

A Waste-Free Holiday

Why we care

For most Americans, gift-giving is an integral part of the holidays. But all that gift-giving creates a lot of waste. Americans throw away 25% more trash than usual between Thanksgiving and New Year's. Excess packaging, wrapping paper, and even unwanted gifts can all end up in the landfill; yet 75% of Americans wish that holidays were less materialistic.

Simple, positive change

Recycle:

- Minimize store-bought gifts by drawing names, making your own, or giving services. See [Simplify the Holidays](#) for ideas.
- Choose classic products that will last over time. Avoid plastic and battery operated toys.
- Stay away from foil wrapping paper and foil-lined envelopes that cannot be recycled.
- When mailing gifts, get reusable boxes from liquor stores and cushion with crumbled newspaper or unbuttered popcorn.
- Use [Furoshiki-folded fabric](#), reusable bags, or newspaper comics and colorful yarn for wrapping gifts.
- For entertaining, use washable dinnerware instead of disposables. If you don't have enough, borrow or rent.
- Instead of a cut tree, decorate with fallen greenery that you gather under fir and cedar trees.

Reuse and recycle:

- After the holiday, flatten wrapping paper for reuse and toss into the trash photo-paper cards and paper with foil or glitter. Roll ribbons onto toilet paper rolls and store for later use.
- Recycle your Christmas tree (call Metro for instructions, 503-234-3000).
- Take packaging peanuts and bubble wrap to a mail service shop and block styrofoam to Flair Plastics or Agilyx.

Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at jeanne@earthleaders.org.