



40 easy ways to go greener at home $\hat{=}$ besides recycling

1. [Plant an herb garden](#). It's good to have a reminder around of where our food originates, and this one is super easy.
2. Switch all your lightbulbs to CFLs (or at least switch a few).
3. [Create a homemade compost bin for \\$15](#).
4. Switch one appliance to an energy efficient model (look for the "[energy star](#)" label).



Photo from [Flip & Tumble](#)

5. Stop using disposable bags. Order some reusable bags—my favorites are [Flip & Tumble](#). Or, [make your own](#)—they're insanely easy.
6. Buy an inexpensive reusable water bottle, and stop buying plastic disposable bottles (my favorite is the [Kleen Kanteen with the sport cap](#)). Then watch [The Story of Bottled Water](#), a short movie about the bottled water phenomena.
7. Wash laundry in cold water instead of hot.
8. Turn off lights when you leave the room.
9. Don't turn on lights at all for as long as you can—open your curtains and enjoy natural light.
10. Drive the speed limit, and combine all your errands for the week in one trip.



Photo by [Kamyar Adi](#)

11. Better yet, walk or ride a bike to your errands that are two miles or closer.
12. Support your local economy and [shop at your farmer's market](#).
13. Turn off your computer completely at night.
14. Research whether you can [sign up for green power](#) from your utility company.
15. Pay your bills online. Not only is it greener, it's a [sanity saver](#).
16. Put a stop to unsolicited mail—sign up to [opt out of pre-screened credit card offers](#). While you're at it, if you're in the U.S., go ahead and [make sure you're on the "do not call" list](#), just to make your life more peaceful.



17. Reuse scrap paper. Print on two sides, or let your kids color on the back side of used paper.
18. Conduct a [quick energy audit](#) of your home.
19. Subscribe to good eco-friendly blogs—I dig [Keeper of the Home](#), [Kitchen Stewardship](#), and [Live Renewed](#).
20. Before buying anything new, first check your local [Craigslist](#) or [Freecycle](#).
21. Support local restaurants that use food derived less than 100 miles away, and learn more about [the benefits of eating locally](#).
22. Fix leaky faucets.
23. Make your own household cleaners. I've got quite a few recipes in my first book, [Organized Simplicity](#).



Photo by [Kasia](#)

24. [Line dry your laundry.](#)

25. Watch [The Story of Stuff](#) with your kids, and talk about the impact your household trash has on our landfills (I don't love some of their politics, but I can overlook it when watching).

26. [Learn with your kids about another country or culture](#), expanding your knowledge to other sides of the world.

28. Lower the temperature on your hot water heater.

29. Unplug unused chargers and appliances.

30. [Repurpose something](#). It's fun.

31. [Collect rainwater](#), and use it to water your houseplants and garden.



Photo by [Lori Ann](#)

32. [Switch to cloth diapers](#) – or at least do a combination with disposables. [Even one cloth diaper per day](#) means 365 fewer disposables in the landfill each year.
33. Switch to [shade-grown](#) coffee with the “[Fair Trade](#)” label.
34. Use a [Diva Cup](#) for your monthly cycles. At the risk of TMI, I’ve been using mine for more than five years now. (*Update*: Eight years and counting.)
35. [Use cloth instead of paper to clean your kitchen](#). Be frugal, and make these rags out of old towels and t-shirts.
36. [Use cloth napkins](#) daily instead of paper.
37. Read [Animal, Vegetable, Miracle](#), and be utterly inspired.



38. Repurpose glass jars as leftover containers and bulk storage, [especially in the kitchen.](#)

39. Watch the myriad documentaries on Netflix about the food industry and environment. Some of my favorites are [Food Inc.](#), [Amazing Planet](#), [Discovery Atlas](#), and [Food Matters](#). My daughter was totally mesmerized with that last one—it's insanely important that our kids understand where our food originates.

40. [Donate to—and shop at—thrift stores.](#) You'll be recycling perfectly usable items, you'll be supporting your local economy, and you'll be saving money.

Which of these do you already do? Which ones are you going to focus on this next year? And what can you add to the list?