

TIPS FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE HOUSEHOLD

RECYCLE AND DO IT WELL

Recycling is great, but it only works if you do it properly. Rules vary from place to place, so you should check your local recycling rules. Here are a few general ones to stick to!

- ✔ **Check the label of a product to see if it can be recycled.** If you're unsure about anything, look it up on www.mywaste.ie
- ✔ **Keep your recycling loose.** Don't stuff it in boxes or tie it up in plastic bags - otherwise the machine can't sort it.
- ✔ **Make sure your plastic is clean before recycling it.** Dirty plastic and plastic that contains non-recyclable materials, can lead to cross-contamination, making the process of recycling more energy consuming, or even to a discarded batch of recyclables that end up in the landfill.
- ✔ **Food scraps should go to the compost bin.** If not, they end up in the landfill, where organic materials decompose without oxygen, producing methane which is a 25 times stronger than carbon dioxide (at causing global warming).

LESS PLASTIC IS FANTASTIC

Did you know that even if it's properly recycled, the same bit of plastic can only be recycled 2 to 3 times? Whereas glass and aluminium are infinitely recyclable! Plastic is not great because it often ends up in a landfill and takes a really long time to break down. When it does, it releases toxic chemicals into the environment and leaves microplastics behind. But it seems to be everywhere. Just in the supermarket alone, you'll find so much is wrapped in plastic, often unnecessarily so. It takes conscious effort to try and avoid it.

Here is a few things you can do:

- ✔ **Bring your own produce bag** to the shop, to avoid using the plastic bags you're offered there.
- ✔ **Choose products not packaged in plastic** but packaged in cardboard, I'm glass or tinned.
- ✔ **Always have a reusable bottle, cup and bag on the go.** Many of the to-go cups offered in coffee shops, have a plastic lining, which makes them unrecyclable. If you need need a to-go cup, look out for 'compostable' ones.

DROP FAST FASHION

It's time to slow down on fast fashion. This model of fashion is all about newness, and we're encouraged to buy new things we don't need, discarding the ones we don't use anymore. Every year, the amount of items from the fashion industry that end up in a landfill is mind boggling: an estimated 92 million tons of textile waste is produced each year. What's worse is that many of these clothes are made of synthetic fibres, which means that once they end up in a landfill, they will breakdown to microplastics that pollute the air, soil and water. Also, by washing these clothes, half a million tonnes of plastic microfibrils are shed and end up in the ocean. So what can we do? Firstly, **buy only what you need.** Secondly, **buy second-hand clothes** where you can. Thirdly, when buying new clothes, **avoid synthetic fibres.** And finally, **wash your clothes on a low heat and spin** to reduce microfibre shedding - it'll help your clothes last longer!

BUY LESS AND BETTER MEAT

Farming animals is one of the biggest contributors to climate change worldwide as meat and dairy production contribute 14.5% of the planet-warming gases. Although many farmers in Ireland subscribe to the Bord Bia's Origin Green programme, as consumers, we also need to adopt more sustainable practices.

So what can you do?

- ✔ **Eat better meat.** Choose grass-fed, organic and local meat and dairy when you can. Look at the labels to make sure you know what kind of meat and dairy you are buying.
- ✔ **Reduce red meat consumption:** reducing the amount of red meat you eat can significantly lower your carbon footprint.
- ✔ Embrace at least **one plant-based day a week.**

EAT BETTER FISH

Overfishing is a huge problem that is leaving our oceans much emptier than they should be. Also, some seafood is farmed unsustainably. For example, mangrove forests are cut down to make way for farming prawns, and there is a type of fishing which uses dynamite, which damages coral reefs. Buying sustainably sourced fish instead helps lower the demand for harmful fishing practices.

So to eat better fish you should...

- ✔ **Look out for certifications** by the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) or the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC).
- ✔ Buy **local** Irish seafood!



REFUSE,

When I want a new clothing item, I will wait a few days before buying it so I don't make spontaneous purchases!

 **ADD TO THE LIST!**

REDUCE,

On Tuesdays and Thursdays we will eat plant-based meals

I will check on Stopfoodwaste.ie for tips on how to avoid wasting food

REUSE,

This Christmas, I will use the wrapping paper I saved from my birthday, to wrap the presents

REPAIR,

I will bring my shoes or belts to the shoe shop to fix them instead of getting rid of them
 I will find a repair place at repairmystuff.ie

RECYCLE

I will wash my plastic recycling before putting it in the recycling bin

