



ZERO WASTE 101 CHEAT SHEET

Ready to reduce your waste? Not sure where to start? Going zero waste isn't easy, but it is easy to take steps towards reducing your waste. This Zero Waste 101 Cheat Sheet has you covered with 9 simple steps to help you make some of the basic changes you can take to reduce your waste.

1. REFUSE: Start saying "no thank you" to things you don't need in your life. Request no gifts at special events; decline freebies; opt-out of junk mail; unsubscribe from lists, podcasts, magazines and papers that do not serve you; skip the gift bags; refuse to use single-use plastics. Refuse the unnecessary in your life.

2. SIMPLIFY: Less is better. Let that be your new mantra! Shop less, consume less media, and reduce the extraneous from your life. Find out what is most important to you, and stick to that. Share, borrow and rent instead of own, where relevant. Declutter and donate responsibly. You'll feel lighter with less!

3. REUSE: Ditch the disposables. Choose to reuse instead, and carry a zero waste kit with you on the go. Bring your most needed items, from a reusable coffee cup to water bottle and cutlery or reusable bag.

4. REPAIR: Did something break? Find out if you can fix it, or find someone who can repair it for you. Let your automatic reaction be to repair your stuff rather than to toss it immediately. Trashing our stuff is a last resort if it can be fixed and given a new life.

5. RECYCLE & COMPOST: Learn your waste management system and stick to it! Find out what actually gets recycled and what gets landfilled, and learn to compost if that's an option where you live. Even if you don't have a municipal compost system, there are often many options for home and community composting.

6. CONDUCT A TRASH AUDIT: Once you get a better handle on your waste management system, find out what you're tossing in the trash and the recycling bins over a period of time (either a week or a month, it's up to you). Take notes, and find zero or low waste alternatives for items you commonly toss in each bin.

7. SHOP ZERO WASTE: Next time you're out shopping, determine if you can buy the least wasteful version of what you're purchasing. Try shopping with your own containers and bags. Buy things that are built to last and that are repairable. Shop secondhand when possible. Ask yourself if you can borrow or swap for what you need instead. Also consider the full life-cycle of an item, like how it was made and how it can be disposed of if/when the time comes. Be an informed and conscious consumer.

8. ENJOY EXPERIENCES OVER THINGS: Instead of shopping for fun, find hobbies and activities that you love instead. Consume less stuff, and enjoy more life.

9. DON'T TRY TO BE PERFECT: Do what works best for you given your circumstances, community, and budget. Have fun with the process!

