



15 Resolutions You Can Cross Off Your List Today

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The New Year is here, and what better way to celebrate than by doing some good! Whether you made resolutions or not, the start of a new

year is a clean slate. You may not know what the next 12 months have in store, but you can guarantee that you jump-started 2013 (2015) on a positive note by accomplishing any (or all!) of the following eco-actions.

- 1. Keep the TV off.** It's the first week of the New Year, do you really want to waste it sitting in front of the television? We thought not. You could get so much done today if you spend less time watching reruns -- and you could cut down electricity usage too.
- 2. Make dinner tonight.** Why waste the gas and money to go out for dinner, when you can make a nice, hot meal right at home? Go with local, organic ingredients to step it up a notch. Not only will you be saving money, and help out the local economy, you'll have leftovers for later.
- 3. Take a shorter shower.** In general, it'd be good to cut back on excess water usage. You can install low-flow showerheads and fix leaky faucets for other inexpensive and easy conservation moves, but if you shave a minute or two off of your shower today that's a step in the right direction. Do that for a whole month and you could save 150 gallons of water and be one step closer to being a Water Sentinel.
- 4. Clean out your closet.** It's time to clean out all those clothes you never wear and put them to good use. Donate them to your local Salvation Army or upcycle them into something new. You'll feel better for having cleared out some of the clutter, believe us.
- 5. Drop that paper towel.** Sure it's easy to just grab that roll of paper towels when there's a spill or you need a napkin, but a regular kitchen towel does the same trick and reduces waste. It's a hard habit to break, we know, but worth it! You could also go with Bambooe towels to help kick that regular roll of disposable towels out of the kitchen.
- 6. Cut back on driving.** We know, it's so convenient to just jump in the car, but if you're going down the street to the store, why not walk? Not only will you get in some exercise (fulfilling another resolution perhaps?), but you'll reduce pollution. If the trip is longer than down the street, use a Sierra Club bike, carpool, or take public transit to lower your carbon footprint.
- 7. Sponsor a wild animal.** Not only will you feel good for having protected America's wildlands and wildlife, you'll get to choose which area you support. The sponsorship will help restore and preserve the region of your choice, and maybe inspire you to go on an outing later in the year.

8. Recycle, recycle, recycle. Did you do some celebrating for the New Year? Well then that must mean you have some bottles or cans leftover. Don't just trash them, collect them in an old trash bin and save them to be recycled instead. It's a simple step, but highly effective.

9. Turn down your thermostats. This will help lower your energy usage, and your bills. And yes, that was plural. We're not just talking about your heater and AC units, think about your refrigerator settings as well.

10. Protect clean air. A fresh, new year requires fresh air. You can help ensure by educating yourself and pledging to take a stand against toxins caused by coal mining. Visit the [Beyond Coal website](#) and sign the petition, donate funds, or volunteer time to fight for clean air throughout the year.

11. Make a compost bin. In general, it's best to cut down on food waste when you can. If you have a yard, look into setting up your own composting. If you're living in a smaller space, there are a couple different options to keeping your waste to a minimum. Try out some of these simple compost ideas.

12. Invest in rechargeable batteries. It may sound like an odd resolution, but think about the number of times you replaced batteries last year. We go through them quicker than we'd like to think, and much of the time they don't get disposed of properly.

13. Switch to reusable bags. New year, new mottos! And we say that plastic is out and reusable is in. One of the easiest ways to help reduce plastic waste is to ditch plastic bags when shopping. You can purchase reusable bags or make your own. Either way, make a mental note to always keep one handy, either in your purse, briefcase, or glove compartment.

14. Donate blood. With all the tragedy being reported on a daily basis, it's hard to know what you can do to help. Donating blood is one of the best ways to help out. The Red Cross can help you find your nearest location and you can set up your appointment today.

15. Clean up your neighborhood. For today, start by taking a walk around the neighborhood and seeing how much trash you wind up with after a couple blocks. You'll be surprised by what you find. It might inspire you to do more, whether you form your own clean up crew or join an outing near you.

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