

# COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE ON EASY WAYS TO LIVE A MORE SUSTAINABLE LIFE



# ABSTRACT

Living sustainably doesn't have to be complicated. This guide explores simple yet impactful ways to reduce waste, conserve energy, and make eco-friendly choices in everyday life. From adopting sustainable shopping habits to embracing a greener lifestyle at home and work, this comprehensive resource provides practical tips for individuals looking to make a positive environmental impact effortlessly.

# INTRODUCTION

As climate change and environmental concerns continue to grow, more people are seeking ways to live a more sustainable life. However, sustainability doesn't require drastic lifestyle changes; even small, mindful actions can make a significant difference. This guide offers easy and practical ways to incorporate sustainability into daily routines, proving that anyone can contribute to a healthier planet with minimal effort.

## I. What Is Sustainable Living?

Sustainability has all the trappings of a “buzz” word. You've heard it encouraged by global organizations, bloggers, artisans, and environmental activists alike. And if you're a fan of The Good Trade, you've seen it all over our site, too. More than a buzz word, though, it can be a personal philosophy that greatly benefits the larger public.



Sustainable living means we prioritize the use of natural and renewable resources instead of creating excess waste and depleting environmental resources for future generations.

“Sustainable living means prioritizing the use of natural and renewable resources.”

## The History of Sustainability

The term is believed to have first been defined and popularized by the now-dissolved World Commission on Environment and Development in its 1987 report, “Our Common Future.” (It eventually came to be known as The Brundtland Report after the Commission’s chairwoman, Gro Harlem Brundtland.) Published by the United Nations through the Oxford University Press, the document aimed to present environment-related concerns in the context of political development. And in it, sustainable development is explained how we largely still recognize it today, as: “Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

## Some Statistics About Sustainability

In our day-to-day, living sustainably means being cautious and conscious of how we interact with our home appliances, commutes, shopping trips, and more. It means curbing our habits of expending, whether that be money or energy, in order to protect and improve our environment. It’s recognizing that some resources are finite. Otherwise, continuing to consume at untenable rates will exhaust our earth.

“Living sustainably means curbing our habits of expending in order to protect and improve our environment.”

## A Beginner’s Guide to Living More Sustainably

Even without intention, many of us are beginning to live more sustainably every day. Remember the widespread ban of plastic straws in restaurants and plastic bags at grocery stores? That was just the beginning. To practice it on a greater scale and use it to inform your everyday actions, here are a few easy ways to start.

### 1. Use Less Energy

More than just turning off the lights when leaving a room or unplugging appliances that are not used daily, consider swapping your bulbs for energy-efficient ones and switching to a smart thermostat to more accurately detect and auto-balance your home’s temperature. When possible, hang dry clothes and cook without using the oven, stove, or microwave. And take shorter showers with cooler water. (To estimate your household’s carbon footprint, the US Environmental Protection Agency has a calculator.)

### 2. Create Less Waste

“Use alternatives to paper goods.”

Try meal-planning or seasonal eating to avoid accumulating excess food that will ultimately go to waste. Use alternatives to paper goods, like washable cloths instead of paper towels or a bidet instead of toilet paper. And take inventory of your personal products to discover which are available without single-use packaging, like refillable deodorants, toothpaste and mouthwash tablets, or shampoo and conditioner bars. While you're at it, get a reusable water bottle for plastic-free hydrating.



### 3. Travel More Consciously

When distances allow, keep your car's engine off and walk, bike, or take public transportation. For trips to nearby destinations, consider if a train can get you there. And when taking to the sky, opt for direct flights when possible and look for airlines that are implementing carbon offsetting (like JetBlue). You can even purchase your own offsets in advance of traveling to compensate for the emissions created and direct the funds toward projects of your choice. (CoolEffect and Sustainable Travel International can assist with this.) Once you arrive, you can look for eco-friendly lodging.

### 4. Shift The Way You Shop

“If and when you shop, do so with intention instead of impulse.”



If and when you shop, do so with intention instead of impulse. If you're in need of new clothes, try thrifting and starting a capsule wardrobe comprised of biodegradable fabrics, like linen. (Here are some tips on how to thrift online—via our favorite shops—and in-person, as well as how to avoid thrift fatigue.)

Even when shopping for items other than clothes, look for fair trade certifications to ensure that the pieces were created in conditions that were safe, empowering to their artisans, and protective of the environment.

## 5. Hold Corporations & Governments Accountable

Conscious consumption can mean buying more from brands whose values align with our own, and buying less—or nothing at all—from the ones that don't.

“We have to reduce consumption, not redirect it.”

Our personal choices will certainly impact our home, but they may fail to take the more powerful changemakers to task. So here are a few ways to do just that:

- **Join a CSO (Civil Society Organization):** To support civil societies in holding their governments accountable when it comes to those aforementioned Sustainable Development Goals, international coalition TAP Network has created a [SDG Accountability Handbook](#). It suggests over 14 approaches for citizens to take, including both informal processes (like engaging with the media and hosting public outreach campaigns) and formal ones (like contributing to voluntary national reviews and pursuing law reform). For each approach, it provides practical, step-by-step guidance on executing it, from how to conduct a community focus group to how to determine whether or not a government's actions violate the law.

Sustainable living is a lifestyle, practice, and philosophy. And in the face of an increasingly threatened and rapidly degenerating earth, it can often feel as if a single human's small choice can't make a big enough change. But it's the accumulation and transmission of these choices—from opting for reusable face wipes to calling your local representatives—that can make all the difference. Start with yourself and then share what you've learned. Start in your home and then expand into your community. Make it a habit instead of a fad and you'll feel like you're contributing to not just any cause, but the most essential one.



## II. Top 10 Tips for Sustainable Travel

Tourism is at a crossroads, facing the challenge of balancing growth with sustainability. Over the past two decades, the number of international tourist arrivals more than doubled, surpassing 1.4 billion in 2024. While this tourism boom promoted economic growth and personal fulfillment, it often came at the expense of the environment and local communities. As tourism surged, it came hand in hand with gentrification, crowded streets, pollution, and habitat loss.

According to research by Booking.com, 76% of travelers say they want to travel more sustainably. While this shifting mindset is a promising sign many travelers don't know where to begin.

### What is sustainable tourism?

Before we go any further, it's important to clarify what we mean by sustainable travel.

While people often think of sustainability as minimizing our environmental footprint, it is much broader and all-encompassing than this. Sustainable tourism is all about achieving a balance between economic growth, human well-being, and environmental health. It focuses on *reducing tourism's negative impacts* and on *maximizing its positive benefits* for communities, cultures, ecosystems, and the planet. Sustainable tourism accounts for both the immediate impacts felt today as well as those longer-term impacts that will be experienced by future generations.



Contrary to traditional perceptions, sustainable travel goes beyond protecting the environment to also account for tourism's impacts on people, cultures, and economies.

## How to start traveling more sustainably

While it's one thing to understand what sustainable travel means, it's another to actually put it into practice. That's why we've rounded up our top ten tips for sustainable travel to help you be a more eco-friendly and socially conscious traveler. As you read, think about which practices you can adopt when you travel.

### 1. Get off the beaten path

Prior to the pandemic, many destinations were literally being loved to death as they became victims of their own popularity. Historic cities, beaches, and other tourist hotspots were being overrun by hordes of visitors, a phenomenon that is now known as "overtourism."

### 2. Slow down and stay awhile

It can be easy to get caught up trying to cram as much as possible into a trip. After all, this may be the only time you visit the destination. Though a packed itinerary may seem ideal on paper, you'll likely spend the majority of your vacation rushing from one place to another. While you may tick off lots of bucket list sights, you'll miss out on actually getting to know the destination. Not to mention, this fast-paced "hit and run" style of tourism is a surefire recipe for stress.

Do yourself a favor and give yourself more time to explore the destination. Instead of taking multiple shorter trips each year, opt for just one longer vacation. Once you've



reached your destination, park yourself in one area for a while instead of hopping from one place to the next.



Taking a cooking class with a local host is a great (and tasty!) way to learn about the local food culture.

Spending more time in a destination makes for more authentic, memorable, and meaningful travel experiences. At the same time, it reduces pressure on the cities and communities you visit while creating greater benefits for the local businesses you support. An extra bonus: slow travel is also better for the environment since it reduces the amount of carbon emissions generated by flying or driving between destinations.

### 3. Use efficient modes of transportation

In addition to traveling slow, there are other ways that you can reduce the carbon emissions produced by your trip. Approximately 8% of the world's carbon emissions are caused by travel and tourism. As such, the travel industry is a significant contributor to climate change, which is one of the gravest threats to the future of tourism, people, and the world.

Air travel, driving, and other forms of transportation make up the largest part of tourism's carbon footprint. Though all modes of transportation require energy, some are more efficient and cleaner than others. How you get to/from and around your destination makes a difference.





#### 4. Conserve water and energy

Beyond transportation, tourism also relies on energy for heating, lighting, and electricity. This along with intensive water use by tourists can put great strain on local water supplies and energy infrastructure. Tourists often consume significantly more water and energy than local residents and many destinations struggle to keep up with the demand. As global temperatures rise and the population grows, it will exacerbate this problem even further.

#### 5. Offset your carbon footprint

While you should always do what you can to minimize your energy usage, some carbon emissions will remain unavoidable. You can compensate for these inevitable greenhouse gas emissions through a process known as “carbon offsetting.”

When offsetting your footprint, just be sure to go through a reputable provider to ensure you’re creating the greatest impact.

#### 6. Keep your dollars local

The best way to ensure host communities reap the benefits of tourism is by supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs. Consider staying in locally-owned homestays and guesthouses rather than expat-owned hotels or international chains. Dine at local restaurants and savor traditional dishes made with locally-sourced ingredients. Get out of your comfort zone and have some fun navigating the local market – buy spices grown by a local farmer or purchase jewelry made by a local artisan. Although haggling is expected in many cultures and okay to do, don’t be stingy and pay a fair price. Book excursions led by local guides or learn a new skill

from a local expert by signing up for a weaving workshop or surfing lessons. If you book a packaged tour, choose an operator that prioritizes local suppliers.



While it may be tempting to give money to beggars, it's best to avoid this practice as it often causes more harm than good. At its worst, begging can be a form of human trafficking and travelers' well-intentioned gifts can perpetuate a system that keeps children out of school and forces them onto the streets. Even if this isn't the case, giving money to beggars can fuel a dependence on tourist handouts. A better alternative is to make a contribution to a local charity that empowers people through skills development, education, micro-loans, or access to social services. You can help promote the equitable distribution of wealth by patroning businesses that are owned or managed by marginalized groups such as women, indigenous populations, or minorities.

## 7. Respect local communities

One of the incredible things about travel is that it offers a glimpse into other traditions, beliefs, and ways of life. Seize this opportunity to expand your horizons by embracing the differences and soaking up the local culture.

### **III. 7 easy-care indoor plants for living rooms — minimal time, maximum impact**





If you ask us, indoor plants for living rooms are as necessary as the sofa and throw pillows.

No room is complete without a pop of green, so we asked gardeners which easy-going plants lend themselves best for our socializing sanctuaries. Our experts spill on seven varieties that will look good, require minimal effort, and even bring a hint of drama to your space — we're looking at you, bird of paradise.

Now's the time to put those small living room ideas into action and allow the pros' favorite low-maintenance indoor plants breathe life into your space.

"For plant parenting success in your living room, remember to match your light, lifestyle, and care level to your plant picks, and you'll enjoy lush, beautiful houseplants for years to come," says Stacy Ling, gardening expert and creator of Bricks 'n Blooms.

Depending on what type of plant you're working with, you'll want to place it in the proper locale: a south-facing direction offers high light, east and west-facing offers medium light, and north-facing offers low or indirect light.

"Many plants can grow really well indoors, but the amount of light your living room has will play a key role in which you should choose," says Lorin Nielsen, the head horticulturist at Epic Gardening. "Some plants tolerate low-light conditions. Others are better in brighter spaces."

While each plant baby will require its own specific needs, these selections complement small living room feng shui and will soften your aesthetic with a peace-inducing natural touch.



Before making a decision, start with your lighting availability in the living room and consider your lifestyle before selecting a plant.

## 1. Snake plant



Caring for a snake plant is quite simple, making it a no-brainer for the living room. Even better? It looks great.

"Forget the fuss; let the soil dry out between waterings, and your living room sanctuary will flourish," says Meg Cain, founder of The ZEN Succulent. "Dust their leaves occasionally to keep them breathing easy, and voila — you've got a thriving green retreat that practically takes care of itself."

But are snake plants toxic to pets? If you have furry friends in tow, you might want to give snake plants, and all plants for that matter, a home that Fido cannot reach.

If you're doing some shopping, snake plants at The Home Depot vary in size and also have cute planters, which is a necessity, of course.

## 2. ZZ plant



"Picture glossy, deep green leaves that practically shine — that's the ZZ plant," Stacy says. "It thrives in both bright and indirect light, needs minimal watering, and can even handle periods of neglect. Talk about a forgiving friend!"

When you're arranging furniture in a small living room, top everything off with a ZZ plant on your coffee table or shelving unit. Costa Farms' ZZ Plant on Amazon is budget-friendly and comes highly rated by over 6000 shoppers.

### 3. Peace lily



One of the biggest outdated home decor trends is sticking to single-purpose furniture and accessories. The same can be said about apartment gardening ideas. Look for plants that give you more.

"Peace Lilies, known for their beautiful white blooms, also purify the air, says Gene Caballero, co-founder of Green Pal. "They prefer medium to low light and require consistent moisture without overwatering."

#### 4. Spider plant





If you really want to take your green thumb skills to new levels, working with a spider plant is the way to go, according to Stacy. A variety of spider plants are available on Amazon, and we particularly like this pre-potted spider plant with macrame hanger.

"Not only is the spider plant easy to care for, but it also gifts you with baby spiderettes that you can propagate for yourself, or share with your plant-loving friends," she says. "Bright indirect light is its happy place, but it can handle lower light too. Just let the soil dry between waterings."

## 5. Giant bird of paradise



One of the most common small living room mistakes is forgetting to include natural elements. If you have a little extra room in your gathering zone, let a bigger plant flourish there.

"When it comes to living rooms, generally we have a little more space to play with. This gives us the opportunity to have some amazing feature plants that can grow larger," says Dominic Hooghuis, co-founder of The Plant Runner.

## **IV. 7 Ways To Going Green With Your Move**

Adopting a sustainable lifestyle has become the need of an hour. According to a recent study, around 84 per cent of plastic waste goes to landfills. This poses a potential threat to the ecosystems, leading to environmental impacts such as climate change, drought, bushfires, etc.

However, you can make a huge difference by reducing the consumption of non-renewable resources, single-use plastics and energy when preparing for a house move.

From downsizing your house to booking eco-conscious removalists Brisbane, you can do plenty of things to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions throughout the journey.

Here are the 7 most reliable ways to help you go green with your home relocation. Incorporate these simple hacks into your next move and protect your planet from a carbon footprint.

## 1. Donate, Sell or Recycle Unwanted Items

Believe it or not! Downsizing is one of the best ways to go green. It is good to declutter your home and get rid of items you no longer need.

Instead of adding waste into the landfill, prepare a strategy to make the most out of your household items you no longer need and help organise your move. So, you can do the following to get rid of unwanted items in a sustainable way:

**Sell:** Organise a garage sale to get rid of pre-loved items and earn a few dollars.

**Donate:** Help underprivileged people by donating old furniture, clothing, books and other unwanted items to the local charity.

**Recycle:** You can drop off your broken or other household items at the local recycling centre. Also, dispose of hazardous waste before you move out, such as pesticides, chemical cleaners, and batteries.

## 2. Use Basic Household Items For Packing

You can save both money and the environment by using basic items for packing and cushioning your precious possessions, such as décor items, lamps, picture frames, clothes, etc. You can use:

- Old towels to safeguard your glass items
- Blankets and bedsheets
- Old newspapers to wrap plates
- Egg crates, etc
- Luggage and bags, etc

## 3. Invest in Eco-friendly Packing Peanuts

You no longer need plastic-based packing peanuts to fill empty spaces in your moving boxes. These are made from polystyrene and other petroleum-related plastics that increase the plastic waste and cause pollution.





Instead, use biodegradable packing peanuts that are made from cornstarch and wheat. You can also choose peanuts made from recycled paper and other stuff.

#### 4. Get Used Moving Boxes

Sturdy cardboard boxes can help protect your household belongings while in transit. A well-packed box can keep your delicate items intact during shifting, loading and transportation.

However, buying different types and sizes of boxes can take a lot of toll on the environment. So, you can look for used cardboard boxes that are available in good condition.

Ask for free boxes from a local grocery store, bookstore or liquor shop. You can also get them from U-haul, recycling centres or an online platform for free.

You can also use containers, dressing drawers, crates and other available storage boxes to pack your household items safely. This can also help you save a lot of money if you have a serious financial crunch.

#### 5. Look for Green Moving Services

If you have decided to book experienced removalists in Brisbane, look for a company that strictly adheres to green moving practices. It is good to check for key aspects, including:

- Biodiesel moving trucks
- Uses eco-friendly packing supplies
- Manages Paperwork digitally
- Offers Reusable crates

Ask relevant questions to professionals related to eco-friendly moving services and reduce carbon footprint in the environment by making the right choices.

## 6. Minimise Back-and-Forth Trips

This is one of the best hacks to ensure a green move. Instead of making small trips to and from your new residence, focus on getting all your household items transported by removalists in one go.

Create an inventory of your items, and let professionals bring the right-sized moving truck. This will reduce fuel consumption while saving you a lot of time and money.

Read on useful tips to understand cubic metres when renting the right size of moving truck.

## 7. Dispose of Hazardous Items Carefully

There is no denying that store-bought cleaners, air fresheners, batteries, paint, and pesticides can cause serious damage to the environment if not disposed of properly.

These can contaminate the water bodies, wildlife, human beings and, of course, soil. So, it is good to dispose of hazardous household items carefully when relocating your home.



Pro Tip: Make a list of items that can pose a threat to the environment, and never pack any flammable liquid and corrosive products when relocating your home. You can contact the removalists in Brisbane and list down the items that can't be relocated due to safety protocols.

There are myriads of benefits related to green moving practices. If you are concerned about the environmental effects, consider these 7 tips and go green with your next home relocation.

## **V. Sustainable Strategies for Packing and Moving to a New Home**

Moving to a new home can be stressful, but it's also a great time to rethink how you approach the process. It's easy to overlook how much waste moving creates, from packing materials to fuel for transportation. The good news is that it's possible to make the process eco-friendly with a few simple tweaks. Apart from helping the environment, sustainable moving practices can also make your move easier and more organized.





These changes don't have to be complicated. With some creative thinking, you can reduce waste, declutter, and make the process more efficient.

Let's explore how to keep your move green with a few simple strategies.

### 1. Hire Professional Movers

One of the best ways to make your move smoother and greener is to hire professional movers. You might think that doing it yourself is more eco-friendly, but that's not always the case. Professional movers are experts in packing and organizing, which means fewer trips back and forth. Fewer trips mean less gas used, and less gas means fewer emissions. Plus, they're pros at loading trucks in a way that maximizes space, reducing the number of trucks needed.

### 2. Use Recycled or Reusable Packing Materials

Packing up an entire house can require a lot of materials, but that doesn't mean you have to use brand-new cardboard boxes and bubble wrap. Instead, try to use what you already have on hand, like suitcases, laundry baskets, and storage bins. These items serve double duty—moving your things and then being used again after the move. If you do need boxes, ask local stores for their used ones or borrow them from friends.

There are also more eco-friendly alternatives to the usual packing materials. Instead of plastic bubble wrap, consider using old towels, blankets, or newspaper to wrap fragile items. You can also buy biodegradable packing peanuts or look into renting reusable plastic bins. These simple swaps can reduce the amount of waste generated from packing and make your move more sustainable.

### 3. Donate or Sell Unwanted Items

Moving is the perfect time to declutter, and instead of throwing things away, you can donate or sell them. Not only will this reduce the amount of stuff you have to move, but it also helps keep perfectly good items out of landfills. Begin sorting through your things and setting aside anything you don't need or use anymore. You can donate clothes, books, and furniture to local charities or sell them online through marketplaces like Facebook or Craigslist.

Decluttering before a move is a win-win. You reduce the amount of packing you need to do, and someone else gets to benefit from the items you no longer need. Besides, the less stuff you have, the fewer boxes you'll need, which cuts down on packing materials and space in the moving truck. It's a simple way to make your move lighter, greener, and less stressful.

#### 4. Move Efficiently to Reduce Carbon Emissions

Efficiently planning your move is one of the simplest ways to reduce your environmental impact. The fewer trips you need to make, the less fuel you'll burn. Start by consolidating items and packing them tightly into as few boxes as possible. This way, it's easier for movers to fit everything into one trip, saving time and reducing the emissions from multiple journeys. If you're moving locally, try to choose the shortest, most fuel-efficient route.



Another way to lower your carbon footprint is to move during off-peak hours when there's less traffic. Less time idling in traffic means fewer emissions from the moving truck. You can also ask your moving company about their vehicle options—some movers often use more fuel-efficient trucks, which is a great way to make your move even greener.

## 5. Pack Energy-Efficient Appliances

Moving is the perfect time to think about upgrading your appliances. Older appliances can use a lot of energy, so before you pack them up and take them to your new place, consider switching to energy-efficient models. Energy Star-rated appliances, for example, use less electricity and water, which can save you money in the long run while also reducing your overall energy consumption.

If you don't want to take your old appliances with you, consider donating or recycling them instead. Many charities accept gently used appliances, or you can contact local recycling centers to dispose of them responsibly. This way, you avoid adding more waste to landfills, and someone else may get used out of what you no longer need.

## 6. Opt for Digital Over Paper

In the digital age, there's really no need to rely on paper to organize your move. Rather than printing checklists, schedules, and documents, you can keep everything online. Use apps or spreadsheets to create your moving checklist and track what's packed in each box. Not only is this more environmentally friendly, but it also keeps your information easily accessible and less likely to get lost.

# **VI. Sustainable Products and Habits for Your Everyday Life**

Establishing sustainable routines can be easy and give your lifestyle a boost. Take a look at our selection of eco-friendly products that you won't be able to live without them once you try them.





Implementing sustainable habits has been a growing global concern. Yet, most people assume that adopting environmentally friendly practices is complex and expensive. At THON, we've gathered 11 greener products that promise to protect the environment and transform your daily life.

### 1. Reusable bags



It seems like an obvious tip, but the truth is that there are still many people who haven't adopted this practice. The use of plastic bags is not only harmful to the environment but also to your wallet, as you have to pay for them with every purchase. Even if you reuse them for the next purchases, they wear out quickly.

One tip is to buy or make your own tote bags and leave them in the handbags you must use for shopping or near your shopping list. This way, you are sure you will remember your eco-bags.

## 2. Eco-friendly necessities



When you are packing your luggage, organizing your shoes, toiletries, and even dirty clothes can be a mess. Instead of storing these items in plastic bags, organize them in necessaires.

Suppose you are one of those people with everything they need in their handbag. In that case, necessaires are also an excellent option to organize it. If you have already made a purchase at THON, you can reuse our sustainable packaging and pack your items.

### 3. Sustainable home textiles





Try to think in the simplest things: bed and bath linen, items your skin comes into contact with daily. Start by reducing your carbon footprint with sustainable bedding, for example. By picking eco-friendly linens, you are also protecting yourself from toxic substances, which may be present at some point in the production process.

#### 4. Fair trade

Eliminating the purchase of clothes in the fast fashion industry may be difficult. Still, the truth is that the production and shipping of these chains are highly polluting. Therefore, reducing the purchase of items in these stores is a big step.

Supporting the growth of local businesses is a great way to avoid buying clothes from fast fashion chains. Remember that although local stores usually charge higher prices, usually their pieces are crafted from prestigious textiles. This makes them last longer and lets your skin breathe. In addition, these companies typically pay fair prices for the production of their products.

#### 5. Cotton buds, reusable wipes and washcloths



In our daily routine, we must take care of our skin. Cleansing well and removing makeup are two essential steps. However, at these moments, we sometimes use a lot of disposable cotton pads, which represents a substantial environmental impact, given the excess water needed to produce the pads. To overcome this, do your routines with **reusable wipes** or **washcloths**.

## CONCLUSION

Sustainability is an ongoing journey, not a one-time effort. By making conscious choices—such as reducing waste, conserving resources, and supporting eco-friendly products—anyone can contribute to a greener future. Small changes lead to big impacts, and together, we can create a more sustainable world for future generations.

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