

Eco-Christmas Top Tips

1. **Buy less:** When it comes to the environment less is almost always more. Buy less food, less manufactured good, less travel and less plastic will lead to a lot less waste.

Try and remember these three golden rules:

- Reuse, reduce, recycle wherever you can
- If you can make it at home – make it
- If you do have plastic, look after it and use it as much as you can before throwing it away

2. **Wrapping paper:** On average, Brits use around 227,000 miles of wrapping paper. To check if your wrapping paper is suitable for recycling simply carry out the scrunch test: screw a piece of paper up in the palm of your hand, if it stays scrunched you can recycle it, if it unfolds itself, you can't.

Why not try and make your own?

All you need:

- brown paper
- a stamp (you can make one from a potato)
- poster paint.



Instructions:

- Carefully cut a shape in your potato if you have a cookie cutter you can use this
- Dry the end of the potato and dip in the paint
- Stamp your potato on to the brown paper
- Wait for the paint to dry and wrap!

<https://www.tate.org.uk/kids/make/paint-draw/wrapping-paper>

3. **Food:** We spend on average 20% more on Christmas food compared to other months which unfortunately can lead to a lot of leftovers. Why not make the most of the leftover food you have with these recipes ideas?

<https://www.jamieoliver.com/recipes/category/course/leftovers/>

https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/collections/christmas_leftovers

4. **Christmas Trees:** Up to 8 million Christmas Trees are bought every December in the UK. This can create lots of unwanted waste at the end of Christmas- If you like a real tree- have you thought about renting a Christmas tree? <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/50536143>. If you buy a real tree make sure your recycle it- Cornwall council offer a collection service for your tree

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/recycling-collections/christmas-rubbish-and-recycling/>

5. **Tree decorations:** Tree decorations are often made of plastic which isn't great when it ends up in landfill or the sea. Why not have a go at making one of these edible tree decorations which leave no waste once eaten: https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/stained_glass_window_09846

Or you could make a salt dough creation for your tree.

What you will need:

- 1 cup of flour
- 1 cup of salt
- 1 cup of water

Instructions

- In a large bowl, mix the salt and flour
- Gradually add the water in until it forms a nice thick dough
- Don't add too much or it will be a sticky mess
- Set out some wax paper for the kids to make their shapes on
- Don't forget to poke a hole in your creation – a straw works great for that
- When you're ready to bake, transfer the creation still on wax paper to a baking sheet.



6. **The Christmas party outfit:** Rather than heading straight out to the shops for some fast fashion why not buy something pre-loved. You can often pick up a fantastic outfit for a fraction of its original cost at charity shops up and down the high street or online selling sites like e-bay.
7. **Gifts:** Why not consider buying your presents from a charity shop, meaning new resources don't have to be exploited and you have the added benefit of the money being donated to a good cause. Alternatively, homemade presents are a great way to show you care. Why not have a go at these rock art picture holders.

<https://www.thepragmaticparent.com/homemade-christmas-gifts-kids-can-make/>

What you will need:

- Paint or permanent marker pens
- Rocks found at the beach or in the garden (remember to wash them first)
- A sealant- like PVA glue
- Craft or floral wire
- Beads
- Bead tools like wire cutter and pliers
- Special photos to display or give without for the person receiving to add



Instructions:

- Wash your rocks and let them dry.
- Let your imagination go wild decorating your rocks
- Let the paint/pens dry
- Cover the rock in a layer of PVA glue- this will stop the paint from running if they get wet
- Put the rock at the middle of the wire and twist around the rock.

You should have two bits of wire sticking up- thread with beads.

Leave around 3cm at the top to create two hoops which will hold the photo.

8. **Christmas Lights:** If you are buying new lights this year for your tree or house- why not go LED. LEDs are much more environmentally friendly as they use up to 80% less energy. If every UK household swapped a string of incandescent lights for its LED equivalent, we could save more than £11 million and 29,000 tonnes of CO2, just over the 12 days of Christmas.
9. **Shop local:** Give your local shops and markets some love this Christmas and reduce carbon from travelling to big towns and cities. As well as supporting independent businesses, you're likely to seek out special finds you won't get anywhere else
10. **Christmas Jumper-** rather than buying a new jumper why not swap with someone else. It might be hard this year to get together in large groups to swap jumpers, but you can swap with people in your bubble. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/50674553>
11. **Winter walks.** When the rain stops get outdoors. Getting outdoors makes us all feel better, gets us more active and gives us time to appreciate the nature around us. Here are some ideas from Get Active Cornwall <https://www.getactivecornwall.co.uk/activities/walking/circular-walks/>

Why not pick up some materials on your walk to make one of these Christmas decorations.

What you will need:

- 5 twigs-roughly the same length. Bendy sticks work better
- Some string



Follow the instructions here to complete your star

<https://lovelygreens.com/how-to-make-a-simple-twig-star/>

12. **Christmas cards:** According to Imperial College researchers, around 1.5 billion Christmas cards are thrown away by UK households each year. E-cards could be a great alternative to cut your carbon footprint, save trees and save money. Friends of the Earth will help you send your paperless cards (donations to their charity is optional) <https://ecogifts.friendsoftheearth.uk/category/winter-holidays>

But if you are buying cards to send, look for cards with the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) mark. Better still have a go at making one <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YmjvHDLmu-E>

What you'll need:

- Paint
- Card
- Your finger
- Pens



And here's an extra idea – we love making these!!

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pMk7rweOQc5XqsgnhVSQn9XqWo4QuW15/view>

<https://brendid.com/free-printables/>

