



### Holiday To-Do-List

- ~~Buy~~ <sup>Be</sup> presents
- ~~Send gifts~~ <sup>Peace</sup>
- ~~Shop~~ <sup>Donate</sup> for food
- ~~Wrap gifts~~ <sup>Someone in a hug</sup>
- ~~See the lights~~ <sup>Be</sup>

It is estimated that Americans contribute 25% more volume to landfill between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day - approximately one million extra tons per week. The National Retail Federation <https://nrf.com/media-center/press-releases/holiday-spending-reflects-continued-consumer-demand> estimates that consumers will spend an average of \$997.73 on gifts, holiday items and non-gift purchases for themselves and their families this holiday season, and despite the continued supply chain disruption, this is on par with consumer spending last year.

The following tips are ways to reduce the amount of garbage generated during the Holiday season, how to give a gift without buying a gift, and exercise environmental stewardship.

### Reduce Waste

- When entertaining, use reusable dishes, glassware, silverware, and napkins rather than disposables. Have containers on hand to send guests home with leftovers or freeze for another time. Donate unopened, shelf-stable items to a local pantry.
- Take reusable beverage cups and bottles while on the run.
- Compost food organics if service provided.
- Make a list to save time, money and last-minute shopping frenzies.
- Shop with reusable bags – smaller ones for produce and fruit.
- Reuse gift bags or wrap gifts in a piece of cloth or lace, pillow cases, blankets, holiday tins, or comics from the Sunday paper.
- Recycle - flatten cardboard boxes. Remove plastic labels.
- Recycle – glass and plastic bottles, metal cans and pans, food/beverage cartons and non-glitter wrapping paper – empty, clean and loose.
- Recycle burned-out lights – this is a community program – check locally.
- Contact your community to see if holiday trees are picked up for compost.
- Save energy by avoiding decorations that require an outlet.
- Turn down heat before family/guests arrive.
- If going out of town, UNPLUG electronic devices and home appliances.
- Collect water while waiting it to heat up for a shower and use for plants and trees.

### Giving Ideas

- Visit with an elderly or housebound neighbor – take a decorated plant.
- Offer to shop for someone who is homebound.
- Babysit a newborn so his or her parents can get errands done or just catch up on rest.
- Volunteer at a soup kitchen or food pantry.

- Use the money you would spend on gifts to make donations to your favorite charities - either one large one as a family, or smaller ones for each member individually.
- Go gift-free and make the gathering about family being together.
- Give “gifts of the heart” – coupons for house chores, snow shoveling, making a meal, giving a massage, babysitting, etc.
- Give “certificates” for doing things together, like going to a concert, sports events, a movie, ice skating, bowling, or a bike ride.
- Check out SWANCC’s *Eco-Friendly Marketplace Guide*.

### Activities

- Sing Christmas carols at a nursing home.
- Put together a care package and send to troops overseas.
- Share the holidays with a military family whose spouse is in service and can’t make it home.
- Put seed out for the birds.
- Make ornaments from nature, use a pine cone, twig, bark, etc.
- Take a ride or walk around the neighborhood to look at decorated houses.
- Watch classic holiday movies with loved ones.
- Attend the concert of a children’s or youth choir.
- Host a tree-trimming party.
- Host a cookie exchange party.
- Share the religious traditions of your holiday with someone of a different faith.
- Make a family cookbook that showcases your favorite meals along with great pictures.
- Make handmade cards using card fronts from previous years.
- Decorate a large plant with lights and ribbons rather than a Christmas tree.
- Encourage “pay it forward” movements in your community. Start by doing something simple like buying a coffee for a complete stranger.

## Tips to Reduce Waste This Holiday Season

**Rethink** – Reduce – Reuse – Repurpose – Recycle – Compost!

- Donate gently used books to a children's hospital.
- Make a fire in an outdoor fire pit and toast marshmallows while sipping hot chocolate.
- If weather permits, go sledding, build a snowman or have a snowball fight – no matter your age!



**PERSONAL GIFT CERTIFICATE**

Presented To: \_\_\_\_\_

Good For: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_



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Good For: \_\_\_\_\_

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