

REFUSE TO BUY OR ACCEPT:

Bags, plastic Use reusable containers (jars or cloth bags) for bulk items. Instead of sandwich baggies, use reusable snack bags, glass food storage with silicone sleeves & lids, or stainless steel lunch boxes. Instead of trash bags, if you have a large wet dry (PUL) bag, the kind for soiled diapers, try it as a waste basket liner. Whenever you bring cash, check or credit with you, bring your reusable shopping bags, too.

Balloons (especially helium) and plastic decorations Depending on the occasion, consider making upcycled fabric bunting (banners) or reusable tissue paper pompoms.

Beverages in plastic bottles Unless you're in a real emergency, drink tap water, filtered if there are safety concerns. BYOB (Bring Your Own Bottle) of your drink of choice and refill when you're on-the-go. If you enjoy fizzy drinks, make them with a carbonator. At a recent Pomfret Green Team event, there was discussion about milk in glass bottles; *Harvest Moon* in Putnam sells raw milk in returnable glass bottles. *The Farm to Table Market at Elm Farm* in East Woodstock also carries milk in glass bottles.

Cigarettes

Cling wrap Use silicone covers or wax-infused cloths like beeswrap.

Coffee & tea bags, in plastic Consider buying beans and loose leaf tea in bulk, and brew in a French Press, or use a fine mesh strainer for tea. Avoid K-cups, individually overwrapped tea bags, styrofoam, and paper coffee cups (lined with plastic). Bring your own travel mug.

Dental floss in plastic containers Try refillable floss. Check out dentallace.com

Disposable...

Diapers, paper napkins, paper towels. Switch to cloth.

Lighters. Use matches or a refillable lighter.

Menstrual products. Switch to cloth or a cup.

Razors. Consider a safety razor instead.

Tableware & table-settings. Use cloth table linens, real plates, glasses, and utensils.

Detergent in plastic...

Dish detergent. Hand-wash with old-fashioned soap or use powdered detergent in cardboard.

Laundry detergent. It can be found in cardboard or an aluminum canisters. Note, if you wash synthetics, the 'scrub' function of the grains of the powder can result in loosening the fibers more than with liquid. Try washing with soap nuts or a bar.

Dryer sheets Hang clothes to dry, otherwise use reusable dryer balls instead of dryer sheets.

Excess packaging Don't buy it if you're unwilling to recycle the packaging that comes with it. Opt for the bar soap, toothpaste, & other items that come without a box, the greeting card that is not overwrapped in a plastic film (better yet, make your own cards).

Fast fashion Buy mostly second-hand, and wash before you wear for the first time, but afterwards only when necessary. When buying new clothes, opt for fewer but higher quality, sustainable fashion. Avoid acrylic. If you're unfamiliar with this issue, check out this short video or the documentary True Cost.

Free samples and swag Say 'no thanks' to give-aways, things handed to you, things that you didn't even want to begin with, including samples and stuff from conferences, expos, businesses and doctor and dentist offices.

Frozen ice cream, regular or dairy-free, store-bought We can't recycle the tubs. If you prefer cups, not cones, bring a stainless steel cup to fill at your favorite 'nice' cream shop.

Gifts, unsustainable in nature Consider giving no-thing but your time or experiences that are in line with your values.

Glitter and anything with glitter on it It may look nice but it is not; glitter is litter.

Junk "food"

Junk mail, catalogs & magazines you no longer wish to receive Cancel those subscriptions. These sites can help: catalogchoice.org and dmachoice.thedma.org

Marketing, consumer culture Consume cautiously. Refuse to buy into the profit-driven, ever-present advertisement industry and marketing messages that promote unrestrained consumption, thoughtless brand loyalty, impulse buying, and materialism. Skip electronics and character-based toys and items for your kids. Ask family & friends to honor this practice as well when buying gifts for your children. Ask doctors and schools to stop providing branded items like Disney character bandages or box-office hero stickers. For more tips, see here.

Packaged products that could be homemade...

Bath and beauty products. Search the web for inspiration on recipes.

Cleaning products. For an all-purpose cleaner, fill a spray bottle with 1 part white vinegar and 4 parts water (great for counters, windows and other household messes).

Frozen meals & snack packs.

Party favors & toys of the 'cheap plastic throwaway' kind Talk to your children about cheap plastic crap. Skip toys that will outlast the joy they bring. Depending on who you're treating, consider favors such as seed packets, books, upcycled art activities, gift certificates, and coupons to local kid-friendly business. If you're planning an event or party, make it zero-waste or at least plastic-free. Let guests know how to help.

Photo cards, on photo paper Well, don't refuse to accept them unless you want to lose friends and family, but do refuse to buy them. They cannot be recycled. If you want to share photos, send them electronically or print them on recyclable paper.

Plastic pens Go with refillable fountain pens or pencils instead.

Products containing unsustainably sourced Palm Oil If you don't know, ask companies what their palm oil policy is. At a minimum, choose companies certified by the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil.

Produce, plastic-wrapped Choose fruit and vegetables not wrapped in plastic. Support your local farms and CSA. Ask produce departments to offer more loose options. Use your own reusable bags for produce. Ask for signage encouraging other shoppers to do the same.

Shampoo, conditioner, etc., plastic packaged Switch to bar shampoo; choose liquid shampoo and other products that can be refilled; opt for Savon de Marseille olive oil soap for an all-purpose soap that can be used for body, hair, clothes, dishes, and even your pet; or make your own products.

Single-use spoons, forks, knives, chopsticks Bring your own reusable dinnerware.

Sponges, synthetic dishwashing Instead, use cut up pieces from an old towel or shirt, wash & reuse. Or, find a plant-based scrubber that can be composted.

Straws and cups, plastic Say "I'd like (whatever you want to drink) without a straw and in a glass or mug, not in plastic." Parents, don't hesitate; wait-staff at several local restaurants seem to have been trained, when they spot a child, to immediately bring water in a cup with a lid and straw. If there's a chance you'll want a straw, keep a reusable straw on hand.

Tissues Use handkerchiefs.

To-go-containers, plastic "Eat and drink for here." If you order sauce or dressing on the side, ask for it to be in a ceramic cup. For leftovers or take-out, bring your own containers.

Unsustainable animal products & seafood If you do eat lamb, cow, pig, or poultry products, opt for right-sized portions of local grass-fed, organic, and pasture-raised.

Vegetable stock, store-bought Save veggie scraps (garlic, onion, carrot, potato peels, mushroom tops & leftover herbs) in a container in the freezer until you're ready to make stock.

REFUSE. REDUCE. REUSE. ROT. RECYCLE.

- **Refuse to remain silent.** Hold elected officials accountable and call out companies willingly polluting the planet for profit. Have the conversations you've avoided for fear they could be difficult or won't matter. Speak up when you spot a local business throwing recyclables in the trash. Let your loved ones know how you're feeling about the holiday gift-giving season, months in advance. Blurt out your thoughts on how advertising is brain damage when you and the stranger beside you on the bus both notice the "Smart" Water advertisement. And, allow your actions to speak for themselves; be bolder with & more conspicuous about your actions to consume/waste less.
- **Refuse to wait for someone else** to step up and steer us the right way.
- **Refuse stuff you don't really need.** This includes everything from nicknacks to more electronics to eco-friendly alternatives. Don't attempt to fill emotional voids with material goods. When the thought occurs to acquire something new, be clear as to the reasons you want it. Consider not just its price but its life cycle as well as the cost it's taken on the natural world, from habitat loss, air and water pollution, to climate disruption.

Wallet Insert



Why do I want it? Do I need it? Am I looking for meaning or identity in it? Do I have something else that could serve the same purpose? Could I make it myself? Could I borrow it; swap for it; buy it used? Where, by whom, & under what conditions was it made? What is it made of? Does it contain toxic chemicals? What is it packaged in? How long will it last? Will it serve multiple purposes? How will it be maintained? Can it and its packaging be recycled? Can it be composted? Is it in alignment with the kind of world I want and the quality of life I value? Can I wait to buy it later?