



Shopping for a Better World

As you venture into the madness of holiday shopping this season, here are a few things to keep in mind to shop responsibly, for a better world:



1. **Buy durable products.** Look for products that are constructed well and that will last for years. Research major purchases ahead of time through consumer magazines and organizations.
2. **Buy reusable products.** Garbage doesn't just disappear after we put it at the curb. It goes to landfills where it sits for years. By buying products that can be reused (such as reusable razors instead of disposable razors), you get more value from your purchase and eliminate unnecessary products from the waste stream.
3. **Buy products with eco-friendly packaging.** Many products are over-packaged or packaged with materials that persist in the environment. Make better choices and choose products that have recyclable or reusable packaging. Buying in bulk helps.
4. **Read the label.** Look for these terms on the label before purchasing a product: recyclable, biodegradable, recycled content, unbleached or chlorine-free bleaching, not tested on animals, CFC-free/ozone-friendly, Made in USA/Union-Made.
5. **Shop at home.** Save money on gas and avoid the hassle of holiday traffic and parking woes by shopping from your home computer or catalogues.
6. **Reuse gift packaging.** Use metal tins, glass jars from the kitchen, colorful pillowcases, baskets or any other materials. Decorate packages with ribbon that has been reclaimed from previous years' gifts.
7. **Give a gift that gives twice.** Purchase your gifts from an environmental organization or nature center (see *insert*). Proceeds will benefit that organization's efforts. Consider giving a membership, which may offer extra benefits throughout the year.
8. **Stay real or fake it.** Use a rooted or artificial Christmas tree. After the holidays, plant the tree in your yard or donate it to a park, nature center, or other organization. An artificial tree can be used for many years and will be better for those with allergies. If you buy a cut tree, chip it for garden mulch.
9. **A gift for those in need.** Don't throw away used or extra items when you receive a new replacement as a gift. Donate the extra or unwanted items to thrift stores, shelters, or other charities.
10. **Make a "green" New Year's resolution.** Learn to compost, recycle more materials from your household, save water, resist disposable items and products with excess packaging, use your car less, clean your house with less toxic products, and replace items in your home with more efficient and economical ones.

(Portions adapted from the Better World Handbook, www.betterworldhandbook.com)

For tips to live environmentally sound all year round, visit www.CleanOceanAction.org and follow links for Education. **Got a tip?** If you have any tips to add to our holiday or "10-Tips series", please send them to SandyHook@CleanOceanAction.org, or call COA at 732-872-0111.

