

Green Festive Season Checklist for Families

Simple ways to celebrate, save resources and reduce waste



The festive season can be joyful and kind to the planet. Use this checklist to plan a low-waste, low-stress celebration with your family.

1. BEFORE THE HOLIDAYS – PLAN & DECLUTTER

- Talk as a family about having a “green Christmas”
- Set a simple budget and gift plan to avoid over-buying
- Declutter gently: set aside usable items to donate, not dump
- Check local recycling and e-waste drop-off points (see www.ewasa.org)

Have a
Fun-Filled
Holiday

2. GIFTS & SHOPPING – LESS “STUFF”, MORE MEANING

- Choose experiences (vouchers, outings, concerts, nature trips)
- Support locally made, durable items from responsible brands
- Look for second-hand books, toys or refurbished electronics
- Make DIY gifts – baked treats, homemade body scrubs, potted herbs
- Ask family to keep gifts simple and practical (or opt out of gifts)



3. WRAPPING & DÉCOR – LOW-WASTE, HIGH-IMPACT

- Wrap gifts in brown paper, newspaper, old maps or fabric
- Avoid shiny/laminated paper and plastic ribbons
- Tie with string or twine and decorate with leaves, herbs or pinecones
- Reuse gift bags, boxes and tissue from previous years
- Choose a potted indigenous or fruit tree instead of a plastic tree
- Decorate with natural items and upcycled paper/fabric ornaments

4. FOOD & ENTERTAINING – CUT WASTE, NOT ENJOYMENT

- Plan the menu and shopping list – avoid over-catering
- Use real plates, glasses and cutlery instead of disposables

Have a plan for leftovers:

- “Leftover lunch” the next day
- Freeze extra portions
- Send guests home with reusable containers
- Compost fruit and veg scraps where possible
- Rinse and recycle clean tins, glass, paper and cardboard



5. ON-THE-DAY HABITS – ENERGY & WATER SMART

- Put lights and decorations on timers
- Switch appliances off at the plug (avoid standby)
- Provide jugs of tap water instead of single-use bottled water
- Serve drinks in reusable cups
- Take a short digital break – more family time, less screen time



6. AFTER THE HOLIDAYS – TIDY UP RESPONSIBLY

- Sort recyclables: paper, plastic, glass, metals
- Flatten and store cardboard boxes for recycling
- Pack away reusable décor, bags and boxes for next year
- Take old electronics, cables, batteries and small appliances to an authorised e-waste recycler, not the bin
- Talk as a family: What worked well? What will we repeat next year?