

# The 10 Commandments of Living a Green Lifestyle

## 1. Thou shalt REFUSE to engage in unsustainable practices.

(Do your best to) refuse food wrapped in plastic, single-use products, bargains and freebies that you have no immediate need for. Refuse pamphlets and business cards if you'll never look at them again and take a picture instead. Living with enough integrity to be able to refuse to participate in unsustainable practices is one of the most important skills for living a zero waste lifestyle and will eradicate *a lot* of the waste from your home and your life.

## 2. Thou shalt REDUCE what you have and what you consume.

Start living a more minimalist lifestyle by decluttering your home of needless items, rid your life of excess, and continue to say no to excess in the future. If you have not used an item in the past 2 years, there is a good chance you will not use it any time soon. It's time to move it out of your house. Do your best to recycle, gift, thrift, and give away as much as possible to avoid it ending up in the landfill. To maintain a minimalist home and lifestyle, you must also reduce your overall consumption. Only take in items that add value to your life and do your best to refuse all other excesses. Not only will this help you feel better about what's around you, but by continuing to refuse excess there won't be a need for multiple purges every year.

## 3. Thou shalt REHOME items you no longer need.

When decluttering your home of excess items, don't just throw them away to fill up limited landfill space. Find a new home for them. When you upgrade a phone, give your old one to a friend in need of one, sell it online, or find a company that recycles phone parts or refurbishes them. Clothes

that you no longer need can also be sold or donated to charities and second-hand shops. Rehomeing your excess items allows the next owner to breathe new life into them while keeping them out of the landfill.

#### **4. Thou shalt REUSE & REPAIR what you have.**

Cheaply-made disposable items are meant to be used (usually just once) before being discarded. Not only does it waste money, since you have to continually buy the same items over and over, but they do great harm to the environment when they fill up landfills or end up as oceanic litter. Zero waste living means ridding yourself of disposables and replacing them with high-quality reusable alternatives like the ones you can find at [ZeroWasteStore](#). And unlike single-use disposables, higher-quality reusable items are often designed to last longer and be easily repaired!

#### **5. Thou shalt REPURPOSE items that have outlived their original purpose.**

Repurposing or upcycling, old items that are no longer useful for what they were designed for is a fun exercise in creativity! Old toothbrushes become household scrub brushes for cleaning tile grouts, faucet handles, and other tight spaces. Old CDs and DVDs make for great table coasters or art projects. These are simple repurpose ideas, but you can get as elaborate as your creativity desires. Websites such as Etsy or Pinterest are great places to find innovative ideas to breathe new life into your old items. Check around your city to see if there is an art store that will take old materials that help artists create new projects!

#### **6. Thou shalt RECYCLE your recyclable items.**

Picking up the habit of refusing and reducing will help eliminate most of your waste, but you may still find yourself with excess plastic, metal, or glass items that you can't rehome or repurpose. If there's anything we learned during our journey toward sustainability, it's that just because an item has those three arrows, doesn't mean it's actually recyclable. This is why it is good to get serious about recycling to conserve our natural resources and keep these items from entering our landfills. Contact your city's public works department to find out what items are recyclable (and where), what recycling program your city employs, and whether it is curbside pickup or drop-off locations. You can keep a small bin at work and

in your car so that you can separate recyclable items. And before you purchase something, read the packaging label to make sure the materials are recyclable where you live.

## **7. Thou shalt ROT your organic waste by composting.**

Instead adding to the toxification of our air, soil, and water inside of an air-locked landfill for decades, a composting system can turn your organic waste such as food scraps, grass clippings, cardboard packaging, etc., into nutrient-rich, fertilizing soil amendment in just a matter of months. Contact your city's public works department to see if they have commercial composting pickup program or drop-off locations. Local farms may also welcome your compostable waste. Read blog post on [Composting](#) for beginners to learn how you can use a personal composting system to turn your scraps into rich fertilizer for your home garden.

## **8. Thou shalt REPLANT your fruits and vegetables.**

If you have a home garden, hopefully, you use a compost system for healthier crops. The next step in elevating your zero waste game is replanting your fruit seeds and vegetable stumps to regrow them for even more delicious food to eat. There are so many fruits and vegetables that can be regrown in the comfort of your home such as lettuce, green onions, and even sweet potatoes and avocados! A simple online search can provide you with excellent methods on how to do so. What a wonderful way to take part in the circle of life!

## **9. Thou shalt RETHINK your actions and habits.**

Transitioning from an environmentally unaware existence to zero waste awareness is a lifelong journey that will force you to adjust the way you view your relationship with yourself, your community, and Mother Earth herself. It requires commitment, discipline, and integrity so that your actions will always be tied to your bigger purpose. And as it is with any major lifestyle change, to successfully reach your goals you'll adopt a new way of thinking and question your actions.

- Do I really need this item?

- Is it compostable?
- How will it affect the environment?

Where at a previous point in life you might make a decision based on convenience without a thought, you'll now take the time to stop and think. But remember, no journey or person is perfect. You won't be able to always say no or make the most environmentally friendly choices. Do the best you can with what you have.

## **10. Thou shalt strive to REINVENT new ways to go green.**

Just as it is with rethinking, making an impact with zero waste requires a conscious effort to do so. With a new eco-minded way of thinking and a revamped belief structure, you will start to question your actions on a personal level, as well as the actions of your communities on a much larger scale. This investment in time to better understand your personal and communal consumption habits and the effects it has on the planet will cause you to become more self-aware. It is this self-awareness that grants us the ability to think outside the box in search of green new solutions to solve our environmental problems and reinvent the way we consume and discard.

Every zero waste journey looks different, sounds different, and feels different but these 10 commandments apply to (almost) every single one. Keep them in mind at the beginning of your journey or when you find yourself stuck or struggling. And remember, we're all in this together! We need millions of people imperfectly practicing better habits, not one person doing it perfectly. We're always here for you!

### **Other Blogs You Might Find Helpful:**

- [7 Ways To Make A Difference in 2023: The Best Ways To Show Up For The Planet](#)
- [10 Stupidly Simple Sustainable Swaps To Begin The New Year \(Under \\$40\)](#)
- [26 Sustainable Terms & Definitions To Help You On Your Sustainable Journey](#)
- [Starting a Zero Waste Lifestyle: A Beginners Guide to Going Zero Waste](#)

- [The Hidden Cost Behind Convenience: Why Supporting Small Businesses Matters](#)