

A Zero Waste Guide to Holiday Gifts

Tips and tricks on how to reduce your waste this holiday season



Three gifts wrapped in recycled paper with natural decorations. The top gift is decorated with a sprig of greenery and a small wooden bow. The middle gift is decorated with a sprig of greenery and three red berries. The bottom gift is decorated with a sprig of greenery, a wooden leaf, and a small wooden bow.

Zero Waste Gift Wrapping

ZERO WASTE GIFT WRAP

- There are many ways to wrap gifts using reused or recycled material. Try wrapping your gifts using recycled paper, reusable bags, newspaper, scrap fabric, mason jars, or cloth napkins.
- If you opt to use wrapping paper for your gifts, consider buying from brands that use recycled or re-purposed paper. For example, Paper Source uses 100% recycled content for their wrapping paper. Alternatively, [Wrappily](#) sells wrapping paper made using recycled newsprint.

DECORATIONS

- Instead of buying single-use ribbons and bows, try using plants, twine, or jewelry to decorate your gifts. You can also make your own bows out of magazines and recycled paper to add a personal touch to your gift (click [here](#) to find out more).



Recycling Gift Packaging

RECYCLING GIFT WRAP

- It is estimated that 2.3 million pounds of wrapping paper ends up in landfills every year.
- Unfortunately, not all wrapping paper can be recycled. Foil or glitter-decorated paper cannot be put in curbside recycling bins. A general rule of thumb is if it scrunches, it **can't** be recycled.
- Before recycling your gift wrap, remove any tape and decorations, such as bows and ribbons. Bows and ribbons can be reused next holiday season to save money and material.

HOLIDAY CARDS

- Most holiday cards can be recycled, however those with glitter or foil cannot.
- Charities such as St. Jude's Ranch for Children accept holiday cards for their recycled card program. Click [here](#) to find out more about this program.

ALTERNATIVES TO RECYCLING

- If you have gift boxes, bags, or wrapping paper in good shape, you can save them to reuse or donate them locally. Check out WasteFreeSD.org to find locations to donate.

Zero Waste Gift Ideas

When buying holiday gifts for loved ones, it is important to be conscious about the waste involved and the life cycle of the items you are buying. Below are some ideas of gifts that will help you reduce waste.

GIFTING EXPERIENCES

A great way to reduce waste is to gift an experience instead of a material item. This could include a class, a concert ticket, or even a coupon book. A full list of ideas can be found [here](#).

MAKE YOUR OWN GIFTS

Making your own gifts, such as baked goods, soap, or clothing items, both reduce waste and add a personal touch to your gift. Click [here](#) for a list of zero waste gifts in a jar.

SUSTAINABLE BRANDS

If you opt to buy a material item, there are many brands that make a conscious effort to be low waste and eco-friendly. A list of some of these brands can be found [here](#).

