

GO CIRCULAR!



Why Go Circular?

The Circular Economy can help mitigate the effects of climate change by keeping materials at their highest value for as long as possible and designing out waste.

If we all try to Go Circular, we could help wildlife and our environment by designing, making and using things more carefully.

The good news is that you can start with SMALL CHANGES and, if lots of us do them together, we can have a BIG IMPACT.

And often, these changes can be cheaper than the way we do things now, in our Linear Economy.

How does this resource work?

We've come up with some initial ideas for cutting out waste at home or at school. We've outlined 5 Key Themes you can see below, and we've split the ideas into 3 sections:

- Me
- My Home
- My Classroom and School

This is a LIVING RESOURCE - we're going to keep thinking and adding to it as we come up with new ideas, and we really want to hear from you. If you come up with ideas to Go Circular which aren't here yet, please email them to us (mary@ostrero.com) and we can add them in for other people to think about too. We'll keep your name and school next to your idea so people know where it came from, and we'll feature some of the best ones in our exhibition.

Key Themes

As you investigate these waste-saving ideas, you will see there are a few key themes emerging:

1. Make things last - look after your things and repair them to make them last as long as possible. So that might mean mending a hole in your jeans, using every bit of space in your jotter or replacing that cracked screen on your phone instead of buying a new one.
2. Ditch single use items for reusable ones - for example, replace cling film with washable wrappers; use a fabric facemask that can be washed instead of a single-use disposable one; or a reusable water bottle rather than a plastic single-use one.
3. Get rid of useless packaging - when you buy or when you give! For example, try to replace things in your packed lunch that come individually wrapped, like yoghurts, cheese or crisps, with ones you've got from a bigger bag and put into a reusable box.
4. Share rather than own - for example by having a Halloween or World Book Day costume library at school; or joining a tool library at home. Sharing is often cheaper, means we use fewer resources - and you don't have the hassle of looking after the object and disposing of it at the end of its life.
5. And maybe most importantly, ask yourself these 3 simple questions every time you are about to buy something:
 - Where does it come from?
 - Do I really need it - and if so, do I need to own it?
 - Where does it go once I've finished with it?

Just thinking about these three things makes you more aware of the impact we all have every time we buy or use an object.



Clothes

- Love preloved clothes - they are great for your look, your pocket and the planet. We can buy second hand (from e.g. charity shops, gumtree, ebay, Oxfam online); look online for new clothes that others don't want; lease clothes (Mud Jeans, Rent the Catwalk etc); share clothes; or swap them with friends when we'd like a change.
- Take good care of our clothes and challenge ourselves to make them last for as long as they fit us. If we tear or damage them, mend them yourself or have them mended.
- When we have finished with our clothes, don't bin them - somebody else could love them too! Hand them down or across to friends; sell them online [with help from your adult]; or give them to charity.

School Bag

- Be a school bag hero - try to keep your school bag for as long as you can. Look after it so that it doesn't get too bashed up and make it last for as long as you can.
- Stationery - we all love it, but how much of it do we really need? Be careful not to keep on buying pens and pencils when you have a lifetime's supply already - use up what you have and try to keep the same pencil case for as long as you can.
- Jotters - write on every page and look after all of the school books that come home with you so that you or others can keep on using them for as long as possible.
- Water bottle - cut the single use plastic bottles and buy a reusable bottle that you can fill up again and again - money saving, better looking and circular!

My snacks and lunch box

- Have a reusable packed lunch box.
- Avoid single use wraps like cling film, tin foil, paper or plastic bags. Instead, think about getting reusable boxes, cloth or beeswax wraps. You only have to buy them once and then you can use them again and again.
- Think about the packaging on your lunch and snacks. Can you choose items that don't have as much packaging on them, or - better still - don't have any? If they do have packaging, can you recycle it?
- Ask your adult to buy food that doesn't come in plastic bags where they can - like loose carrots, apples and oranges.

How I get around

- If you can, walk to school, cycle, scoot, board or skate!
- Take public transport wherever you can.
- Avoid car journeys whenever possible.

My Stuff

Electronics

- Think about where your electronics come from - could you buy refurbished or second hand items?
- If buying new, look for the most environmentally friendly makes - a quick internet search will help you find them
- We tend to be given a new charger every time we get a new phone - ask if you can buy just the phone so you don't end up with a pile of chargers you don't use.
- Look after your stuff and try to make it last. If your console, phone, tablet or television breaks, don't just dump it. It can be repaired or sold for repair.
- When you have finished with your equipment, someone else could use it - you could sell it, hand it on or give it to charity.
- If it really is broken, put it in the small electricals section of your local recycling centre - don't throw it in the bin!

GO CIRCULAR! Section 1: Me



Toys

- If your toy comes wrapped in layers of unnecessary packaging, send the supplier an email to let them know that you don't like that. Your opinion is more powerful than you know!
- Tell your adult that it's okay for them to buy you pre-loved toys - there are so many out there, in fabulous condition (check out bricklink.com, Gumtree, Ebay, Preloved, charity shops and toy libraries).

Books

- Join a library - a brilliant example of how we can share items to prevent waste!
- Think about their future - don't write or scribble in them and use a bookmark rather than folding down the pages
- Make sure that they go on to be reused when you have finished with them, by passing them on to a friend, a second hand book shop or a charity shop.
- In the sad event of a book being unable to be used again, make sure that you put it into the paper recycling bin so that it can have another life.

GO CIRCULAR! Section 2: My Home



These days, homes needn't compromise on style or quality when making choices that are good for our planet.

Food & Drinks

- Buy local and seasonal where you can to reduce your carbon footprint.
- Get a veg box delivered to cut out packaging.
- Buy fruit and veg bags to help you carry unpackaged fresh goods at the supermarket - you are more likely to choose it if it's easy!
- When you have to buy packaged goods, opt for materials that are easy to recycle (like aluminium cans, paper or cardboard cartons).
- Get your milk delivered in glass bottles that are collected and refilled each week.
- Look for a local refill station for dry goods like pasta, rice and cereal.
- Save dinner leftovers for the next day, or freeze them for an easy meal later.
- Start a compost.

Bathroom and household

- Shampoo and conditioner bars (from Lush, Albapure, Faith in Nature and lots more) are just as good as the stuff in a bottle, but with no packaging!
- Try deodorant that is in a cardboard rather than plastic container.
- Buy eco cleaning products - they are just as effective and kinder to the environment. You could even take a bottle of your own that you like and fill it up at a local refill station to cut out extra packaging.
- Recycle plastic or glass bottles - don't put them in the bin!

Gifts

- Where did the materials that make up your gift come from? Buying local materials or locally made items reduces carbon footprint and supports your local economy.
- Making something yourself can be even more special than buying something - check out Making Circles Online for Bryony Knox's beautiful brooches, made of aluminium cans. There are so many great ideas out there - check out Pinterest for more.
- New-to-you gifts - Gifts don't have to be new - they can be second hand, but still in great condition. Thrifting gifts is a brilliant, affordable way to give. And this means you are taking something out of the waste stream, hooray! By shopping at antique, vintage or second-hand stores, you can find truly one-of-a-kind gifts. Trawl your local shops or buy second-hand online at places like Gumtree, ebay, Oxfam, antique shops etc.
- Zero waste gifting - shampoo bars, bath bombs and shower bars are a great way to get others to fall in love with beauty that isn't packaged. There are ever more brands on the market that offer zero waste options - check out Lush, Albapure etc...
- Think about how much you need to give. Less is often more if the present is a thoughtful one.
- Gift reusables - the gift that keeps on giving. There are so many beautiful reusable mugs, water bottles, make up pads, cloths and paper towels out there. Not only do they look and feel good, but they save the gift receiver money every time they are used!
- Gift cards to your favorite low waste shop or gift vouchers to a sustainable local restaurant.
- Think about the materials that your gift is made of and wrapped in.
- Did you know that most wrapping paper can't be recycled, so ends up in landfill? Always check the label to see if you can recycle it.
- Wrap your gifts in cloth, newspaper, reclaimed gift paper, or recyclable paper. You probably have a stash of gift bags just waiting to be reused, so reuse away. You can also wrap with a piece of scrap-fabric furoshiki style, which sounds fancy and looks gorgeous but is pretty easy to do. Furoshiki: The Art of Japanese Fabric Wrapping (invaluable.com) Tie with twine and tuck in some leaves or flowers and you've got the perfect looking gift.

GO CIRCULAR! Section 2: My Home



Energy

- Ask your adult where your electrical energy comes from - it's so easy to change to a renewable energy provider and it's a brilliant chance to make a big difference.
- Smart Meters are a great way to find out how much money you are spending on gas and electricity to help you save - do you have one?
- Switch off the lights when you aren't in a room - it really does make a difference to your energy bill and the planet!

Sharing

- Think about joining a Car Club if you live in an area where this service is run. It can be significantly cheaper than owning your own car and just as handy.
- There are tool libraries all over the country - you pay an annual fee, usually of about £20, and can then use as many tools as you want throughout the year. It's cheaper than buying your own, you get the most up to date tools, don't have the hassle of storing and looking after them - and save the planet's valuable resources.

GO CIRCULAR! Section 3: My Classroom and School



Equipment

- Don't use plastic glitter, which causes problems for aquatic life and contributes to plastic pollution (non-plastic, biodegradable glitter is available for die-hard fans, however many schools in Scotland are now deciding to ban glitter).
- Using a microfibre cloth rather than a plastic whiteboard 'duster' that contains plastic glued to fabric and can't currently be recycled at the end of its life.
- Recycling your writing instrument and equipment – Terracycle is a company that collects otherwise hard to recycle materials. There are numerous drop off points for these around Scotland. Find the nearest one, collect your used colouring pens and biro and drop them off to be properly recycled so the material can be kept at its highest value.
- Having a reuse box in your classroom – a place to disassemble crafty items and recover what you can for reuse.
- Jotters – use every page and every space, keep for the following year or recycle.
- End of year recycle – near the end of school collect all teaching material (laminated letters, jotters, bags, books) to make sure that they are reused, redistributed, properly recycled or given to charity if not to be used again.
- Marker pens and melted crayons – recycle the pens after taking ink out and melt crayons to make a new batch.
- Laminated name tags can't be recycled - Use mini chalkboard name tags – or pass on the laminated name tags to the next class up for reuse.
- Check out who supplies office equipment and ask if it is possible to buy eco alternatives?

Sharing

- Uniform shop - get your parent council involved and set up a uniform recycling service. Ask parents to hand in uniforms that have been outgrown, wash them and hang them on a rail for others to purchase. Think about charging something (eg. £2 per item) for the uniform items so that people recognise that they are worth something and should be valued. Charging for items rather than giving them away often has the counterintuitive effect of making people value the items more. This cuts out waste, keeps uniforms being used and raises money for the Parent Council or school.
- Community resource sharing – using local shops and businesses waste streams (eg sweetie jars from sweet shops, bike inner tubes, fabric books etc).for storage and project resources.
- Halloween costume/Dressing up costume shop - same as the uniform shop - ask parents to hand in costumes that pupils have outgrown, then re-sell them for £2 or so, keeping the items valued and raising money for school extras!
- Bring in your books and swap them on World Book day.
- Hold a toy-swap shop.

Energy

- Switch off lights if your school doesn't have smart lights.

Go Digital

- Instead of having a paper school newsletter, go paperless and send one out by e-mail.
- Use a platform like Class Dojo, Teams or Google Classroom – teachers and students share files (set homework, announcement, grade, communicate etc) to go paperless.

GO CIRCULAR! Section 3: My Classroom and School



Projects

- Think history and look back to look forward - Victorian classrooms were very low waste, with pupils using chalk and slate to draw and minimal packaging waste. Organise a class trip to New Lanark where Pupils can enjoy a classroom roleplay in Robert Owen's time (1825).
- Fixing and mending club - could you start a knee patching, teddy fixing club to make your things last?
- Eco schools - build for the next flag