

Top 12 Sustainable New Year's Resolutions

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Ask an Expert: Top 12 Sustainable New Year's Resolutions

To make 2019 a great new year, challenge yourself to try these simple lifestyle changes each month. Each aspect of sustainable living presented is not only good for the environment, but good for your health and wallet as well. Whether it is dusting off your bike, exploring vermicomposting or simply changing a light bulb, each small change you make will have lasting impacts. Consider these month-by-month



tips.

January: Lose paper weight this year. Go paperless with your bills and unsubscribe from junk mail through Direct Marketing Association's Mail Preference Service at dmchoice.org.

February: Be a cool Valentine. Save on your heating bill and turn your thermostat down while your house is empty during the day. See if you can sleep better with the thermostat down a few degrees at night as well. For other energy saving tips, visit extensionsustainability.usu.edu/energy.

March: Start your (natural) spring cleaning. Make your own cleaning products to minimize toxin exposure, save money and be healthy. Visit uaex.edu/Other_Areas/publications/PDF/MP492.pdf for tips and recipes.

April: Let rain showers water your flowers. Build garden swales instead of mounds to capture natural water flow. Find pictures, explanations and books on how to do it at atharvestingrainwater.com/.

May: Be bright with LED and natural light. Switch the light bulbs in your home to more efficient LED lights and use natural light to brighten your home and office. Energy tips can be found at extensionsustainability.usu.edu/energy.

June: Avoid June bugs with natural pest control. Create your own garlic and dish detergent mixture for aphids, or experiment with other natural pest control recipes to improve your family's health and your landscape. Visit eartheasy.com/grow_nat_pest_cntrl.htm for tips on natural pest control.

July: Beat the heat with a native garden. Plant drought and heat-tolerant native edibles and ornamentals this year to add natural Utah beauty to your landscape. Browse extension.usu.edu/htm/horticulture for helpful information.

August: Be thrift chic. Prepare your "new" work or school wardrobe with a visit to your local thrift store. While there, drop off clothes you no longer wear to keep the cycle going. Learn more about how to give clothes a second chance at usuextensionsustainability.blogspot.com/2013/05/give-clothes-second-chance.html.

September: Head back to school or work with alternative transportation. Opt to bike, walk or ride the bus as your primary mode of daily transportation. Find out more by viewing the fact sheet at extensionsustainability.usu.edu/air.

October: Happy Halloworms! Start your own household vermicompost system with red wigglers, a container, bedding, dirt, moisture and your daily food scraps. See Extension's vermicomposting fact sheet at extensionsustainability.usu.edu/land/.

November: Give thanks through local giving! Sign up for a community-supported agriculture program, and buy a Thanksgiving meal from local sources to reduce your family's food print (the carbon footprint associated with how the food was produced and the miles it has traveled between production and consumption). Find out more about the local food movement at extensionsustainability.usu.edu/food.

December: Give more while consuming less. Reuse newspaper and other paper scraps to make homemade upcycled (converting used materials into new items) gifts for friends and family. Opt to draw names with family and friends to reduce the quantity and increase the quality of gifts. Host creative craft nights with friends and catch up while repurposing products that are typically thrown away. See Extension's "Reuse" fact sheet at extension.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/Sustainability_2012_11pr.pdf.

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