



ZERO WASTE BOSTON

REDUCE *and* REUSE LIST

“Reduce and Reuse” is the first category of recommendations in the [Boston Zero Waste Plan](#), because the simplest way to become a Zero Waste City is by producing less waste. Reducing your waste by buying only what you need, and reusing, repairing or repurposing instead of buying new are the best things you can do for the environment and your wallet.

REDUCE what you buy

- Make a **grocery list** to buy only what you need.
- Consider **growing your own herbs** or **produce** instead of buying them with packaging.
- Cancel **junk mail** or **magazine subscriptions**.
- Read newspapers or magazines **online**.
- Consider giving **experiential gifts** instead of material items.
- Research and seek out **high-quality, long lasting items**, like appliances, furniture or clothing, instead of items you will need to throw out and replace soon.
- Buy food and other items in **bulk** to reduce unnecessary packaging.

REFUSE disposables and opt for REUSE

- Eating out? Carry food in reusable **to-go containers** and use reusable **utensils** instead of plastic ones.
- Always have a reusable **mug** and **water bottle** with you.
- Reuse **office supplies** like 3-ring binders, unfilled notebooks and file folders. Urge your office space, school or community to do similar practices.
- Take reusable **shopping bags** to shop or to buy groceries, including **produce bags**.
- Give up disposable paper towels or napkins and use **cloths** or **rags** instead, which can be bought or made out of old T-shirts. This will help save money, too!
- Seek out **rechargeable** or **refillable items**, like batteries, printer cartridges, or soap dispensers.
- Reduce **coffee waste**, like disposable pods or filters, and opt for reusables instead.

REPAIR broken items

- Repair your **household objects** and **electronics** at a free and local repair event. Check with your local library.
- Repair your **phone**, **computer**, and even **car** instead of buying new.
- Bring torn or ill-fitting clothing to a **tailor**, or **patch holes** in clothing and furniture.
- Repair **shoe soles** or bring shoes to a repair shop in Boston.
- Repair **wooden furniture** with basic carpentry skills, or polish them if they are scratched or worn.



- ❑ **Sharpen kitchen knives** instead of buying new ones.

REPURPOSE or DONATE to give new life to items

- ❑ Donate and buy **second-hand clothes** at second-hand stores, thrift stores and donation centers near you. Search online for locations near you.
- ❑ **Buy used** tools, furniture, decor, dinnerware, or electronics at yard sales, second-hand stores, or online businesses.
- ❑ Make your own household or hygiene products, like all-purpose cleaners, out of simple ingredients by **repurposing containers** you already have.
- ❑ Repurpose **leftover food** and reuse **food scraps**, like orange peels and meat bones, for seasoning in future recipes.
- ❑ Reuse and repurpose **glass jars** and **jugs** as storage containers, mugs, planters, or decoration.
- ❑ Donate **non-perishable food items** to shelters and food donation establishments.
- ❑ Reuse **newspapers** or **magazines** as gift-wrapping or in crafts.

TRADE and BORROW

- ❑ **Get** and **give items for free** with online neighborhood groups, giveaway communities, or free stores.
- ❑ **Borrow** or **rent** specific items you need for an occasion or in the shorter term, especially if you're hosting a large party or cookout.
- ❑ Borrow **library books** instead of buying your own.