



TREA'S

# WASTE REDUCTION GUIDE

**Taking  
effective steps  
to minimize  
waste in your  
home to create  
a better planet  
for future  
generations.**



**TD Friends of the  
Environment  
Foundation**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Challenges Related to Current Waste Practices:

Waste reduction as an immediate priority .....	1
Sustainable practice: Waste Diversion .....	1
Environmental impacts of landfills .....	2
W12A Landfill .....	2
Potential to increase waste diversion .....	2

## Taking The Steps To Reduce Waste Production:

Simple changes with minimal effort .....	3
Minimalism .....	3
Getting started .....	4
Helpful tips to make reduction easy and fun .....	4
Simple changes in the kitchen .....	5
Simple changes in the bathroom .....	6
Other changes and tips .....	6

## Getting Inspired:

Mayfair on the Green: Zero Waste .....	7
The Journey towards Zero Waste .....	8



**Why Waste reduction is an immediate priority.**



**The primary means of waste disposal in North America is land filling. Landfills have a finite lifetime, because of this, increasing numbers of landfills reaching their limits due to waste production.**



**Current waste related practices in North America are not sustainable, however it is not too late to change this trend.**



## **Sustainable Practice: Waste Diversion**



**Recycling  
&  
Composting**



**“Waste diversion can reduce the demand for energy and new resources by re-using materials that have already been produced (for example, aluminum, glass, plastics and paper). As a result, it can also reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”**

**-Statistics Canada**





#### SOIL FERTILITY

- Decaying garbage releases toxic chemicals into soil affecting soil fertility for years to come

#### AIR POLLUTION

- Large amounts of methane released into atmosphere which then contributes to the warming of climate

#### BIODIVERSITY IMPACTS

- Development of new landfills can result in the loss of 30 to 300 species per hectare

#### GROUNDWATER POLLUTION

- Toxic leachate can seep into groundwater and possibly affect neighbouring water bodies, this in turn can have detrimental effects on marine life



**W12A Landfill**

**In London, more than one ton of waste is produced per person each year. All of the residual waste generated by London homes and businesses is disposed of at the City's W12A Landfill. At the current rate of waste production, the W12A landfill is expected to reach capacity by 2025.**

## POTENTIAL TO INCREASE CURBSIDE WASTE DIVERSION

**Data collected by the City of London showed that majority of the curbside garbage being thrown away to the landfill can be diverted. As the chart indicates, only 30% of the curbside waste that is generated by Londoners is garbage. This means that by optimizing waste diversion practices, London residents have the potential to generate more recycling and compost rather than waste that goes to the landfill.**

### TYPES OF CURBSIDE WASTE GENERATED IN LONDON



Garbage (30%) Compostables (45%) Other Recyclables (15%) Blue Box (10%)



# Simple Changes with Minimal Effort

**REFUSE:** Say no to the things you don't need. This prevents unwanted items from being brought to your home and being thrown out a short time later.

**REDUCE:** For the things you do use, use less of them. This results in less overall waste.

**REUSE:** Reuse the items that don't have to be single-use. This extends the lifespan of a product so you can use it again rather than purchase another.

**REPURPOSE:** You might not be able to reuse a product, but chances are you can find another way to use it or swap it with someone else. For example, using old pasta jars as mason jars.

**RECYCLE:** Recycling is efficient, when it's done properly. But keep in mind some items will not recycle indefinitely and will eventually end up in the landfill.

**ROT:** The amount of waste you create can be simply reduced by composting food scraps, yard trimmings, and much more. This process turns waste into a renewable material.



## Minimalism

Regardless of the achievement of excellent waste diversion rates, waste will always be produced due to the predominant consumer culture which persists in North America. The adoption of a minimalist lifestyle invites you to identify what is essential in your life and reduce your needs accordingly. The lifestyle of an average North American is far from this, but upon embarking on this journey many may find reducing to be quite rewarding.

The adoption of a minimalist lifestyle does not require a drastic lifestyle change. One can simply begin by constructing a list of material items which are essential and then accordingly, begin to reduce in other areas.



# REDUCING

# WASTE IN

# YOUR

# HOME

## Getting Started

Creating less waste starts by looking at your current habits and making changes. These changes can be big or small, they all make a difference!

1

### Step one: Being aware

Like any problem, you need to understand what's going on and how you can make a difference. Do your research to help make wise decisions on the amount of waste you create.

2

### Step two: Consider what you bring home

Do I need that? Will I eat that? Will I wear that? Many homes acquire clutter that soon gets thrown out. When shopping it can limit waste and save you money by simply considering if an item is a "need" or a "want".

3

### Step Three: Simple Swaps

For almost every single use item, there is a reusable alternative. As you phase out disposable items, try and replace some of them with reusables. You don't need to do this all at once, gradual changes over time are just as effective! One deterrent of making the swap may be that the reusable item costs more than the disposable. However, just think about how much you will use the reusable item in the same time you would go through countless disposables.



## Some Helpful Tips to making Reducing EASY & FUN!

- It's hard to change your habits over night. Setting goals is a great way to track your progress
- Start by aiming to cut down on the amount of garbage bags you put at the curb. Once you meet that goal, try reducing the size of the bin in your kitchen and aiming to only fill it once a week
- Are you passionate about reducing your waste? If so, why not start a blog and inspire others!
- **Challenge your friends and family to reduce their waste! Multiple small changes can add up to have a BIG Impact!**





# Simple Changes in the Kitchen

Reducing your waste often begins in the kitchen. Here, all sorts of waste accumulates on a daily basis and that waste is easy to identify. Limiting the amount of waste you bring home is a great start. Changing your shopping list to less products packaged in unnecessary amounts of plastic is an easy way to do so. Making simple swaps in your kitchen for products that can be recycled or reused can greatly reduce the amount of unnecessary waste your kitchen produces. Put produce/fruit in reusable bags rather than single-use plastic bags available at the grocery store. If you really want to cut down on the amount of waste produced from your kitchen, consider getting a composter to turn waste such as food scraps and paper waste into a nutrient rich soil for your garden.



## Here are some effective changes you can do!

Disposable Items	Reusable Alternatives
Paper towel	Kitchen towels (cotton, linen, microfiber, etc.)
Disposable napkins	Reusable napkins made of cotton, linen, etc.)
Plastic bags	Reusable containers or reusable snack bags
Aluminum foil	Silicone baking mats
Coffee Filters	Filter-free coffee maker, or reusable filters
Plastic Dish Scrubs	Cloth or wood brush with replaceable compostable head
Plastic Wrap or Wax paper	Beeswax wraps, abeeego wraps
Egg cartons/berry cartons	Return egg/berry cartons to farms or farmers markets
Plastic produce food bags	Reusable bags for produce
Microwave popcorn	Buy kernels and put them in a pot
Cold treats	Buy a reusable popsicle kit and make your own
Plastic straws	Reusable metal or glass straws
Plastic cutlery	Metal cutlery
Milk bag/carton	Glass milk jars you can return



# Simple Changes in the Bathroom

Personal care products are likely to come in a variety of plastics and unnecessary packaging. Think about how many plastic toothbrushes your house goes through in a year, how many toothpaste tubes are thrown in the garbage. There are many reusable alternatives to these common bathroom products. Try buying a wood/bamboo toothbrush, buy the plastic-free Q-tips. Some stores even offer refilling shampoo/soap containers. This can save money and reduce waste!



Disposable Items	Reusable Alternatives
Body wash and Shampoos	Soap/Shampoo bars or buy in bulk
Plastic Q-tips	Plastic-free or compostable ones
Disposable razor	Electric or straight razor
Plastic toothbrush	Wooden or bamboo toothbrushes
Makeup/Deodorant	Pick those that come without packaging
Floss	Reusable floss sticks/pics
Toothpaste	Try making your own toothpaste powder
Disposable feminine hygiene products	Non-disposable feminine hygiene products
Shaving cream	Use soap

Adapted from: <https://learn.eartheasy.com/guides/zero-waste-a-beginners-guide/>

## Other Changes/Tips for Your Home

- **Switching to paperless billing** → Switch billing to electronic
- **Use a reusable water bottle** → one reusable water bottle can prevent the use thousands of plastic bottles
- **Buying second hand clothing** → consider shopping at thrift shops, you may be surprised at the quality of clothing you find
- **Shopping for food in bulk** → minimizes the amount of overall packaging
- **Supporting sustainable takeout** → Ask for no plastic cutlery or napkins, bring your own instead
- **Purchase travel coffee mug** → majority of vendors selling coffee allow and even encourage customers to bring their own coffee mugs
- **Replacing dryer sheets with reusable dryer balls** → Store bought balls can be used again and again for up to 500 washes and work just as well or better than conventional dryer sheets
- **Reusable bags** → Purchase reusable cloth bags rather than plastic bags
- **Reusable straws** → Purchase a reusable straw to eliminate single-use plastic straws



# Going Zero Waste is Possible!

## Mayfair on the Green: Scarborough ON



With a collective effort by the building staff and residents, Mayfair on the Green was able to attain an 85% waste diversion rate in just a few years after taking this initiative. This was a substantial feat as the average waste diversion rate of an apartment building of a similar size is only 26%.

### How they reached their goals:

- Transformed the building's garbage chute into a green bin chute which collects organic waste only
- Provided residents with separate stations to recycle electronic waste as well as stations to dispose of cooking oils and hazardous waste such as cleaners
- Introduced a designated sharing shelf where residents can leave old books, clothes and other household items for others to take
- Commenced an outreach effort by putting up posters/ brochures in multiple languages discussing the program
- Building staff went door to door to further explain benefits of program and answer questions



### Results:

- Cut down annual waste fees from \$20,000 to \$5,000 per year
- Reduced the use of 20 dumpsters a month to only one dumpster a month
- 40 bags/ reusable goods donated per month

# **The journey towards zero waste...**

**Challenge  
yourself to  
take the  
steps  
towards a  
more  
sustainable  
future!**

When commencing on the journey towards zero waste, start off by changing your waste practices as much as you can. This approach will ensure that the waste practices which are taken up will be sustained and integrated into your lifestyle with minimal effort. As mentioned previously in the guide, multiple small changes can add up and have a large scale impact.

Going Zero Waste is the ultimate long term goal which lies in the foreseeable future, how it will be reached is if everyone begins to do more than they already are and sustain this trend. For some this may mean the implementation of basic waste diversion practices such as recycling and composting into their homes and businesses. For those already partaking in these practices regularly, they can begin to implement some of the ideas listed in this guide to further reduce their waste production.

For those that are keen to commence on the journey towards zero waste, we encourage you to join us in our 30 day Waste Challenge.



# References

[https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2013/06/07/toronto\\_garbage\\_stinks\\_in\\_southwold\\_township\\_locals\\_complain.html](https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2013/06/07/toronto_garbage_stinks_in_southwold_township_locals_complain.html) <https://sciencing.com/effects-landfills-environment-8662463.html>

<https://www.canadiangeographic.ca/article/canadas-dirty-secret>

<https://www.todaysparent.com/family/family-life/ways-to-reduce-waste-at-home-even-if-you-are-exhausted/>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/green-lane-landfill-oneida-nation-smells-1.4567724>

<https://www.goingzerowaste.com/blog/the-ultimate-step-by-step-guide-to-going-zero-waste>

<https://learn.eartheasy.com/guides/zero-waste-a-beginners-guide/>

[http://www.torontoenvironment.org/2017\\_greener\\_city\\_for\\_all\\_award](http://www.torontoenvironment.org/2017_greener_city_for_all_award)

[http://www.torontoenvironment.org/zerowaste\\_mayfair](http://www.torontoenvironment.org/zerowaste_mayfair)

<https://getinvolved.london.ca/WhyWasteDisposal>

[http://thecif.ca/projects/documents/343-London\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://thecif.ca/projects/documents/343-London_Final_Report.pdf)

<https://www.london.ca/residents/Garbage-Recycling/waste-management-planning/Pages/Resource-Recovery-Strategy.aspx>

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/strategy-waste-free-ontario-building-circular-economy>