

# What You Can Do to Help the Environment

Review the following list and see how many of the suggestions you already incorporate into your life. Some of the recommendations are quite easy; others require some research and long-term commitment, and so, are goals to work toward.

1. Recycle newspaper, paper, cardboard, glass, tin, and aluminum.
2. Buy recycled products.
3. Use low- or phosphate-free detergent.
4. Wash clothes in cold water.
5. Use old clothes and cloth to wipe up spills and for cleaning instead of paper towels.
6. Reduce use of nonessential appliances (e.g., electric can openers, pencil sharpeners).
7. Reuse paper grocery bags.
8. Use reusable containers for sandwiches and leftovers instead of plastic wrap, baggies, and foil.
9. Install low-flow aerators on faucets and water-saving showerheads.
10. Do not leave water running when showering, shaving, brushing your teeth, washing dishes or your car.
11. Place space-occupiers in toilet tanks. (Do not use bricks or rocks; they can damage pipes.)
12. Insulate water heater, and set it at 130 degrees (cool enough to save energy, but hot enough to kill bacteria).
13. Fix leaky pipes.
14. Tune-up your furnace.
15. Lower thermostat one degree for every hour you will be away or asleep.
16. Turn off lights and appliances when you leave the room.
17. Replace incandescent bulbs with energy-efficient bulbs.
18. Insulate and weather-strip your house.
19. Donate unwanted clothing and household items to charity or to a thrift shop.
20. Buy and use rechargeable batteries.
21. Use cloth diapers, or instead of just using disposal diapers, alternate between cloth and disposal.
22. Start a compost pile in your yard, or take yard clippings and debris to a yard debris recycler.
23. Plant a tree.
24. Use organic pesticides and fertilizers.
25. Do not overwater your lawn or garden.
26. Return reusable items to merchants (e.g., plastic and rubber pots to nursery; hangers to dry cleaner).
27. Avoid buying styrofoam.
28. Reduce use of disposable products, or, if you must buy disposable, buy paper or glass products instead of plastic.
29. Buy locally produced items when possible.
30. Use reusable shopping bags.
31. Keep your car tuned, tires properly inflated, and the air conditioner well maintained and only service them at repair facilities that recycle CFCs.
32. Recycle engine oil.
33. Drive the speed limit, and accelerate and slow down gradually.
34. Carpool.
35. Use public transportation when possible.
36. Bike or walk for short trips.
37. Do not litter.
38. Oppose toxic chemicals on fruits and vegetables.
39. Monitor workers' exposure to hazardous products and conditions (consult local trade unions).
40. Participate in clean-air and clean-water programs.
41. Learn how to lobby local, state, and federal officials.
42. Suggest and help organize an environmental awareness day at your parish.
43. Volunteer with an environmental group.
44. Join a local or national pro-life group to stand up for unborn human life.
45. Air dry laundry whenever possible.
46. Collect rainwater and gray water (i.e., tub, sink, wash water) for use in gardening.
47. Explore alternative energy sources (e.g., solar, wind).
48. Urge local officials to begin curbside recycling.
49. Enjoy recreational activities that use renewable instead of nonrenewable energy (e.g., hike instead of watch television).
50. Buy products that will last, and rent items you do not use very often.
51. Start a community garden.
52. Educate children about sustainable-living practices.
53. Support work to empower the poor.
54. Write letters to the editor expressing your concern about environmental and social justice issues.