

# SUSTAINABLE LIVING: HOW TO SHOP, DRESS, PLAY AND CONSUME MORE SUSTAINABLY



Estimated read time:



REC  
MATE



REDUCED  
WATER  
CONSUMPTION









## KEY TAKEAWAYS

*The role of individuals, interest groups, and civil society in the sustainability movement should not be underestimated.*

*With some immediate and simple changes to how we shop, dress, play and consume, we can all contribute towards creating a more sustainable future.*

Sustainability is often written and spoken about as a lofty concept being driven by governments and corporations, that will impact economies in the distant future.

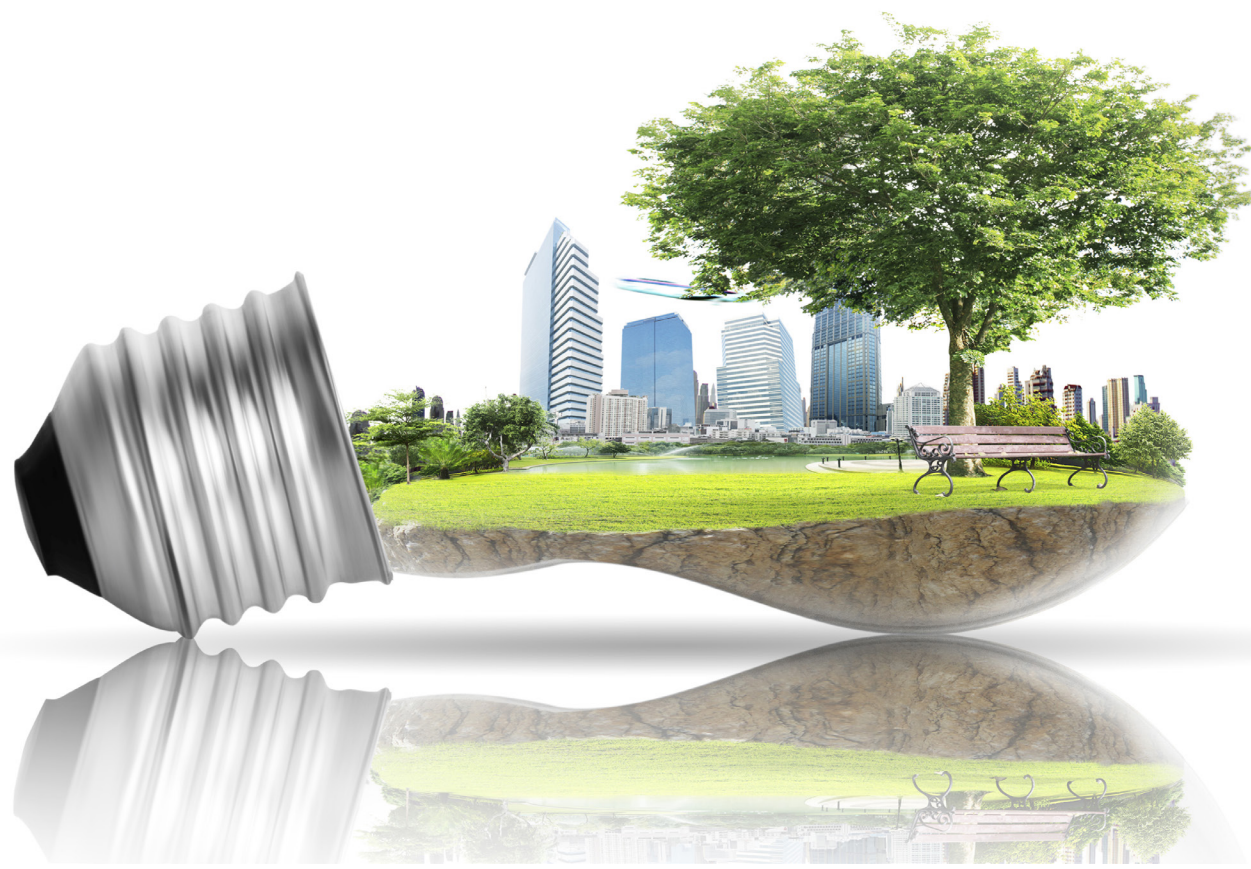
Governments and corporations undoubtedly have an important role to play in championing

sustainability, as they are responsible for establishing policies, laws, regulations and industry standards that direct how resources are used.

However, the role of individuals, interest groups, and civil society in the sustainability movement should not be underestimated. With some immediate and simple lifestyle changes, we can all contribute

towards creating a more sustainable future.

Furthermore, sustainable living has numerous benefits, including savings, improved health and wellbeing, and reduction of carbon dioxide emissions. Here are a few simple steps that we can take to shop, dress, play and consume more sustainably.





# How to Shop Sustainably

Sustainable shopping requires that we rethink what we buy and how we buy it. Consumers have the power to force change in the way items are sourced, packaged, and sold. The following are some simple, impactful actions we can take:

## Reduce Plastic

Purchase items with plastic-free packaging and walk with a reusable shopping bag to the grocery store, the market and even to the mall.

SAY NO TO PLASTIC STRAW

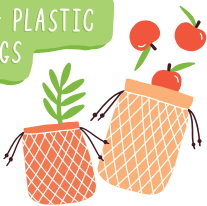


BRING YOUR OWN BAG



Not only is local food fresher and more nutritious, but it also has a lower carbon footprint and supports local businesses.

NO PLASTIC BAGS



BRING YOUR OWN CUP



## Repair and refurbish instead of buying new



Before you replace your broken television, blender or couch set, consider having these items repaired and/or refurbished. Repairs usually cost much less than purchasing new and help small service providers in the community.

QUALITY

GO GREEN

NOT QUANTITY

To shop less is to shop better. Invest in purchasing better quality products that will last longer.

WASTE SORTING



## Buy what you need

If you are buying in bulk, consider splitting the purchase with a friend or family member. This will reduce your individual cost and result in less wastage.



## Support businesses that employ sustainable practices

Take the time to research the stores that you plan to shop at. Find out whether they are actively trying to reduce plastic use; sourcing produce from regenerative farms; buying from local farmers, etc.



*There Is*  
**N**   
**PLANET**  
**B**   
**SAVE THE EARTH**

# How to Dress Sustainably

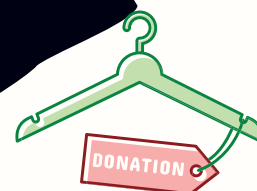
**SUSTAINABILITY IS ALWAYS IN FASHION.**

It is therefore quite alarming that the fashion industry produces 10 percent of the world's carbon emissions and is the second largest consumer of water on the planet (Fall-Johnson, 2020).

The fast fashion culture drives the demand for cheap, trendy clothing that in turn, results in 85 percent of clothing ending up in landfills every year. Fast fashion also perpetuates unsavoury employment practices where workers in the developing world are forced to work under unsafe conditions with low pay.

The deleterious effects of these practices came into sharp view in 2014 as 1,138 workers perished when the Rana Plaza factory collapsed in Bangladesh.

Below are some conscious decisions we can make to support a more reasonable, sustainable culture as it pertains to what we wear.



## Donate used items.

Used dinner dresses and suits can be donated to schools and charitable organisations to be worn by students who need clothes for graduation or to outfit young professionals.

## 'Shop' in your own closet.

Be creative about mixing and matching your items of clothing and don't be afraid to rework or revamp an old outfit.



## Rent a dress or suit.

A growing trend in developed countries is the rental of garments for special occasions, including weddings, gala events, and graduation balls. This is a sensible way to look fashionable at a lower cost while eliminating waste.



## Buy better quality clothing and wear them longer.

As fashion goes, if you keep your clothes long enough, they will be back in style before you know it.



## Repurpose old clothing.

For example, old towels can be repurposed as washcloths. Even some international fashion brands, such as Rave Review of Sweden and Conner Ives in the UK, produce the majority of their designs from existing materials.



**Buy clothing made from natural fibres**, such as linen and cotton, as opposed to synthetic fibres, such as polyester. Production and washing of synthetic fibres releases over 500,000 tonnes of microfibres into the oceans annually (Fall-Johnson, 2020).

# Sustainable Leisure

We all need to relax and have a little fun from time to time. For many of us, leisure involves travelling to other countries, attending sporting events, enjoying the movies, or simply hanging out with friends. Leisure, similar to other facets of life, can be enjoyed in more sustainable ways.



## Try a 'staycation'

Vacationing in-country helps to reduce your overall carbon footprint and supports local establishments. Moreover, taking the time to explore the country improves your appreciation of the flora, fauna, history and culture of your homeland.

## Family activities

### Engage in environmental activities as a family.

Activities such as beach clean-ups and tree planting exercises can be enjoyable to do as a family. This also helps to instil positive values among the young generation.



## Sustainable vacation spaces

**Chose sustainable vacation accommodation.** There are a growing number of environmentally friendly vacation spaces that utilise sustainable practices such as renewable energy, LED lighting, natural lighting, farm-to-table restaurants, etc. If you have a choice, why not choose a sustainable option.



### Carpool to events.

Carpooling is a simple way to reduce your carbon consumption in a measurable way.



### Incorporate sustainability into your events.

When planning your events – weddings, birthday parties, baby showers, corporate events, etc. – include reusable crockery and cutlery and sustainable décor elements.



## Outdoor activities

**Enjoy physical activity outdoors.** Activities such as hiking, biking and jogging outdoors help improve both your health and appreciation of nature. Gardening and landscaping can also be rewarding hobbies that directly benefit the environment.





# Sustainable Consumption



United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #12 - Sustainable Consumption & Production highlights the imperative that global consumption must be reduced in order to minimise impacts on the environment, economies and people.

We must begin to do more and better with less if the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees by 2030 is to be achieved. Sustainable consumption will require a cultural shift, in which everyone can play a part.



## **Eat more fruits and vegetables.**

Farming of livestock, particularly cows, produces about one third of human-caused methane emissions globally. Methane is a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. Reducing beef consumption is an immediate change that can reduce methane emissions.



Please  
**STOP**  
the  
**FOOD**  
**WASTE**

## **Eat smaller portions.**

Consuming smaller portions will directly reduce carbon emissions, reduce wastage and benefit your health as well.



## **Don't waste water.**

Use just enough water to shower, brush your teeth and wash dishes. Also, utilise a bucket to wash your car, as this would greatly reduce water consumption.



## **Don't waste electricity.**

Turn off the lights and air conditioning when you leave a room. Hang your clothes on the line to dry instead of using the dryer and use energy efficient appliances as much as possible.



## **Eat seasonal fruits and vegetables.**

Consumption of fruits and vegetables in season reduces emissions resulting from bringing produce to market. Seasonal produce is also fresher and more nutritious.

Sustainable living is achievable. However, it requires awareness, planning and consistency to make it a lifestyle. The rewards of sustainable living are endless, as it saves money and promotes health and well-being while strengthening the economy and preserving the environment. Making and implementing a plan for sustainable living can also be an enjoyable family activity.

Apps such as NGC's Energy SmartTT can provide useful information to help measure the energy consumption of your household. The entire family can get involved in setting reduction targets and monitoring consumption during the year. Then you can come together to celebrate your 'wins' as your electricity and water bills as well as your waistlines are all reduced! ■