

# Unwrap Your Gifts



*Live Healthy Live Well*

## Going Green This Holiday Season

The holidays bring many opportunities to “be green” and think about the impact our traditions and activities can have on our environment. Being green doesn’t have to be difficult or expensive, but it often means taking a little extra time to be intentional. Here are four ways to be green over the holidays:

### Gift Giving

During the holiday season, there is often increased pressure to purchase items that you might normally skip other times of the year. The social pressure to buy gifts, cards, and miscellaneous “stuff” fuels consumerism and waste.



Try to avoid any gifts you purchase from ending up in the landfill. Consider gifting an experience, a homemade consumable product (like bath products or food), a second-hand item, or an eco-friendly product like Swedish dishcloths, reusable water bottles, or glass soap dispensers.

### Product Packaging

When you purchase an item this holiday season, consider the packaging and challenge yourself to eliminate waste. Gift cards are popular, but the cards are difficult to reuse or recycle. Go old-school and give cash or checks as a sustainable alternative.

### Gift Wrap

Did you know that in the United States, an additional five million tons of waste is generated over Christmas, four million of which is [wrapping paper and shopping bags](#)? Newspaper, butcher paper, reusable boxes, metal tins, and paper gift bags are creative and sustainable ideas for gift wrap. Choosing these materials helps to keep traditional gift wrap, bows, and ribbons from ending up in the landfill.



### Holiday Traditions

Holiday cards, party invitations, decorations, and food can take a serious toll on our environment. Large gatherings can mean single-use plates, utensils, cups, and napkins. Uneaten food becomes food waste. Avoid or reduce this waste by choosing reusable products. Finally, if you decorate with a live tree, look for opportunities to [recycle your tree](#) and keep it out of the garbage.

Looking for more green ideas? Visit the [OSU Extension Sustainability](#) website to find tip sheets, videos, and a 3-D Sustainable Home Tour.

### Call to Action:

Have you ever considered how many planets we would need if everyone lived like you? Take this short quiz to begin to understand your impact on our planet, then read three simple acts you can do today to make a difference:

<https://www.footprintcalculator.org/home/en>

With Thanksgiving is this week, we do not have a webinar scheduled. To dive deeper into our topic, we encourage you to visit the [OSU Extension Sustainability](#) website to watch some of their videos or read the educational resources, many of which focus on holiday sustainability topics.

Happy Thanksgiving!



**Writer:** Laura Stanton, Extension Educator, Family and Consumer Sciences, Ohio State University Extension, Warren County, [stanton.60@osu.edu](mailto:stanton.60@osu.edu)



**Call to Action:** Alisha Barton, Extension Educator, Family and Consumer Sciences, Ohio State University Extension, Miami County, [barton.345@osu.edu](mailto:barton.345@osu.edu)



**Reviewer:** Jenny Lobb, Extension Educator, Family and Consumer Sciences, Ohio State University Extension, Franklin County, [lobb.3@osu.edu](mailto:lobb.3@osu.edu)



# THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

---

## EXTENSION

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

---

CFAES provides research and related educational programs to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis.

For more information, visit [cfaesdiversity.osu.edu](http://cfaesdiversity.osu.edu).

For an accessible format of this publication, visit [cfaes.osu.edu/accessibility](http://cfaes.osu.edu/accessibility).

If you wish to unsubscribe from Ohio State University Extension's Live Healthy Live Well emails, please reply to this message with the text "unsubscribe."