

## One Green Thing

# Looking for an Eco-Resolution?

This year expand your karmic footprint by choosing a goal that's good for both you and the planet. Use this guide to find an eco-friendly promise you'll actually keep. *By Amanda Schupak*

### START

Do you want to invest in a **ONE-TIME PROJECT** or cultivate a **NEW HABIT**?

Get me in the habit.

One-and-done, please.

Do you have more time or money to invest?

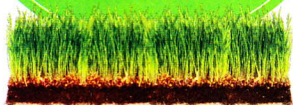
Going green takes green.

I've got time for the environment.

Big spender or on a budget?

### Five minutes

Reset the schedule on your automatic sprinklers so your lawn is irrigated in the early morning or late evening. Evaporation during daytime hours means as much as 30 percent of water never makes it into the soil, which can amount to 126 gallons of water wasted each week at your house alone.



### A half hour

Older toilets use as much as seven gallons of water with each flush—when less than a gallon can do the trick. Not ready to replace a gallon guzzler? Fill a plastic bottle with water and a bit of sand or gravel and submerge it in the tank (careful to keep clear of the stopper) for a do-it-yourself low-flow throne.



How much?

\$\$

Even in the off position, many electronics suck energy, which accounts for up to 10 percent of your electricity bill. The Smart Strip surge protector (from \$29; cableorganizer.com) cuts power to peripherals like printers, scanners, and DVD players when the main device (your computer or TV) is off. Belkin's Conserve Valet (\$40; belkin.com) charges four USB gadgets (phones, iPods, camera) but shuts down completely when the dock is empty.



### An afternoon

Tweaking the energy efficiency of your home doesn't have to mean replacing appliances. The U.S. Department of Energy's energysavers.gov site gives step-by-step instructions on conducting a home-energy assessment and shows how a few freebie changes—closing the fireplace damper, lowering the hot-water heater to 120 degrees—can save water, energy, and dollars.



\$

Each year the average U.S. home receives 1.5 trees' worth of junk mail—mostly unopened credit card offers, solicitations, and catalogs. For a measly buck, you can register to block junk mail at [dmachoice.org](http://dmachoice.org).



\$\$\$

As much as 30 percent of your home's heating and cooling energy goes out the window—literally. But the honeycomb pattern of Hunter Douglas's Duette Architella insulating shade (from \$300; [hunterdouglas.com](http://hunterdouglas.com)) lets light through while slashing energy loss by up to half (and lowering your utility bills, to boot).





# May We Help You?

Where do you want to practice your new routine?

At work

Eco on the clock or on your break?

At home

Are you going solo or making it a family thing?

Family thing

Solo

What part of your body do you want to green?

Do you want to buy less or trash less?

Buy less

Made from 95 percent natural and renewable ingredients, Method Laundry Detergent (\$15.50; [methodhome.com](http://methodhome.com)) is eight times more concentrated than conventional cleaners, which means one compact bottle can handle 50 loads—while using 36 percent less plastic and 33 percent less energy and oil to produce.

Face

Developed by celebrity makeup artist Rose-Marie Swift, RMS Beauty's luscious eyeshadows, lipcolors, and skin balms are 98 percent organic, come in plastic-free recyclable glass pots, and are packaged in paper and boxes made at a wind-powered factory (\$18 to \$38; [rmsbeauty.com](http://rmsbeauty.com)).

Underarms

The energy it takes to mine enough aluminum for one stick of antiperspirant could power your laptop for a half hour. Switch to a deodorant; for a serious upgrade, consider Lush's deodorant bars (\$8; [lushusa.com](http://lushusa.com)). They're aluminum-free, made of only natural ingredients, and have zero plastic packaging.

Trash less

Recycling paper, aluminum, and glass is second nature by now. But what about your toddler's high chair or the padding under the old carpet? Visit [earth911.com](http://earth911.com) to find surprising recycling initiatives in your area.

On the clock

Those e-mail signatures reminding you to print only when necessary are about one kajillionth as eco-effective as using double-sided printing and copying. The average office worker in the United States uses 10,000 pieces of paper each year, so slashing that number is well worth the ten frustrating minutes it takes to figure out your machine's settings.

On my break

It's sad enough we're often stuck eating lunch at our desks. What's worse is mindlessly grabbing a plastic fork or spoon each day from the cafeteria—contributing to the estimated 40 billion that wind up in U.S. landfills annually. An easy fix: Keep flatware at your desk, like To-Go Ware's bamboo utensil set with a storage pouch made from recycled plastic (\$13; [to-goware.com](http://to-goware.com)).

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