

# The Ultimate Guide To Eco-friendly Living



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## Abstract

As the world becomes increasingly aware of environmental issues, adopting an eco-friendly lifestyle has never been more crucial. This guide explores the fundamentals of creating a sustainable, energy-efficient, and environmentally conscious home. From using renewable energy sources and eco-friendly building materials to reducing waste and conserving water, this comprehensive resource offers practical tips and innovative solutions for homeowners. It also delves into the benefits of green living, including cost savings, improved health, and a reduced carbon footprint. Whether you're building a new home or making small, sustainable changes, this guide will help you transform your living space into an eco-friendly haven for a greener future.



## 1. Introduction

In today's world, where climate change and environmental concerns are growing, creating an eco-friendly home is more important than ever. Sustainable living not only helps reduce our carbon footprint but also promotes healthier living spaces and long-term cost savings. Whether you are constructing a new house or making small changes to your existing home in Adelaide, adopting eco-friendly practices can have a significant positive impact on both the environment and your well-being. This guide provides a step-by-step approach to transforming your home into a sustainable haven. From energy efficiency and water conservation to eco-friendly materials and waste reduction, we will explore practical ways to make your home greener. By making informed choices and integrating sustainable solutions,



you can contribute to a healthier planet while enjoying a comfortable and resource-efficient lifestyle.

## **2. How to Save the Environment at Home**



There are plenty of little steps that people can take at home to help save the environment in Adelaide. While the eco-footprint of each step is small, thousands of people doing the same thing can make a difference. In making some small changes to the way that you do things at home, you are gradually making a difference, even as an individual. We've put together a few tips, tricks, and ideas to help you get started!

### **Things You Should Know**

Turn off lights and electronics when they're not in use and switch to fluorescent light bulbs to reduce energy consumption.

Weatherproofing your home and lowering your thermostat in the winter are other simple ways you can conserve energy and help the environment.

Recycle when you can and buy reusable products. If possible, avoid buying disposable or single-use products.

**Turn off the lights.**

Always switch off the lights when you are not using them. Rooms that are lit with nobody in them are wasteful.

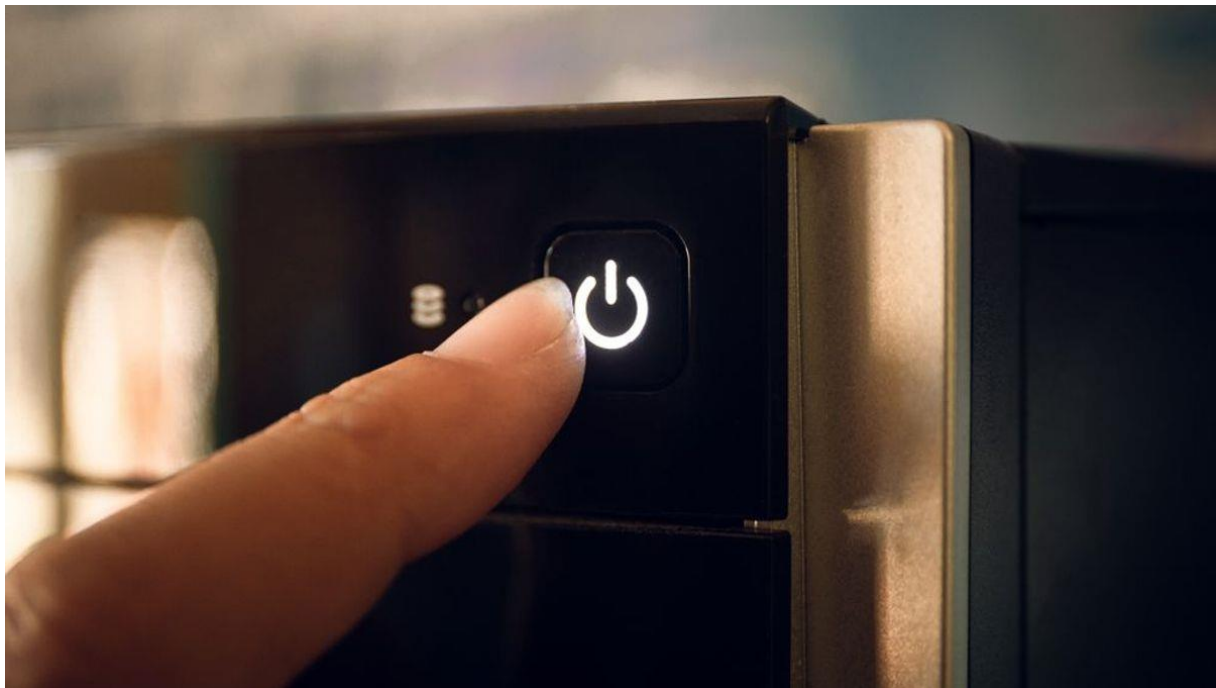
**Switch to compact fluorescent light bulbs.**

These bulbs last longer and consume one-quarter of the energy. Lately, LED lamps have started to pick up the pace too -- they are up to 10 times as effective as fluorescent, and totally blow incandescent bulbs off the charts.

**Power down your TV when you are not using it.**

Believe it or not, up to 30% of power used by TVs is used while they are turned off. Simply buy power strips and switch them off when you're not using them. They use far less energy while turned off.

**Turn off the computer every day.**



Even if it feels like it is not making much of a difference, it is. You also reduce any risks of overheating or short-circuiting by turning computers off overnight.

**Lower the thermostat in the winter.**

A few degrees can make a big difference. Plus, an extra layer or blanket will not only keep you cozy but will help to reduce your electricity bill significantly.

**Regulate your home's temperature with your windows.**

Keep windows and doors closed properly to avoid the loss of heat in winter. Also, open the windows in summer. The cross breeze will often keep you cool and flushes out stale air (indoor air is often more highly polluted than the air outside). Importantly, the use of fresh air to cycle through your home saves the cost of running an air conditioner.

#### **Pair ceiling fans with AC units.**

Using just air conditioning units can be inefficient. However, pairing fans and air conditioning will significantly increase the effectiveness of your temperature control. The fans will circulate the warmed or cooled air generated by the air conditioning unit.

#### **Fill in any gaps around your home.**

Gaps reduce energy efficiency in a home. By caulking gaps around windows and doors, you increase the ability of your house to retain heat and cool at the right times of year, allowing your heating and cooling systems to work less.

#### **Insulate your home.**



Insulation keeps the heat and cool on the correct side of your living space. Consider not only the ceiling but also the walls and under the floors.

#### **Replace gas stoves with induction.**

The burning of gas like propane or natural gas releases its own greenhouse emissions and can be potentially dangerous. However, even when switched off and properly sealed, gas stoves still leak small amounts through the cooktop and pipes.

### **Install low-flush toilets in your home.**

These use 1.6 gallons (6.1 L) per flush instead of 3.5 gallons (13.2 L). This cuts your water consumption by more than half.

### **Take showers instead of baths.**

Showers use less water. While you're at it, don't forget to install an efficient showerhead.

## **3. Reduce Plastic Waste At home**



It's no secret that our planet has a serious problem with plastic waste. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, more than 460 million metric tonnes of plastic are produced every year, with a significant proportion of that ending up in landfill and our oceans.

Australians are also one of the biggest consumers of single-use plastic in the world, and while bans on single-use straws, takeaway containers and cutlery have rolled out across Australia, that doesn't mean we should stop there. Our homes should be rid of plastic too, and this endeavour is entirely possible because there's always a sustainable alternative to plastic. But where does one begin?

"It's easy to feel overwhelmed when you begin looking at how you can reduce your plastic use," says Niccii Kugler, founder of Nash + Banks, an ethical and eco-friendly online



marketplace. “Start by focusing on one area at a time, for example your bathroom, and start by phasing eco-friendly options in next time you need to replace an item.”

“A good place to start is by replacing your everyday plastic items with those that can be thrown into your home compost after use. There are compostable alternatives for everything from toothbrush handles to iPhone cases,” she adds.

Ready to cut down on plastic and invest in things that last? Here are 10 simple things you can do to reduce your plastic footprint and lead a more sustainable life.

### **1. Bring reusable bags to the shops**

“The kitchen, and specifically the pantry, accounts for a huge amount of single-use plastic. Keep a set of reusable shopping bags handy in your car for food shopping and grab your fruit and veg “naked” to avoid using unnecessary plastic bags on fresh produce,” Nicci suggests

“You can go that step further by shopping with your own reusable containers for pantry staples like pasta, legumes and nuts at bulk food stores.”

### **2. Stop buying ‘halves’ of fruit and veg**

“Half a melon, pumpkin (squash), cauliflower, cabbage or papaya means plastic wrap,” points out Alexx Stuart, author of Low Tox Life. “Buy them whole and get a little recipe inspiration to ensure you use them all up over the week. You could roast half your cauliflower with turmeric and olive oil, served with pomegranate and goat’s curd; then blitz the other half into a puree with coconut milk and sea salt. Different textures and flavours means not getting bored!”

### **3. Opt for glass or reusable plastics**

We create a lot of plastic waste without realising it. Where possible, you can reduce your plastic usage by:

Not buying plastic water bottles. Instead, carry a reusable bottle or invest in a water filter or filtration jug if you don’t like drinking tap water.

Using keep cups instead of single-use coffee cups.

Choosing condiments in glass jars over ‘squeeze tops’.

Using reusable plates and cutlery at picnics, or biodegradable options.

Investing in food storage containers that will last a lifetime, especially glass ones.

### **4. Ditch the plastic wrap**

“You can get reusable bowl covers, beeswax wraps, silicone bowl covers, or just pop a plate over the bowl. It’s one of those things that you just don’t need to replace when you’re out next time. You’ll soon see you really didn’t need it. I have a few tiny glass containers or jars for little things like half a lemon, opened goat’s cheese and so on,” says Alexx.

### **5. Back to bar soap**

“Choose packaging-free, solid beauty products wherever you can. I love NueBar’s range of shampoos, conditioners, face washes, body washes and exfoliators. They are also palm oil-free, handmade, vegan and cruelty-free, so they tick a lot of other boxes too,” suggests Niccii.

### **6. Reusable razors and toothbrushes**

“Billions of disposable plastic razors end up in landfill every year. A reusable safety razor is a one-off investment that will also save you money in the long run,” says Niccii. “The razor itself will last forever and the replacement blades are inexpensive and recyclable. Aussie brand Kappi does a range of safety razors that look amazing in your bathroom in matte black, rose gold and gold.”

The same goes for toothbrushes. Rather than going through the continuous cycle of buying and discarding toothbrushes, opt for a compostable option or invest in an electric toothbrush, where only the head needs to be replaced every so often.

### **7. Sleep in natural fibres**





“Bedding is a great place to start in the bedroom. Consider the materials that you are choosing. Synthetic fibres shed microplastics into the water supply each time you wash them. Choose quality natural fabrics like certified organic cotton, linen or bamboo for sheets and doona covers and look at what pillows and cushions are filled with too. Choosing to support brands that have made a commitment to plastic-free packaging, from swing tags to compostable mailers, is another step in the right direction,” says Niccii.

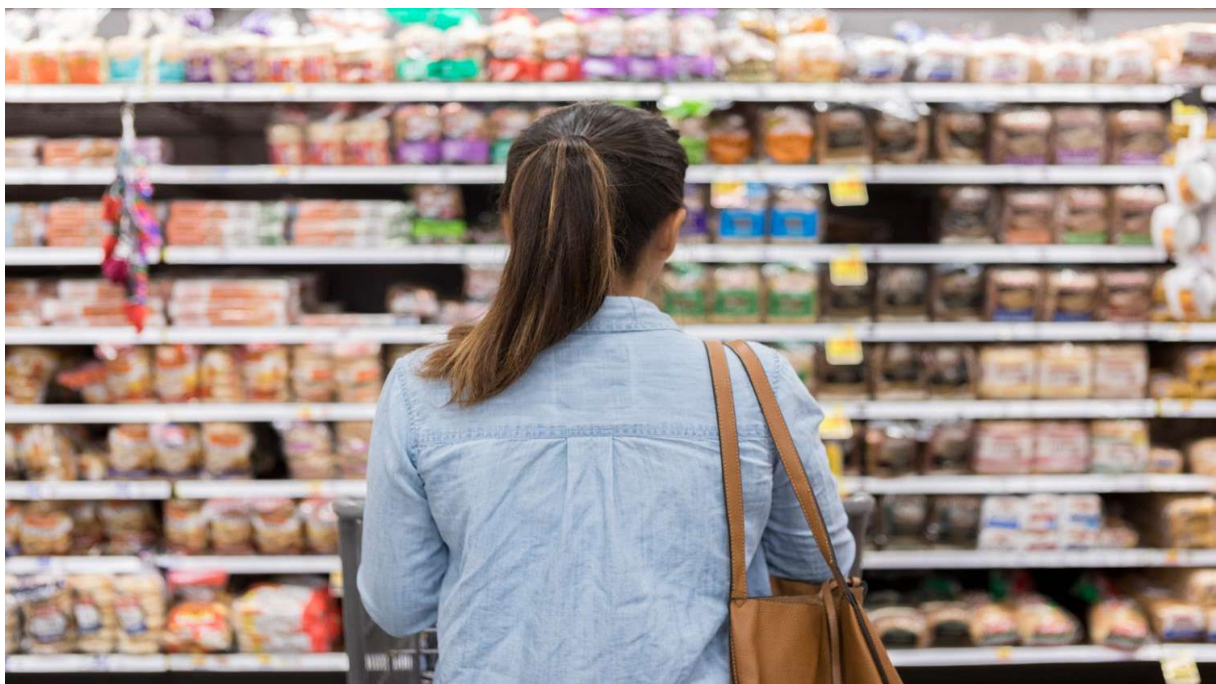
## **8. Watch what you wear**

Have you ever thought about how the clothes you wear impact the environment? From production to postage, plastic is used in the creation and distribution of clothing and textiles, with much of it ending up in landfill or in our oceans.

Thankfully, many brands have made the switch to compostable mailing bags for online orders, but it’s not just the packaging that’s concerning; it’s the materials and procedures used to make clothes.

Choosing to support and shop from clothing brands who are committed to minimising their ecological footprint is the first step towards a more sustainable wardrobe. Good On You, is an Australian-founded company dedicated to helping consumers make ethical and sustainable choices when purchasing clothes. If you want to find out how a brand you love rates in terms of sustainability, check out their Brand Directory where they give clothing companies a score broken down into categories: Planet, People, Animals.

## **9. Buy in bulk**



The most simple yet effective thing you can do to reduce plastic waste at home is to switch to refillable cleaning and body care products or subscribe to a brand like Zero Co, who deliver personal-care and home-cleaning products in Adelaide direct to your door, minus the single-use plastic.

Making your own natural cleaning products is another way to reduce plastic waste, and chances are, you have everything you need in your pantry already. Namely, bi-carb soda and vinegar.

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Going green is rapidly becoming the norm, and the kitchen is a great place to start making environmentally friendly changes to your lifestyle. From the food you buy to the way it's cooked and stored, you can save energy, reduce your carbon footprint and keep an eye on your budget in many different ways.

Eco-friendly cooking not only benefits the environment; it's healthier for you and your family, too. Choosing organic vegetables keeps chemicals out of your body, as well the air, soil and rivers.

Many eco-friendly habits are also budget friendly. And these days, who isn't watching every penny? Finding ways to cook more efficiently -- like using the right appliance for the job -- can help you reduce monthly energy costs. And you can cut your total supermarket bill by reusing products like aluminum foil and glass containers, buying and cooking food in larger quantities and making the most of leftovers.

### **Buy from Local Farmers**

Tomato lovers know there's nothing tastier than a fresh, locally grown tomato in the summertime, but it makes sense to buy food from local farmers year-round.

"One of the most eco-friendly things you can do foodwise is to eat local," says Ann Wilkinson, president of Origin Farms Consulting of Kansas City, Mo. "Not only are you supporting your local farmers, you're getting the freshest and, in many cases, the best organic and natural foods available. Plus, you're saving the environment the oil-hungry transportation cost of moving food across the country or the globe to your supermarket."

Wilkinson encourages shoppers to search out locally grown fruits and vegetables at farmer's markets, food stands and food co-ops. You'll enjoy fresher food while supporting small business in your community and helping the environment.

### **Shop for Organic Products**

Do you know what goes into your food? Bite into a pear from a standard supermarket, and you could be consuming more than 20 potentially dangerous chemicals.

Modern agriculture has made great strides in producing enough crops to satisfy demand, but food companies often use pesticides and chemicals that can harm you and the environment. It's no wonder consumers are seeking healthier options.

Organic farming practices produce crops and raise cattle and poultry without relying on chemicals. Farming the natural way also helps encourage soil and water conservation.

Organic foods provide more nutrients, minerals and vitamins than food grown in large commercial farms. It tastes better, too. Look for organic fruits and vegetables, meats, poultry and dairy from local farmers, markets and co-ops.

### **Find Creative Uses for Leftovers**

Everyone knows that leftover Thanksgiving turkey is great for soup, sandwiches and turketti, but smart cooks make the most of leftover meats all year long. Roasting a chicken for Sunday



dinner? Save what's left to make a pasta dish on Monday or toss it into a salad for Tuesday's lunch. Grill a flank steak tonight and enjoy what's left for weekend fajitas.

Planning ahead can simplify meal preparation on busy evenings, while helping to save the costs of going out to dinner or ordering takeout. Keep leftover bits of carrots, celery, onions and potatoes to make a tasty soup stock -- just add meat or noodles. Pasta dishes like lasagna and chicken casseroles are easy to make in large quantities and freeze in smaller portions to enjoy later.

Many cooks feed their kitchen scraps to a backyard compost pile. Once decomposed, the material makes a great fertilizer for your herb garden. Keep a bin in your kitchen to collect coffee grounds, banana peels, apple cores, eggshells and carrot tops while you're cooking, then take them outdoors. You could also look into an odor-free, indoor system.

### **Use Aluminum Foil Wisely**

Cost-conscious cooks have found creative ways to use and reuse aluminum foil for decades. These habits are also eco-friendly. Wrap lunches, snacks and leftovers in foil to keep them fresh, then rinse and reuse the foil again.

Looking for more smart uses for foil? Line pans and baking dishes with aluminum foil to make cleanup easier, so you use less water. Reuse aluminum foil to clean and scour pots and pans instead of steel wool or plastic pads. You can also use aluminum foil to sharpen scissors and garden shears; simply fold a sheet six to eight times and make several cuts.

Now, you can even purchase recycled aluminum foil from Reynolds Wrap. It's made from 100 percent recycled aluminum from post-consumer sources such as automobile components, cookware, gutters and siding, as well as scraps from industrial cable. According to the manufacturer, there's an 80 percent reduction in the amount of energy used during the process of turning recycled material into foil, compared to making it from new materials. Plus, the packaging and core are made from 100 percent recycled paper, and the inks used on the packaging are water-based.

### **Switch to Eco-friendly Cookware**

While environmentally friendly cookware won't make you a gourmet cook overnight, it can help reduce energy usage in your kitchen and prevent harmful chemicals from tainting your family's food.

Many kitchenware manufacturers, like Cuisinart, are now using a new ceramic technology designed to keep foods from sticking. Traditional nonstick pans are coated with Teflon that starts to break down at temperatures more than 450 degrees Fahrenheit (232 degrees Celsius). Most stoves reach higher temperatures, so the Teflon starts to break down after only a few months.

Pots and pans made with new ceramic-based nonstick technology take less time to heat the surface to the proper cooking temperature because of the excellent heat conductivity of the aluminum it's made from. Its ceramic coating doesn't start to break down until temperatures rise above 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit (538 degrees Celsius).

Purchase only the individual pieces you need instead of buying sets with pots that you'll never use, and select oven-friendly pieces that can be used for multiple purposes. You should also seek designs with tightly fitting lids so that very little heat energy escapes.

Look for cookware made of recycled materials, including handles derived from recycled aluminum. Some manufacturers even offer cookware with handles composed of sustainable materials like bamboo.

### **Cook with Natural Gas**



Gourmet chefs have long preferred a natural gas range for sautéing vegetables and simmering sauces because of the ease and precision it provides. Turns out, gas cooktops are also a green choice.

Natural gas stoves are eco-friendly and energy efficient because the fuel is directly used for cooking. For electric cooktops, electricity must be generated from another source of fuel, like coal or gas.

Many professional cooks prefer using gas because of the immediate response and control that the flame offers. There's no need to wait for the burner to heat up or cool down, and energy usage stops as soon as you turn off the burner. With pilotless ignition systems, gas is being consumed only when it is turned on, lowering energy usage -- and costs -- by about one-third.

Natural gas cooktops and ranges offer even cooking, high-output burners and low simmer temperatures. And you can still cook if the electricity goes out.

### **Develop Green Habits**

Everyday actions add up to big energy savings, so use your appliances wisely. Conserve energy by choosing correctly sized pots and keeping them tightly covered to retain heat. Be sure to keep your stovetop burners clean so they cook more efficiently.

Make the most of your oven by cooking several things at once. Choose cast iron, ceramic or glass cookware to retain more heat and speed cooking time. You can eliminate or minimize preheating to conserve energy. Also, resist the urge to peek into the oven: The temperature drops 25 degrees every time you open the door.

If you're remodeling, consider that convection ovens cook 25 to 30 percent faster than conventional ovens, saving time and energy.

Another green habit is to always use the right appliance for the job. For example, use a toaster to heat up your frozen waffles instead of heating up a large oven, or choose a microwave to heat up frozen foods or leftovers. Electric teapots offer a quick way to boil water and save energy.

Don't be afraid to use your dishwasher. It's a very efficient appliance, and you'll use less water than by washing dishes. Run it only when it is full, and choose the most efficient settings: light instead of heavy and air-dry instead of heat. Just skip the pre-rinse cycle: It uses up to 20 gallons (75.7 liters) of water per load.

### **Eat More Fresh Food**

Here's one more reason to eat healthier: It's eco-friendly. According to the Environmental Defense Fund, if every American had just one meat-free meal per week, the carbon dioxide reduction would be equal to removing more than 5 million cars from the road.

Choosing an organic apple over a bag of chips is a smart nutritional choice and conserves all that energy used in processing, packaging and delivering the bag, then disposing and recycling the waste left behind. While it might be easier to buy microwave popcorn, bottled lemonade or baby carrots, you'll save money by making your own. Just buy regular carrots and cut them into bite-sized pieces, for example.



Another way to eat healthier is to grow your own food -- especially vegetables and herbs. Whether you plant a garden in the backyard or plant herbs in pots on the deck, there's nothing like bringing a red pepper or pinch of basil that you've grown to your table. If a backyard garden isn't possible, find a community garden in your area. Many local parks now offer these small garden plots to gardeners who work together to tend their crops.

## 5. Tips for Eco-friendly Cooking



## Seasonal tips to save energy

Want to save on your energy bill over the summer and winter months? Here are some things you can do to save.

### Quick tips to save in summer

Adjust your air conditioner (set between 25°C and 27°C) and only cool the rooms you are using. Every degree higher can save 5 to 10% in cooling costs.

Even better, use a fan first. Fans are cheap to run, costing 2 cents per hour.

Close blinds during the day and open windows at night. Ideal curtains have a close fit around the window, are thick and/or insulated and covered at the top.

Draught proof your home in Adelaide. Filling gaps to stop cool air escaping can save 25% in cooling costs. For a handy how-to guide go to the Sustainability Victoria website.

Consider an upgrade. Insulation and more efficient heating and cooling systems can help you save even more. You can save up to 15% on cooling costs with insulated walls. To find out more go to our rebates page.

For more tips see our summer guide.

### **Quick tips to save in winter**

Turn down your heater (set between 18°C and 20°C). Every degree lower can save 5 to 10% in heating costs.

Only heat the room you are using by closing off vents and doors of rooms not in use.

Use curtains to trap heat in. Up to 40% of heating can be lost through windows. Ideal curtains have a close fit around the window, are thick and/or insulated and covered at the top.

Draught proof your home. Filling gaps to stop warm air escaping can save 25% in heating costs. For a handy how-to guide go to the Sustainability Victoria website.

Consider an upgrade. Insulation and more efficient heating and cooling systems can help you save even more. You can save 45% or more on heating costs by installing ceiling insulation.

## **6. How To Reduce Waste & Recycle During A Move**



Have you ever relocated home? If yes, then it is a messy and time-taking process. The worst part is that it generates a ton of waste, ranging from old electronics to clothing, wooden furniture, to plastic waste. These can add to the landfill waste and pollute the environment. When waste collects, it emits greenhouse gases, such as methane, that can adversely change the climate. Apart from this, hazardous chemicals from decomposing materials can embed into soil and groundwater- contaminating local water resources. If you are concerned about the environment, reduce waste when de-cluttering your home during a move. It is good to think smartly and focus on proper waste management and recycling to reduce carbon footprint. Here are several tips to help you make the right choices that will benefit you and the environment.

### **What is Waste Management?**

It refers to a streamlined process of gathering, transporting, processing, recycling and disposing of waste materials in an eco-friendly way. The main objective is to reduce the negative impact on the planet, human health and the entire ecosystem. This process involves different strategies, including:

- Waste Segregation
- Composting
- Recycling
- Safe disposal of chemicals, etc

Make sure you hire professional Removalists Adelaide that strictly follows green practices to keep the environment safe and sound.

### **1. Sell or Donate Unwanted Items**

De-cluttering a house during relocation gives you a golden opportunity to purge things you no longer need. However, most people drop the waste into the landfill. This can pollute the environment and emit greenhouse gases. Instead of tossing everything, take a deep breath and donate or sell old furniture, books, gym equipment, clothing and other stuff you don't need. There are various reliable charity organisations that will come and pick up pre-loved items and help the underprivileged people in society. You can also earn extra dollars by organising a garage sale before your move. Sell pre-loved items at heavy discounts and reduce waste.

### **2. Use Old Blankets and Towels as Packing Supplies**

Instead of buying plastic packing paper and bubble wrap that only increases plastic waste, you can go green using old linens, blankets, towels, t-shirts and soft things for packing. You



can use double-layered blankets and carefully handle fragile items during a move. Use towels to wrap your fragile items. You can also use sheets and blankets for TV, pool table, and other delicate stuff. Using these things as green packing materials can protect the environment while saving a lot of money. You can also donate your old sheets and other unwanted stuff to the local charity in Adelaide.

### **3. Use Recycled Moving Boxes**

Of course, you can buy new cardboard boxes to pack your expensive and delicate stuff, but these can only end up in landfill. If you want to reduce carbon emissions, opt for reusable boxes. This will reduce box waste after you have relocated to a new home in Adelaide. You can visit the local grocery store, liquor shop or Facebook marketplace to get free boxes in good condition. The best part is that you can reuse these boxes after relocation as creative storage boxes and units. Here are some benefits of using reusable packing materials, such as boxes, bubble wrap, packing peanuts, etc.

### **4. Dispose of Hazardous Materials**

Instead of throwing old batteries, chemical cleaning products and pesticides into the landfill, make sure you dispose of them using proper methods. Batteries are extremely harmful and can pollute the water sources if leaked and soaked into the soil. Lithium-ion batteries can also cause fires in the waste centre or during transport, while chemicals can pollute the air and water. Whether you have paint can, chemicals, batteries and other hazardous waste, visit the Adelaide Waste and Recycling Centre and safely drop off your hazardous waste. Tip: Professionally-trained removalists Adelaide won't move hazardous materials as it can cause damage during transition.

### **5. Arrange a Recycling Pick Up For Waste**



Make sure you contact the local recycling centre or waste management company in Adelaide, who can come to your place and pick up items that can't be sold or donated. This includes cardboard, paper, plastic containers, glass, and metal objects. Recycling these items can help you protect the environment in the long run.

## **6. Compost Organic Waste**

Do you have access to a composting facility in your locality? If yes, then compost dried leaves, kitchen scraps and other organic waste before relocating a home in Adelaide. This can help you reduce organic waste sent to the landfill and creates a nutrient-rich compost that will bloom your new garden by feeding your plants.

## **7. Plan Your Move Efficiently**

Plan your moving day properly if you want to reduce unwanted trips and fuel usage. It is good to pack and load items in a streamlined manner to reduce the number of trips. This will also help you save a lot of time and money. Make sure you donate unwanted household items or sell them before the final moving day. This will also reduce the number of trips as you have to move only the necessary household items. You can also look for the best removalists Adelaide that can bring green moving vehicles for the utmost safety of your possessions.

## **Conclusion**

Creating an eco-friendly home is not just a trend but a necessity for a sustainable future. By making conscious choices—such as using renewable energy, conserving water, reducing waste, and opting for sustainable materials—you can significantly reduce your environmental impact while enhancing your quality of life. Small changes, like switching to energy-efficient appliances or embracing a zero-waste lifestyle, can lead to long-term benefits for both your household and the planet. Sustainability begins at home, and every effort counts. Whether you take gradual steps or embark on a full eco-home transformation, your commitment to green living will contribute to a healthier, cleaner, and more sustainable world. By adopting these practices, you not only create a better home for yourself but also help pave the way for future generations to enjoy a greener planet.

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