



Reusing Everyday Materials

The 3 R's – Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle, remain to be seen as a hierarchical list. Many people skip to recycling when they should be focusing on the order of the R's – reduce, then reuse, then lastly recycle. Reuse is an incredibly important functionality in our society and can divert millions of tons of garbage from landfills every year.

Here are some tips on how to practice reuse in your daily lifestyle.

**BEST PRACTICE AREA:
ENVIRONMENTALLY
PREFERRED PURCHASING**

**BEST PRACTICE AREA:
WASTE REDUCTION**

DID YOU KNOW?

The average American person creates 4.4 pounds of trash per day. That equals out to 30.8 pounds per week, 132 pounds per month, and 1,606 pounds per year!

THINK OF THE CHILDREN...

Give your children free reign over your unwanted papers, cardboard scraps, and packaging. See how creative they can be!

Participate in S.C.R.A.P.S.—St. Cloud Recycled Art Project Shop. This fantastic program collects unwanted materials from local businesses, institutions, and individuals and sorts them for customers to find the items they need for their art project. Visit www.ci.stcloud.mn.us/arts for more information.

IF YOU CAN'T REUSE IT...

...maybe someone else can! Have a yard sale and offer your unwanted items to someone else. After all, one person's trash is another's treasure! Help out the planet and put a little green in your pocket.

...donate it! Many charities will collect unwanted gently used items for distribution to people who need them around the world. They may even collect them for their own yard sale to raise funds. Be sure only to donate quality, wanted items; they don't need or want your garbage!

IDEAS TO REUSE THE MOST COMMON OF WASTES:

PAPER

- Save used paper as scrap for shopping lists, notes, and drawing paper for children.
- Write your shopping lists on junk mail return envelopes and carry your coupons inside.
- Reuse newspaper as gift wrapping paper. Decorate with markers and crayons.

PLASTIC

- Fill empty plastic bottles (such as mouthwash) with water and freeze to use in coolers.
- Use empty yogurt or cream cheese containers to hold individual portions of food.
- Bring Tupperware when going out to dinner to bring your leftovers home instead of a 'take-out' box.
- Use lids from sour cream containers as a spoon rest while cooking.
- Punch holes in small jars to create a spice or cheese shaker.

GLASS

- Turn a large pickle jar into a cookie or coin jar. Decorate the outside with markers, etc.
- Use glass jars for storage of nails, screws, hardware, etc.

METALS:

- Reuse aluminum foil many times.
- Use clean aluminum soup cans for pencil, pen, and marker holders.

IN THE HOME:

- Use towels and cloth napkins in lieu of disposable paper towels and napkins.
- Reuse sandwich and storage bags.
- Freeze leftover stale bread for later use in recipes that call for breadcrumbs.
- Use rechargeable batteries.
- Use old toothbrushes to scrub hard to reach places.
- Use homemade household cleaners instead of hazardous cleaning products.

IN THE OFFICE:

- Make two-sided copies.
- Use refillable pens, ink cartridges, pencils, and tape dispensers.
- Reuse packing peanuts.
- Bring your own coffee mug to work and when frequenting coffee shops.
- Buy a lunch box instead of using a paper bag. Use reusable containers to pack your sandwich, chips, fruit, etc.

