

Become a recycling guru

Lightbulbs, batteries, old electronics....all diverted from landfill because of you! Recycle everything you can, compost your food scraps and you're well on your way. Check out recyclebc.ca and rbc.ca for all your recycling questions.

But here's the thing to remember- recycling is good, but it's not a complete solution. Many products can only 'downcycle' into lower quality materials that can't be recycled again. That's why going Zero Waste is so important!

Speak up!

You didn't ask for all this packaging so why are you the one left cleaning up the mess? Use your voice as a voter and consumer, and let politicians and businesses know that you want stricter laws and greener practices.

Connect

Zero Waste is a growing movement worldwide. Find other ZeroWasters locally or online, and share tips and success stories. Or join up with the dedicated 'garbage geeks' of SPEC's Waste Committee and help us spread the word!



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How to go ZERO WASTE in 10 Steps



The average Canadian produces over **two kilograms of garbage a day**, making us the world's trashiest country!

Use these tips to reduce your household garbage by half (or more!)

Switching to a Zero Waste lifestyle won't happen overnight. Rather than trying to go cold turkey, try adding a new habit once you've mastered one. And don't worry about being perfect- just do what's right for you and your life!

The Easy Three

That would be plastic bags, disposable coffee cups and bottled water. Get into the habit of carrying a reusable bag with you. Put a reusable water bottle in your gym bag, and a travel mug in your car and at your desk at work.

Buy Secondhand

For every one pound of trash you create at home, industry created **nine** pounds of waste in manufacturing those products. Always donate any 'stuff' that's still got some life in it, and buy secondhand whenever you can. You'll extend the life of already existing goods, keeping them out of the landfill, and you'll avoid all the packaging and waste that come with new goods. Plus you'll save tons of money!

Green your clean

If your cleaning product is classified as hazardous waste, do you really want it in your home? With **Environmental Working Group's** online database, you can search thousands of cleaning and beauty products to find out which are safe and which to avoid! Vinegar and baking soda work wonders!

Find your stores

Does your grocery store lack a bulk section? Coffee shop wrap muffins in saran wrap? It might be time for a switch. Over time you'll find *your* coffee shop, *your* butcher, *your* bakery, places that are willing to work with you on using less packaging. Great Vancouver places to visit: local **Farmers' Markets**, the **Soap Dispensary**, **Second Nature Home Boutique**, and **Nada**.

Get Informed!

Why not start with some Vancouver heroes of Zero Waste? Check out local filmmakers **Jen Rustemeyer** and **Grant Baldwin's** documentaries 'Just Eat It' and 'The Clean Bin Project'. Local blogger and activist **Taina Uitto** has a great website at plasticmanners.com. For further tips, check out **Bea Johnson's** book [Zero Waste Home](#).

Invest in your kit

With the right tools, Zero Waste is a breeze. Slowly replace disposable items as they run out with good quality reusables. Start with your shopping kit: reusable bags, drawstring bags for bulk goods and produce, a washable fabric marker, and glass jars for storage.

Some other handy zero waste items include: a metal safety razor, cloth menstrual pads, glass or metal straws, a cloth handkerchief, and a roll of cloth kitchen towels.

Ditch the Disposables

Avoid individually wrapped servings such as juice boxes, snack sized yogurts and coffee pods. If you must buy plastic containers, choose those marked with #1 or #2 over the hard-to-recycle (and toxic!) #6 polystyrene. At a restaurant, ask for "no straw, please!"

Cling wrap and sandwich bags can be replaced with beeswax wraps and reusable containers. And did you know most wet wipes are made of plastic? Choose ones made of bamboo or use a washcloth instead.