



TIP SHEET

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TIPS TO TRIM YOUR “WASTE-LINE” THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Generating trash during the yuletide season has unfortunately become as much of a holiday tradition as parties and gift-giving. Americans generate an average of 25 percent more waste in the weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year’s – that’s 5 million additional tons of garbage!

This year, create a new holiday tradition by resolving to reduce, reuse and recycle. Follow these simple tips that will allow you to trim your “waste-line” and your budget.

1. **Plan Ahead:** One of the best ways to conserve cash and natural resources is by planning purchases and meals ahead of time. Make a list, check it twice, and stick to it. Also, plan your trips so that you can hit multiple stores in the same area of town. You’ll save time, gas, money, and reduce carbon dioxide emissions.
2. **Know What & Where to Recycle:** Eighty percent of all U.S. cities have a recycling program. These curbside recycling programs and community drop-off centers collect recyclable items, including different types of plastics (jugs, bottles, containers, jars, etc.) aluminum, glass, paper, metal, and other materials. Check to see what and where to recycle in your community. There’s probably more that you can easily do than you think!
3. **Lock in the Freshness:** *Thirty million tons of edible food goes to waste each year, much of it during the holidays.* The average American household can probably save up to \$150 on grocery bills by properly store leftovers. Don’t buy new containers – clean and reuse those plastic ones you were going to throw away. Because these containers have tight-fitting lids, they significantly reduce air exposure, allowing you to lock in freshness. Ditto for zip bags, which can probably be used a couple of times. Label with date and contents.
4. **Collect Cups and Utensils:** After your celebration, instead of throwing away plastic cups, plates and utensils, encourage your guests to place them in the kitchen sink. They can be washed and reused at your NEXT party.
5. **Get Creative on Reuse:** Reuse is the purest form of recycling. Before throwing something away, get creative and think of ways to reuse items. Yogurt cups can store crayons, leftover food items can be placed in margarine tubs, and plastic cups leftover from your holiday party can be a home for growing seedlings in the garden.
6. **Bin There:** This holiday party season, don’t forget the recycling bin. If you are the party host, clearly mark your recycle bin and place it near your trash can. This will make post-party clean up much easier, save room in the garbage can, and help the environment by preventing recyclables from going to landfills. (Tip: Place a few bottles, bags, etc. in the recycling bin so that guests know what to recycle and see that others are doing it. This is the same principal as “seeding the tip jar” if you’re a barista in a coffee shop.)

7. **Reuse Your Wrappings:** Save money and avoid having to buy new wrapping paper and gift bags for NEXT season by setting aside colorful paper and plastic wrappings from THIS year's gift-giving. Store in plastic bags or cardboard boxes, label and store all of your holiday stuff together so that it's easy to find.

8. **Pass It On:** Has your child outgrown that toy from last year? Instead of throwing it away, or storing it on a garage shelf, donate the toy to your local Goodwill, Salvation Army or Purple Heart. Or, hold a toy swap party with friends whose kids are of similar ages. You'll eliminate waste and save valuable household space.

9. **Throw on a Sweater (or learn to snuggle):** Turning your thermostat down by only a few degrees can help you save big on your home heating bill. If you're expecting a large number of guests at your holiday party, turn down your thermostat before the celebration begins; a crowded room of partygoers can generate its own heat. When the party's over, you can also conserve energy by grabbing a blanket and snuggling up on the couch with loved ones.

10. **Cut the Lights!** Turn off holiday lights during the day by unplugging or putting them on a timer. Doing so will not only save energy, but will help your lights last longer. Also, at the end of the season, roll them around cardboard cores from gift wrap or paper towels. That way, they'll be easy to unroll and reuse next year.

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