

A Dozen Sensible Ways to Reduce Waste At Home, At School, At Work

AT HOME

1. Separate papers and containers for recycling and decide on a storage area until the hauler picks up or you go to the Town Transfer Station.
2. Compost food waste in the back yard or utilize the garbage disposal safely.
3. Use leftover vegetables for soups, stews, and stir fry's.
4. Add leftover chicken, steak or pork to the soup, stew, or serve it in a salad.
5. Salad dressing remnants can be used as a marinade for meats and vegetables. Just add a little water, balsamic vinegar and/or a few spices.
6. Toast leftover breads for croutons or soup floats or grind them up for bread crumbs. Don't forget that they will feed the birds too.
7. Use tote bags for shopping in ALL stores.
8. Consolidate store plastic bags, one bag will hold the others, then take back to the store for either reuse or to recycle. Walmart, Hannaford, Price Chopper, Staples, CVS, and other box stores recycle plastic store bags.
9. Use containers (with lids) that cannot be recycled, for food storage or lunch box treats. They can even be labeled to store things such as paper clips, rubber bands, stamps, etc. If you are in the habit of taking home leftovers, bring it to restaurants that give you non-recyclable foam containers and put leftovers in your own containers.
10. Carry a reusable mug for visits to your favorite coffee shop stop: Starbucks, Dunkin Donuts, Stewarts, McDonalds, etc. or ask for a hot food paper cup instead of plastic foam cup.
11. Use real plates, silverware, and glasses because the dishwasher should always be run full any way. Also reuse cloth napkins which often can be used a couple of days before requiring cleaning.
12. Hold a Garage Sale of unwanted items or donate to a local charity.

AT SCHOOL

1. In place of paper towels, use a sponge or rag with water and/or soap for blackboard and other clean-ups. Old cotton kitchen and bath towels and old napkins would make great rags. Shake outside or rinse after each use and wash them every other week. Sponges can be refreshed on the top shelf of a dishwasher.
2. Compost food scraps from the lunchroom either by vermi-composting (worm composting) indoors or setting up a food compost bin outdoors. Outside the food can be covered daily with compost from the Town of Bethlehem's compost facility.

3. Reuse paper bags or lunch boxes and containers with lids. Take home containers to wash and reuse each day.
4. Bring lunch drinks in a reusable thermos or plastic bottle. At home buy large bottles of drinks and share. It is economical.
5. Use both sides of the paper when copying or X out the used side of the paper with a pencil and then reuse the blank side for notes or other copies before putting the paper in the recycling bin.
6. Organize a playground or green space clean-up.
7. Plant a tree on the grounds. Get the "community" involved in the planting.
8. Donate usable clothing left in the lost and found, if no one claims.
9. Reuse old 3 ring binders by first decorating with contact paper then filling with refill paper or reuse as a photo album or scrapbook.
10. Recycle inkjet cartridges and/or have them refilled.
11. Make note/scratch paper using backs of one-side printed paper and cutting to size of the container that can hold the note sheets.
12. Recycle old crayons: www.crayonrecycling.com

AT WORK

1. Share car rides or better yet ride a bicycle or walk to work.
2. Carry your own reusable mug to work. Rinse after each use and keep at desk
3. Organize a "garage sale" or donate surplus supplies: old furniture and other reusable items. Open it up to personnel, non-profits, or the general public. Space has a value.
4. Bring a waste free lunch to work in a reusable bag and plastic containers that can be reused. It is both an economical savings and a reduction in waste.
5. Set up a recycling bin for nickel deposit bottles and cans. Use the revenue for an office perk or donate to a favorite charity.
6. Share inter-office memos via email or a central bulletin board.
7. Share magazines, newspapers, and books with doctor's offices, libraries, or lunchroom attendees. Remember to recycle when over 6 months old or the newspaper over a day old.
8. Avoid a cover sheet for a fax whenever possible.
9. Use a fly swatter instead of insect sprays to eliminate flying insects or spiders. (Buy recycled content flyswatters for the office.)
10. Organize a "Clean your Files Day" (and recycle) around November 15, America Recycles day or any designated day.
11. Hold an outdoor clean-up of litter on office grounds periodically.
12. Purchase recycled content paper for the fax, copier and all your work.