



LIVING GREEN:WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT CAN MEAN

Living Green means reducing to the greatest extent possible the carbon footprint that results from our every day lives. Virtually every product we buy or use has in some way generated greenhouse gas emissions or otherwise degraded the environment. Living Green is all about adopting practices that minimize that impact, either by using less or by changing our buying habits.

Using less is the first step, and awareness is key. Even products that may not be “green” can reduce the overall environmental impact depending on how they are used. We can reduce our carbon footprints with energy-efficiency measures and by adapting to environmentally responsible building design and construction, site planning, lifestyle and travel.

90 Ways To Go Green

1. Recycle. The energy saved by recycling one aluminum container will run a television for three hours. Recycling one glass bottle will save enough energy to light a 100 watt bulb for four hours
2. Buy products with no packaging or packaging you can reuse. Buy in bulk to avoid excess packaging.
3. Use materials with high post-consumer recycled content.
4. Bring your own recyclable bags to market.
5. Use reusable glass or metal containers for water. Do not purchase plastic bottled water.
6. Forego disposable plates, napkins and flatware, and use linens from organic, sustainable and fair trade sources. Launder them with eco-friendly detergent.
7. Switch to reusable coffee filters and supply your home and office with fair trade organic coffees and teas.
8. Wash and reuse plastic sandwich, snack and storage bags.
9. Bring your own mug or thermos to your favorite coffee spot.
10. Bring lunch to work or school in reusable containers.
11. Use compact fluorescent bulbs in lamps; they use less than a third of the electricity that incandescent bulbs do.
12. Recycle compact fluorescents, which contain mercury, through Osram Sylvania which offers its customers return packaging to prevent mercury from leaking

into the environment. The used packs can be dropped off at Fed Ex Kinko's locations or post offices.

13. If living or working in urban areas, lease or build your home or office where daily needs are easily accessible by walking, biking or public transportation.
14. Install a bike rack at your office and provide a place for employees to shower.
15. Have a non-smoking facility.
16. Take advantage of all square footage and install a green roof.
www.greenroofs.org
17. Capture rainwater to water your plants.
18. Install low-flow dual flushing toilets and waterless urinals.
19. Use low-flow sink faucets and showerheads.
20. Turn off the lights when you leave the room.
21. Shut off your computer and monitor when you're not using it.
22. Set the thermostat 78 degrees in summer and 65 degrees in winter.
23. Change heating system filters regularly.
24. Get a professional energy audit done at your home and at your business.
25. Know your local salvage yards and antique shops. Use them instead of new.
26. Don't always buy new, someone's trash may be your treasure – and vice-versa.
www.freecycle.org
27. Get off junk mail lists. www.directmail.com/directory/mail_preference/. A free website, www.catalogchoice.org lets consumers opt out of getting catalogues they don't want while keeping the ones that they do. Additional sites are: www.proquo.com; www.dmachoice.org (click on "Consumer Information"); and to eliminate credit card and insurance offers based on pre-approval, visit www.OptOutPrescreen.com.
28. Sign up for online banking and recurring bills to stop receiving paper statements.
29. Set up a recycling center at home and the office. Recycle glass, paper, newspaper, metals and cardboard. www.earth911.org/recycling/start-recycling-program/
30. Buy recycled office products including paper, toilet paper and envelopes.
www.seventhgeneration.com
31. Provide a paper recycling bin at each employee's desk and a few throughout the office or business.
32. Print letterheads, business cards and marketing materials on post-consumer recycled paper. www.thegreenoffice.com
33. Buy a printer that prints on both sides of the paper, or set your current one to print only all odd or even pages in sequence.
34. Set up a compost bin at home. www.epa.gov/compost/
35. Turn off the dishwasher's drying cycle.
36. Use green cleaning products.
37. In urban areas, use public transportation, walk, or bike – especially to appointments and to run errands. www.publictransportation.org
38. Cluster many errands into one trip.
39. Drive a hybrid car.
40. Check the air pressure in your tires to optimize fuel efficiency.

41. Dress sustainably – wear organically grown fibers and fair-trade produced clothing.
42. Skip the elevator and use the stairs.
43. Save single-sided paper for notes and children’s sketch paper.
44. Send cards and notes on recycled paper or send e-cards.
45. Get a library card and borrow books.
46. Donate old magazines to your dentist, doctor, veterinarian or real estate agent for their lobbies.
47. Find a green dry cleaner and bring your own garment bag.
48. Do not litter.
49. Offset your energy use at home and the office by purchasing green power.
www.green-e.org
50. Go carbon neutral. www.davidsuzuki.org_pvw370829/Climate_Change/What_You_Can_Do/carbon_neutral_steps.asp
51. Buy or rent a house that is already built and/or in a green-certified building.
52. Create spaces that have views to the outside. Take advantage of daylight. Add a skylight.
53. Live and work in smaller, more efficient spaces.
54. Use rapidly renewable materials like bamboo, strawboard, linoleum and wool carpet.
55. Reuse and reupholster furniture.
56. Recycle all carpet.
57. Use Energy Star rated appliances. www.energystar.gov
58. Install ceiling fans to improve circulation of heat and cool air.
59. Install and use radiant heat. www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/radiant_heating
60. Use low or zero-volatile organic compound (VOC) paints.
www.greenseal.org/certification/standards/paints.cfm
61. Use low-VOC adhesives and sealants.
62. Teach children what you are doing to make your home or business greener.
63. When purchasing furniture, ask if it is “Greenguard Air Quality-certified.”
www.greenguard.org
64. Use products from local resources (i.e., within a 500 mile radius of the product’s end use.)
65. Use day-lighting and occupancy sensors.
66. Use live indoor plants for improved air quality.
67. Use Energy Star-qualified double pane windows for better insulation.
www.energystar.gov
68. Use operable windows.
69. Use tankless water heaters. www.tanklesswaterheaterguide.com
70. Use urea and formaldehyde free composite wood.
71. Capture dirt with appropriate materials at the entry way before it enters home or office.
72. Use carpeting and padding that meets the Carpet and Rug Institute’s Green label testing. www.carpet-rug.org/commercial-customers/green-building-and-the-environment
73. Volunteer your time at local conservation agencies.

74. Take a walk on your local trail system. Learn about the local flora and fauna.
75. Support local and sustainable forestry practices. www.lsc.org
76. Visit a horse-logged forest and revel in its beauty.
www.GreenManForestManagement.com
www.community.roanoke.com/healingharvestforestfoundation
77. Set up a worm bin and share the experience with kids.
78. Plant an herb garden or grow your own vegetables.
79. Insist on native plants suited the local climate for all landscaping.
80. Plant trees around your house to cut down on air-conditioning costs.
81. Join a community supported agriculture program. www.localharvest.com
82. Eat locally grown food. Encourage restaurants and caterers to use local and organic foods.
83. Eat seafood that is safely and sustainably harvested.
www.mbayaq.org/cr/seafoodwatch.asp
84. Ask restaurants near your home to use recyclable or compostable “to go” containers instead of Styrofoam.
85. Take friends or clients to lunch at local restaurants.
86. Select hotels with green or eco-lodging programs. www.greenhotels.com
87. Consider an eco-tourism vacation to learn about diverse people and their cultures.
88. Offset carbon emission from travel with Trees for Travel or other similar programs. www.treesfortravel.org
89. Recycle batteries. Batteries can be toxic when discarded improperly. Contact Rechargeable Batteries at www.rbrc.org.
90. Donate cell phones. 130 million cell phones are trashed annually. Donate old cell phones to a good cause, such as those that participate at www.charitablerecycling.com and www.collectivegood.com.
91. Use recycled human waste. Composting has entered the bathroom. Special toilets generate substances that create valuable organic materials for gardens and keep almost 5% of our fresh-water supply from being flushed away.
92. When printing emails select “Print preview” before printing to choose only the page range that will be useful.

Adapted from *101 ways To Go Green* by Sharlyn Underwood, ASID, LEED AP; *Green Scene: Replenish and Recycle* by Joel Lerner of the Washington Post, and various articles on *Personal Technology* and *Eco-wise* from the Washington Post.

For additional hints please check the following sections:

- ❖ **Creating Environmentally Friendly Interiors**
- ❖ **Kid Friendly Green Tips**
- ❖ **Natural Landscaping**
- ❖ **Additional Ways You Can Help Your Watershed**
- ❖ **Points for Green Travel**
- ❖ **Greener Christmas and Holiday Gift Giving**

Creating Environmentally Friendly Interiors thru the use of:

- Bamboo flooring with a formaldehyde-free, water based sealer. (Bamboo grows faster than hardwoods. Because it is a grass, it can be harvested again and again from the same plant. It is also harder than maple and red oak and is quite beautiful.)
- Wool area rugs certified “child labor free,” meaning that no child labor was used in its manufacture. Wool is also a good choice for avoiding petroleum or chemical based fibers.
- No VOC paints (volatile organic compounds): Sherwin Williams “Harmony;” Benjamin Moore “Aura;” C2C, etc.
- Dimmer controlled light fixtures, lo-voltage halogens and fluorescent lighting to conserve energy.
- Low-flow water fixtures and low-energy appliances throughout.
- Protective window films and/or sheer weave window coverings that allow light in and block out heat, ultraviolet rays and the sun’s glare.
- Natural lighting as much as possible.
- No PVC (polyvinyl chloride, which has proven toxic) in upholstery fabrics.
- Sustainable wood sources.
- Stainless steel where appropriate. (Stainless steel is resistant to corrosion and staining, requires little maintenance, is relatively inexpensive, and is 100 percent recyclable. An average stainless steel object is composed of about 60% recycled material, 25% from end-of –life products and 35% coming from manufacturing processes.)
- Ceramic tile.
- Paperstone composite countertops such as Richlite. (Richlite.com)
- Upholstered furniture pieces using soy-based foam seat cushions, cotton and wool fabrics, and water-based wood finishes.
- Environmentally friendly cleaning products. For resources, check out www.ecolabels.org which breaks products down into their uses, provides information on comparing labels, and on what the EPA requires versus what you actually need to know.

Adapted from “*Seeing Green’s Possibilities*” by Rita Mann Konterski, Stir Magazine

Kid Friendly Green Tips: Parenting Goes Green*

- Cotton Clothing is best with organic cotton whenever possible
- Buy second hand cottons. Washing will have already washed out any pesticides and the carbon load will have been calculated.
- Buy consignment clothing and when done bring items right back, reducing the item’s environmental impact even further.

- To avoid energy consumption related to shipping, try to buy locally.
- For nursery furniture, check out gently used furniture in local consignment shops, then use the money you have saved on furniture on an organic crib mattress made by Serta, for example, for \$199.
- Borrow strollers and play equipment to see if your baby or child likes what you have dragged home.
- Yard sales or thrift stores are good sources for second hand baby gear.
- Use a sling instead of a stroller, when possible.
- Breast feeding can save money and help the environment – no energy consumption in shipping of formulas, bottle recycling, etc.
- Puree your own baby food and eliminate energy consumption of shipping food and bottle recycling.
- Use cloth diapers instead of filling landfills with disposables – save even more if passed down to subsequent children. And you can sell them when the kids outgrow them!

*Adapted from an article in **The Washington Post** Business Section, Sunday, October 21, 2007, by Mary Ellen Slater.

Natural Landscaping

- When deep shade discourages grass from growing, you might consider converting to moss. Moss looks almost magical and loves to carpet shady recesses and grows between the buttress roots of tall trees. And it never requires mowing, fertilizing or pesticides!
- Use native grasses as alternatives to mowing.
- Do not weed whack and denude your stream banks and wetland areas. Plant riparian buffers along your streams to stabilize banks and filter runoff.
- Allow native vegetation to flourish. It is drought resistant, requires little maintenance, and will provide welcome wildlife habitat. Go to www.environmentaldefense.org for a list of ways to help the environment.
- Compost your landscape debris. One of the most difficult ingredients to retain in soil is organic material. In a natural world, trees drop their leaves. Smaller plants and grasses and wildflowers die, providing a rich layer of humus. Most plants depend on humus or compost-rich soil for air, moisture and other nutrients.
- Minimize chemical lawn fertilizers and pesticides. You won't have to mow as often and you will allow beneficial insects to flourish while help eliminating detrimental runoff.

Additional Ways You Can Help Your Watershed!

- Remember that each person uses 100 gallons of water per day! Conserve.

- Plant more trees. A single tree is estimated to generate or save tens of thousands of dollars in oxygen and water in 50 years.
- Ask whether you really need that prescription or antibiotic – ultimately it ends up in the watershed, killing or producing same sex fish.
- Choose cleaning and laundry detergents wisely. Many produce “hormonal mimickers” that produce same sex fish...are we far behind?
- Do we really need to build such humongous houses? Smaller is better.
- Think green in terms of building and clothing materials. Try to stay away from petrochemical produced goods.

Points for Green Travel

- Travel less and stay longer rather than taking several short trips.
- Take trains when you can instead of flying or driving.
- Take non-stop flight rather than connecting flights.
- Reuse towels and sheets in hotel rooms rather than having them changed every day.
- Use local public transportation rather than renting a car.
- Travel domestically rather than internationally.
- Abandon the concept of destination weddings!
- Consolidate daily errands.
- Telecommute when possible.

A Greener Christmas -Christmas Trees and Holiday Gift Giving

- Christmas Trees – shop at local tree farms where no fuel was used in trucking the tree across the country. Ask if pesticides or other chemicals were used at the nursery.
- Use LED lights rather than incandescent lighting.
- Reuse the tree by mulching or composting, use for wildlife habitat or erosion control.
- When gifting, think everlasting rather than disposable.
- Give someone a helpful service.
- Give new parents a cloth diaper service (remember those?).
- Give vintage or second hand treasures.
- Forget the reams of gift wrap.
- And again, remember to use recyclable shopping bags.