

Simply Green Newsletter Earth Day 2019 Edition



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Inspiration for Earth Day-

In the late 1960's, Senator Gaylord Nelson thought of creating a special day to celebrate planet Earth because he was worried about its fate. The senator talked to members of Congress and the president about pollution and other environmental-related planetary problems. President Kennedy began visiting parts of the U.S. to discuss these problems.

Creation of Earth Day-

Senator Nelson and others still didn't think enough was being done to help Earth, so they created Earth Day as a way to teach people about the importance of improving our environment. Senator Nelson wrote to colleges and put an article in Scholastic magazine hoping children would join Earth Day's cause. After word got around, the first Earth Day was held April 22, 1970. Many people consider this event the birth of the "Going Green" movement. Observed every year on April 22, this day of environmental awareness has grown by leaps and bounds over the past 48 years. From the historic 2016 signing of the [Paris Climate Agreement](#) to the 2017 [March For Science](#), it has become a day of great significance for eco activists. Coordinated by the Earth Day Network, there are now annual events held in 193 countries around the world to promote the idea that we, as humans, should protect the environment.

The truth is that we shouldn't wait for Earth Day to practice environmental stewardship. Green living is a lot easier than you might think. It doesn't require some big, grand gesture, but rather lots of little incremental changes that collectively can reduce our negative impact on the planet. We call them "baby steps to going green." Here are some tips to accomplish those steps:

- 1) Go to the [America Recycles Day](#) website, enter your zip code and Join An Event (most are on/around Nov. 15) in your community. Near our office, we located more than a dozen events ranging from aluminum can round-ups benefitting local schools to metal and electronics recycling.
- 2) Got something to get rid of that others might be able to use? Goodwill will take just about anything you're willing to donate and give you a tax receipt. But if you don't want to deal with the trouble of loading, driving, etc. we recommend [Freecycle](#). There, you can list just about anything (we've given away mirrors, kids' play sets, old toys, and more) and people will come pick it up! Craigslist is a good site also!
- 3) Make it a point to buy products made from recycled materials. Do research online to find companies that specialize in eco-friendly items, including Alchemy Goods, Ecoist, Eco-Artware.com, Greenandmore.com, and TerraCycle, Inc. Make sure your money is going to companies that believe in and support the development of a green economy.
- 4) Start composting! You can compost items such as dead flowers and plant-based kitchen scraps to shredded paper and used coffee grounds. It's remarkably easy to do, helps to reduce waste going to the local landfill, and provides a nutrient boost for your flowers and/or vegetable garden.

- 5) Paper products account for about 1/3 of the waste commonly found in landfills. Sponges, wash-cloths, and towels are cheaper, reusable, and take up less space than paper towels. And when they get dirty, they're easily disinfected by boiling them in hot water. No waste necessary!
- 6) Before there were chemical-laden cleaning products on grocery store shelves, people used natural things to clean. Lemons have AMAZING antibacterial qualities and will leave your kitchen smelling fresh as a spring morning. Even tough stains on kitchen countertops can be removed by simply leaving lemon juice on the stain for a few minutes, and then wiping it away with a wet cloth.
- 7) The microwave is your friend. Microwave ovens use up to 80% less energy than a conventional oven does. It also cooks faster, leaving you more time to commit to other environmentally-friendly activities.
- 8) A mixture of vinegar and water makes a miracle cleaner when it comes to getting rid of mildew buildup in the tub. Simply spray the solution on the problem area, let sit, then wipe away. Soap scum can be removed with a baking soda paste composed of baking soda and dish soap. Scrub with a toothbrush to remove stubborn stains.
- 9) To maintain a sparkling clean toilet, use a mixture of baking soda and vinegar rather than harmful chemicals. Scrub the toilet once a week to keep it at its cleanest. Add dish soap to the mix to tackle tough stains and make your sink sparkle. Baking soda and warm water with lemon juice added works better than Pine-Sol on your bathroom floors as well!
- 10) Ceiling fans can be used to create a breeze to circulate the air from your AC throughout the house more efficiently.
- 11) Closing your windows, shades and blinds keeps the sun from heating up your house too quickly. When night falls, open the windows toward prevailing winds to catch the cooling cross-breeze.
- 12) Installing a low-flow shower head costs just \$20 but this simple screw-on attachment can reduce water usage by 50-70%. Installing a DIY shower shutoff valve will allow you to cut the water off while you get soapy without having to re-set water temperature.
- 13) Create a DIY rainwater harvesting (rain barrel) system for your lawn and garden. All you need is a 50-gallon barrel, a screen for filtering and a spigot. You might even find building plans online or a website that sells them pre-made.
- 14) To save money on road trips, drive sensibly, maintain a steady speed, and remove excess weight (100 lbs. in the trunk reduces your mpg by 2%). Keep your engine tuned, tires properly inflated, the oil changed regularly and drive a gas efficient vehicle.
- 15) Book green hotels for your vacation, the ones that use alternative energy sources, use water efficiently, that have a recycling program, and employ local people and local products. When you buy souvenirs while traveling, seek out local artisans and buy local foods and produce to support the economies of wonderful American towns and cities!

*Article found on greenglobaltravel.com: "Going Green: 60 Simple Tips for Earth Day & Everyday."