make the most impact 😊

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