

18 Things You Can Easily Do in a Jewish Home to Save the Earth

1. **Reduce your garbage production** -- "Wasting even as little as a mustard seed is against the law of *Baal Taschit* (do not waste)" Maimonides. Strive to reduce your waste by buying products with less packaging and using re-usable cups, plates, and silverware.
2. **Reuse plastic bags** -- If every American family used just 10 fewer plastic bags a month, we'd save 10 billion bags a year. Reusing material goes back a long way in Jewish tradition. In fact on *Sukkot*, the wicks for the menorah in the temple used to be made from the reused underwear of the Priests.
3. **Turn off the tap** -- When you brush your teeth, shave, etc.; we pray for rain 3 times a day, don't let the blessing go down the drain. Conserve water!
4. **Take public transit, carpool, or bicycle** -- Reduce your greenhouse gas emissions.
5. **Eat 1 less meat meal per week** -- The impacts of meat meals are 10-20 times larger than that of vegetarian meals. Try to reduce your meat consumption, 1 meal at a time.
6. **Stamp out styrofoam** -- Carry a reusable mug at all times. Visit the Teva website or local coffee shops to find a portable, reusable mug.
7. **Say a *Bracha* (blessing) over your food** -- Take a moment to appreciate where your food comes from and the resources – both human and natural – that brought your food to your plate.
8. **Plant a garden** -- Bring the realities of food production closer to home. Start small. Cucumbers, Squash, and herbs such as mint and basil, are just a few foods that grow very easily in the Northeast.
9. **Buy local and organic** -- Pesticide use has been linked to human illness, as well as to issues such as bioaccumulation that threaten animal and plant species. Transportation of food is a major contributor to global climate change. Buying local and organic food is healthier for you, the workers and the planet.
10. **Install a toilet water displacer** -- 40% of fresh water in your house is flushed down the toilet. Reduce your consumption with every flush by putting a water displacer (rock, reused water filled bottle, etc.) in the tank of your toilet.
11. **Use compact florescent light bulbs** -- Compact fluorescent bulbs can be used in all regular light bulb sockets. They last years longer and use ¼ the energy of incandescent bulbs.
12. **Save your energy** – Turn off your lights, computer, television, and other electronics when they are not in use. You will help your bank account and the environment.
13. **Honor Shabbat** -- Shabbat is a day where we accept the world as it is, and don't manipulate it as humans are so good at doing. Go for a walk, leave the car at home, notice your surroundings, rest, reflect, and build community. Take a day to appreciate the world in which we live as it is.
14. **Hang a birdfeeder in your yard** -- Be like Noah, protecting the world's animals in an era when their habitat is being quickly destroyed.



15. **Compost** -- 33% of household garbage is food waste. Through composting you can eliminate this waste, as well as provide a chemical free fertilizer for your garden. Be like the Baal Shem Tov who said, "A person should consider himself as a worm, and all other creatures his friends in the world."
16. **Go for a hike** -- For centuries our spiritual leaders have been going into nature to bring themselves closer to G-d's creations. Try saying the Shema at the top of a mountain. It can take on amazing meaning.
17. **Write a letter** -- Write to your local, state and federal representatives calling for stronger endangered species legislation, stricter fuel economy laws, support for healthy, local food, or on any other of the many vital environmental issues. Let them know you care!
18. **Get involved** -- Contact a local or national environmental organization to see how you can be involved in making a change in your community.

For more information on the work of the Teva Learning Center, visit www.tevacenter.org or contact:

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