

A Handy Guide to Wasting Less and Feeling Good

by



Why waste less?

Each year, **12 million tonnes of plastic (mostly packaging) enter the ocean.** One million seabirds and 100,00 mammals die as a result. If we don't stop throwing away so much plastic, by 2050 the ocean will contain more plastic than fish.

Each year, **£140 million worth of UK clothing is sent to landfill.** The amount of water and energy used in making cheap clothes that don't last is causing drought, driving climate change, and polluting rivers around the world.

Each year, **wasted food and drink costs the UK £17 billion-** around £470 per household! Most of this is avoidable. Reducing the amount of food that ends up in landfill could save as much CO₂ as taking 1 in 4 cars off the road *every day*.

So...where's the feeling good part?

Zero Waste Kendal can help you **reduce waste, take better care of the planet and save some money.** And it's not as hard as it seems. Every small change can make a really big difference, and help you feel good too. This little guide will show you how. And it's completely free!

Food and Drink

Starting out...

- **Plan meals** around what you already have. Once you've planned your week's meals, **only buy what you need**. Avoid special offers unless it's something you're sure to use.
- **Make extra portions** and freeze them for another day to save time, money and food.
- If you use a lot of something, buy in bigger quantities to save money and packaging. Once opened, **store food in glass jars** to keep it fresh for longer. You can buy them at **Boyes**.
- We throw away 2.5bn coffee cups a year! Invest in a couple of easy-to-clean **reusable cups** so you always have one ready when leaving the house. Some cafes offer a discount. **Oxfam** sell **Ecoffee cups** which are dishwasher safe and compostable.
- The average person currently spends £25,000 on bottled drinks in their lifetime, so a **reusable bottle** is a wise investment. We like **Klean Kanteen** stainless steel flasks. If you run dry, ask for a refill- licensed premises are required by law to provide free tap water. Ours is amongst the safest in the world, and is tested more rigorously than bottled water, which costs 500 times as much- that's like paying £1500 for an ordinary pint of beer!

Next steps...

- **Buy loose fruit and vegetables** at the market, greengrocers or supermarket. You wash them anyway, so put larger items straight into the basket, then into your reusable shopping bag. For softer or smaller items, use small cloth bags (weigh the food without the bag to avoid paying extra) or reuse the plastic bags provided, then recycle them.
- **Keep all your bags, big and small**, where you always remember them, like by the front door. **Onya** make bags in various sizes which fold into a pocket-sized pouch.
- Buy **loose leaf tea**, as most teabags now contain a layer of plastic. **Farrers** will refill empty jars or tins with any of their loose leaf teas or freshly ground coffee.
- **Take your own reusable containers** to the market, supermarket, local butchers or fishmongers. Some will offer a discount, like the egg stall at the market.
- **Booths sell unpackaged bread**- take a reusable bag or teatowel to wrap it in. **Staff of Life** bakery use paper bags- recycle them if clean, if not compost them. If you buy sliced bread, **recycle the bags** at the supermarket. The same goes for most cereal bags.
- Ring **Creamline Dairies** to arrange **milk deliveries** in returnable glass bottles.

Ready to waste *even less*?

- Make **meals from scratch**. Search online for easy recipes for muesli, yoghurt, snacks, etc.
- Buy **loose food** (fruits, nuts, seeds etc.) from a bulk store, like **Single Step** in Lancaster.
- **Grow your own**. Start with herbs in a pot, then try fruit and vegetables. If you want to grow but don't have the space, ring the council and join the waiting list for an allotment.
- Got **unwanted food**? Don't bin it! Donate it to **Kendal People's Café** at the South Lakes Foyer, take it to your **local food bank**, **Freegle** it, or download the **Olio** food sharing app.
- Visit lovefoodhatewaste.org and join the '**Reduce Your Food Waste**' Facebook group.

Around the house

Starting out...

- **Compost** anything that rots- food, paper, garden waste, natural fibres, even hair. If you don't have space, share with your neighbours, and find someone who needs it for their garden or allotment. 'Recycle Cumbria' do special offers on bins. Call Wendi Lethbridge, Master Composter, on 821032 for help getting started. The council is charged for waste sent to landfill- by composting we could cut this by a third and reduce our council tax!
- If you need something new, try to find it second hand first. Join the local **Freegle** network, www.ilovefreegle.org, to find things people are giving away for free, visit **car boot** and **nearly new sales** advertised in local press, or search **Ebay.co.uk** for used items

Next steps...

- Use **soap in bars**, as the pumps in liquid soap bottles can't be recycled. Buy unpackaged soap at **KAN Healthfoods**, and a ceramic soap dish which drains from **Etsy.co.uk**
- You can buy **bars of shampoo, conditioner, face wash, and body wash** from **Lush** in Lancaster, or online from **Friendly Soap** in Todmorden (we've asked KAN and Booths to stock them too, so keep an eye out!) **Greenfibres.com** sell stainless steel soap tins.
- Replace kitchen roll and single use dishcloths with **washable cloths** made of natural fibres (synthetic cloths shed thousands of plastic microfibres!) **Ecoegg.com** sell rolls of absorbent, multi-purpose bamboo cloths- you can wash each piece up to 70 times, then compost it. If you use kitchen roll, choose recycled paper without dyes, and compost it.
- Put your **landfill bin** in a less accessible place and make your **recycling bin** the bigger bin.
- Choose non-toxic and refillable cleaning detergents and washing powders, such as **YOU** and **Ecover**. **KAN Healthfoods** offer Ecover refills. **Suma Ecoleaf** dishwasher tablets are non-toxic and have no individual plastic wrapping- buy online at **ethicalsuperstore.com**
- If you look after kids, try to **cut down on single use wipes**, and NEVER flush them, as millions are washing up on our beaches! Choose wipes that are compostable such as **Naty** or **Jackson Reece** (even if you don't compost them, it means they are plastic-free), or use muslin cloths for cleaning hands and faces, and reusable wipes for bottoms.

Ready to waste *even less*?

- Search '**reusable menstrual wear**' online to explore alternatives to disposable towels and tampons. There are plenty available, from leak-proof pants to menstrual cups to washable pads. Find what works for you- advice is available at **femininecare.co.uk**
- Buy unpackaged **handkerchiefs from Beales** and cut down on tissues. Precious forests, home to endangered species, are logged to make tissues we use once then throw away.
- Investigate other **reusable, compostable or recyclable alternatives** to disposable household items. There are loads, from washable nappies to compostable sandwich bags. We like **bamboo toothbrushes by Humble Brush**, and **Lavera moisturizer** in a tin from **Holland and Barratt**. Share your finds in our Facebook group!
- **Make your own natural cleaning products**- search for simple recipes online.

Clothing and Textiles

Starting out...

- 30% of clothes in the average wardrobe have not been worn in a year. **Shop your wardrobe before buying anything**- rediscover things you like and get rid of what you don't. If you don't love it enough to wear it often, give it someone who will. Charity shops send only 2% of donated items to landfill, and raise money for good causes. M&S and TK Maxx also collect unwanted clothes in store to raise money for charity.
- 10% of global emissions come from clothing production, so **buying second hand** makes you a bona fide planet saver. Charity shops, car boots and jumble sales (advertised in local papers, or in the Freegle newsletter) often have new or nearly new items at low prices, as does **Ebay.co.uk** (ask sellers for plastic-free wrapping, e.g. scrunched paper)
- It's so easy to buy cheap clothing, we often think, 'might as well.' Next time, STOP! Ask yourself, do I really need this? Do I really like it? How often will I wear it? How long will it last? What is it made of? Will it wash well? **Invest only in things you really love or need.**

Next steps...

- If you do buy something new, **choose items made of natural fibres**. Thousands of tiny pieces of plastic are washed into the ocean every time you wash synthetic clothing. Check out the WI's campaign, **End the Plastic Soup**, to find out more about this issue and what can be done about it.
- **Recycle!** Pass on your no longer wanted items (bedding, curtains, clothing, textiles) to any of the above, or to groups like Tools for Self-Reliance, www.tfsr.org/about. If they are no longer usable, you can recycle them at the **Household Waste Bunker** at Canal Head.

Ready to waste *even less*?

- Organise a '**clothes swap**' with friends and neighbours at one another's homes, through the W.I., or at a local venue. Visit loveyourclothes.org.uk for a guide to setting one up, plus other resources to help you and your community cut down on clothing waste.
- Learn some simple sewing techniques so you can **repair your clothes**, do simple alterations, and make them last longer. Buy second-hand books about sewing or watch tutorials online. Get together with friends and have a skill-share sewing/knitting bee. Use Freegle to source a sewing kit, yarns- even a sewing machine! Transition Lancaster City (TLC) host regular sewing cafés- search online to find when the next one is.
- **Transform an existing item**, e.g. jeans into shorts, or use old curtains or bedding to make cloth bags or new cushion covers- Pinterest is full of inspiring projects! Share ideas with friends, on Freegle, or on the Zero Waste Kendal Facebook group.

Zero Waste Kendal is an informal network of people in and around Kendal, wanting to waste less and live more sustainably. We are supported by local environmental charity, **SLACctt**. To get involved, or for references to the statistics quoted in this guide, search 'Zero Waste Kendal' on Facebook or email Mary at hmh.edwards@hotmail.com

