



Did you know the holiday season generates up to 25% more trash than any other time of year? First comes trick-or-treating, then Thanksgiving, fa-la-la-ing into gift giving, and finally 5-4-3-2-1-ing into the New Year. Americans throw away an additional one million tons of garbage per week during the winter holidays!

Enjoy good cheer, celebrations, and gifts—but please don't trash the holidays!



All I want for Christmas is my two front teeth...



### Whatever happened to “less is more”?

When it comes to the holidays, we not only want our “two front teeth” but diamond earrings and a digital camera! Fill your heart with holiday spirit instead of filling your trash can. Here are some tips to **REDUCE** holiday waste:

- Give **eco-friendly gifts** instead of “stuff” that will ultimately be tossed:
  - gift card, event ticket, theme park pass or fishing license
  - investment gift such as a savings bond
  - handmade item
- Give **gifts of time** such as six months of lawn-mowing for Dad or a homemade dinner for Aunt Sue.
- Select **durable gifts** with a long life.
- Buy **rechargeable batteries** and a battery charger as gifts. Almost half of all battery sales are for electronic holiday gifts.
- **Make your own cards and gift tags** instead of buying. You don't need an art degree; just express yourself.
- Save energy when holiday shopping by **walking, car pooling, riding your bike or shopping online.**
- **Cancel mail order catalogs** you don't need (see [Junk Mail Reduction Kit](#)).
- **Let your LED lights shine.** LED's use 75% less energy than conventional holiday lights and last up to ten times longer.
- **Draw names for family giving** so everyone just gives one person a gift instead of buying for everyone.

reduce





Deck the halls with reused ribbon, fa la la la la la la la la...



## Rekindle the holiday spirit of giving by reusing as much as possible.

Lavish gift-buying and glittery garnishings not only cost American consumers thousands of dollars a year, but also cost trees, water, energy and landfill space. Here are some tips for REUSE during the holidays:

- **Reuse wrapping materials.** When it comes to ribbons, bows, and gift bags—it's okay to be a pack rat! Keep these items to reuse for future gifts.
- **Reuse packing materials** such as cardboard boxes and packing peanuts for mailing gifts. Instead of buying packing materials, use crumpled plastic grocery bags or newspaper.
- **Cut up old greeting cards** for gift tags or [recycled ornaments](#).
- **Reuse an artificial tree** each year, or buy a potted tree that can be planted after Christmas.
- Give back to the community by **donating unwanted items** to local charities ([see list](#)). Encourage your children to go through their toys and clothes to pick items to donate.
- **Bag it.** When shopping, instead of accepting a new bag at each store, reuse the largest bag or bring your own durable bag.
- Make your guests feel special (and reduce waste) by **avoiding throwaway tableware and linens** such as plastic utensils or paper tablecloths.



reuse

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## Walk in a GREEN winter wonderland by giving the gift of recycling!

'Tis the season to be jolly, and you'll enjoy the holidays even more if you know you're helping the environment. Here are some tips to RECYCLE your holiday waste:

- **Recycle your Christmas tree** ([local programs](#)). Your tree will be shredded and recycled into mulch that is provided free to the public ([free mulch sites](#)).
- **Recycle holiday paper** (gift wrap, tissue paper or greeting cards) with "mixed paper" at a [drop-off center or curbside recycling program](#).
- **Buy items with recycled content** such as greeting cards or wrapping paper.
- **Set up a recycling bin for cans and bottles** if you host a party.
- **Recycle leftover food** or holiday decorations such as pumpkins by [composting](#).
- **Recycle the cooking oil** if you deep fry a turkey ([drop-off sites](#)).
- For more recycling ideas, visit our [online recycling guide](#) with over 250 items.



recycle

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, I can't wait to recycle thee...



For more tips to cut holiday waste, visit [EPA Reducing Holiday Waste](#), [Minnesota No-Waste Holiday](#), [Stanford, CA Green Holiday Season](#) or [California "Give Green"](#).