

Have a  
Green  
Holiday



Have you ever noticed how much extra trash your family throws out during the holiday season? Experts say Americans throw out a million more tons of waste each week between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day.

This week, The Mini Page gives you some ideas for turning this holiday season green.



Gift bags and cloth ribbons are especially easy to use over and over.

Green wrap

When wrapping gifts, you could use manufactured paper and ribbons. Or you could make your own paper. If you use store-bought gift wrap or holiday cards, make sure the label says they are made of recycled paper.

The best kind of recycled wrapping paper or cards will have a label saying “100% post-consumer recycled.” Post means “after.”

“Post-consumer recycled” means the paper is made from other paper products, such as newspapers, that people have used and then recycled.

If a label says “recycled,” it may be made

from scraps of leftover paper from a paper factory. Consumers may not have actually used the paper before.

Be sure to recycle your own wrapping paper and catalogs. You can also save wrapping paper and ribbon and use them again.

Another idea is to wrap your gifts in colorful paper, such as the comics section of your newspaper or magazine pages.

Green cards

The greenest card to send is an electronic card. However, getting a card in the mail might be even more fun. Try to send cards that have been made with recycled paper.

If you are sending a card, think about writing a personal note too. For many people, it is much more meaningful to get a card with a note that you wrote.



Green shopping

Look for clothes with labels saying the material is organic or sustainable. An **organic** label means no pesticides were used to grow the fiber that the cloth is made of. A **sustainable** label means the whole manufacturing process is safe for the planet. For example, it means the dyes do not pollute the air or water.

If adults are shopping online or by catalog, encourage them to shop early, so their gifts can be shipped by ground rather than air. It takes six times more fuel to ship things by plane than by truck.

Green packaging

The packaging of goods is a big problem. For example, toys are often packed with lots of plastic and paper. Video game cases are made from plastic.

Some video games can be downloaded from the internet instead.

Experts say some companies are trying to change their packaging so less is wasted. They want to make packaging out of green products such as recycled cardboard. Buy or ask for gifts that are packaged in a green manner.

Green trees

The best choice for the environment is a living Christmas tree that can be replanted. Keep the tree in a pot and bring it inside. Plant it outside after the holidays.

You might want to dig the hole for the tree before the ground freezes. Or you could keep the tree alive in the pot outside until spring.

If you want a real tree that cannot be replanted, try to get it from an organic tree farm near your home.



After the holidays, recycle your tree. Many cities have drop-off places where Christmas trees are chopped up to make mulch. Mulch is a ground covering that protects plants.

Resources



- On the Web:**
- [bit.ly/MPgreenholiday](https://bit.ly/MPgreenholiday)
- At the library:**
- “Dreaming of a Green Christmas” by Anne Zoet

Try ‘n’ Find

Words that remind us of green holidays are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

- BAGS, CARD, CHRISTMAS, CLOTHES, CONSUMER, FARM, GREEN, HOLIDAY, LABEL, MULCH, NOTE, ORGANIC, PACKAGING, PAPER, RECYCLE, RIBBON, SHOP, SUSTAINABLE, TREE, WASTE, WRAP.

H	P	A	R	W	H	P	I	L	C	A	R	D	M	Y
E	T	O	N	R	E	A	G	I	U	P	A	P	E	R
R	R	N	B	E	E	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S
I	E	F	C	M	L	K	A	Q	M	U	L	C	H	N
B	E	P	I	U	C	A	C	L	O	T	H	E	S	L
B	E	P	N	S	Y	G	R	E	E	N	S	G	A	A
O	T	O	A	N	C	I	G	C	P	D	S	G	A	B
N	S	H	G	O	E	N	F	H	M	R	A	F	K	E
Q	A	S	R	C	R	G	Y	A	D	I	L	O	H	L
P	W	C	O	E	L	B	A	N	I	A	T	S	U	S



Mini Jokes



- George:** What type of music do Santa’s elves like to listen to?
- Gina:** Wrap music!

Eco Note



Not all countries produce the same amount of waste. Developed countries, such as the United Kingdom and United States, produce far more garbage per person than countries such as India and China. But developed countries also recycle more of their waste. Paper and cardboard make up a third of all household waste. Much of what we throw away is packaging, used to wrap food and other items.

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For later:

Look in your newspaper for gift ideas that are eco-friendly. Save up colorful newspapers to reuse to wrap gifts.

**Teachers:** For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: [bit.ly/MPstandards](https://bit.ly/MPstandards). And follow The Mini Page on Facebook!



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\* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

Cook's Corner  
Healthy All-in-One Pancakes

You'll need:

- 1 cup uncooked whole-grain oats (not instant)
- 1 cup low-fat cottage cheese
- 6 egg whites
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar



What to do:

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender; process until mixture is smooth.
2. Coat a nonstick pan with cooking spray and place on medium heat.
3. Pour batter into pan, using 1/4 cup at a time for each pancake.
4. Cook until bubbles appear in batter, then flip.
5. Serve with syrup or sliced fruit. Makes 9 to 10 pancakes.

ROOTONYM®  
by Jan & Carey Orr Cook



Study the definition. When you know the missing word, fill in the letter boxes and the sentence blanks.

1. To keep something safe from danger (7-letter verb)

2. Something that is helpful to people (6-letter adjective)

3. To treat food so it will not spoil (8-letter verb)

4. Bush or tree that stays green all year (9-letter noun)

1. To \_\_\_\_\_ the tree from falling, Jules wired it to the wall.
2. This recipe is \_\_\_\_\_ to teach how to make muffins.
3. Mom puts leftovers in the fridge to \_\_\_\_\_ freshness.
4. Dad says a Christmas pine tree is an \_\_\_\_\_.

Answers: Protect, Useful, Preserve, Evergreen.