

Dreaming of a green(er) Christmas



Wondering how can you have an eco-friendly Christmas? We've got it covered.

Can wrapping paper be recycled?



Most wrapping paper can be recycled, but don't forget Sellotape and some coated papers can't. So, if you can, it's best to get rid of the plastic altogether by choosing recyclable paper and use festively coloured string to tie it together. As for ribbons, gift tags and bags, look for those made of natural materials or make your own with sprigs of holly. Consider using fabric or brown paper to gift-wrap presents and avoid non-recyclable materials like glitter and foil. Plus, brown paper and string aren't Christmas specific - they can be used for birthdays and other occasions, so any leftover paper can still be used.

Oh, Christmas tree oh Christmas tree

When picking your perfect pine, opt for a real tree rather than a fake one, if you can. Most local authorities offer collection services for real trees which they shred and use on gardens and parks. So, buying a real tree isn't as bad as you might think, it just needs to come from a sustainable source and be disposed of properly in January.

Top tip: use LED lights in your decorations rather than incandescent ones, they're more environmentally friendly and will last longer. Just remember when you're decorating your tree not to have too many appliances plugged into one socket and avoid any trailing wires.



How can Christmas be plastic free?

Terrible jokes and paper hats are a must on Christmas Day, but do you really need another fake moustache and fortune fish? The plastic toys that pop out of crackers often – understandably – end up lost or in the bin.

If you're looking to reduce your plastic waste but still want a little surprise in your festive crackers, you could make your own. Fill them with chocolate, sweets or handmade gifts. For the less creative, you can now buy cardboard crackers that don't contain plastic toys, or fabric reusable crackers which you can fill with your own treats every year.



Have yourself a merry 'local' Christmas

A tower of selection boxes a few feet high and more mince pies than you know what to do with – when it comes to food, the holidays are a time of over indulgence. You can cut down on food waste without losing any of the festive fun by shopping locally for your delicious festive additions. Use up your leftovers and plan your portion sizes based on how many people will be at the dinner table to reduce food waste. Turkey, vegetables, mincemeat and more can all be sourced at your local butchers and greengrocers. Not only are you putting money back into the local community, you can often put your purchases straight into a tote bag so there's no plastic packaging either.

Plus, with a little research you can usually find some wonderfully talented local business owners that would just love some of their arts, crafts and produce to find their way into your stocking this year. Ditch the gift tokens and next-day delivery orders and grab the opportunity to discover your local community.

If you're a dab hand at handicrafts yourself, perhaps you can make your own treats and trinkets to put under the tree.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Glass jars, bottles, boxes, gift bags, decorations – the list of items you can reuse is almost as long as your wish list. Consider following the three R's this festive period – reduce, reuse and recycle. Find new life for old jars in the kitchen, keep hold of decorations for next year and recycle any old boxes and cards – just remember to remove any Sellotape and ribbons.



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