



AN ALMOST ZERO WASTE CONSUMER

Roadmap to a responsible consumer

"A Zero-Waste consumer does not exist. When the Zero Waste concept was created, it was always presented as "towards Zero-Waste". There is no such thing as zero impact on the planet. It is not possible. Unless we exist, we have no impact. Otherwise we do."

Irina Breniuc, environmental activist and responsible consumer

This guide offers a series of tips to help you in your endeavor towards Zero Waste.



There are many ways to lead a more conscious life with healthy choices for both yourself and nature. You don't have to change your life completely.

We do not believe in an absolute Zero Waste, but awareness of the impact of the choices made and the small steps we can take in this direction, is exactly the change we need.

Do what you can, but do it!

Have you ever wondered what happens to your garbage bag?

Your garbage bag journey to the disposal site means pollution and extremely toxic emissions into the air, water and soil.



"Zero Waste" means the reduction of waste produced without incinerators or other toxic technologies and the transition to a circular economy. It is a growing global initiative that leads us to a change in lifestyle and consumption habits.

"We have to think of resources as being finite. We have to see everything as a cycle, as a circular economy piece in which people take resources from a place, process them, produce some things from them and those things are not destroyed. These return to a cycle in which they become raw material for a second product, third product and so on. Plastic products must have a long life, if it is possible. "

Andrei Coşuleanu – environmental activist and founder of Act For Tomorrow

People generate too much garbage that they can't manage it in a sustainable way. Waste that is not biodegradable and cannot be recycled properly fills our oceans and landfills. The beginnings of the industrial revolution meant more and more waste generated by the profit-driven companies that began to produce goods and materials with a short and limited lifespan, turning over 10% of the planet into landfills.

Five simple principles of a Zero Waste lifestyle:

1. Avoid

If you don't need something, you should give it up. Self-control plays an important role here, but so does critical thinking: for example, think about what things are duplicated in your household or maybe what items could be shared with neighbors, friends or family.

2. Reduce

Consuming less means throwing less. This is not just about material things. Electricity, water consumption and private transport also fall into this category.

3. Reuse

Many items have a long life. Good care extends the life of many products! Repairing things, lending them to the community, or offering them to someone who can still use them is a great way to extend the life of some products and avoid waste.

4. Recycle

Valuable raw materials can sometimes be recovered from waste. Waste should be separated properly or better, and upcycling can turn waste into new and useful items!

5. Compost

Waste that cannot be reused is sometimes compostable, it means that it decomposes over time and is returned to the natural cycle. Use household waste and other compatible waste to make compost.



Write at least one reason why you want to start a Zero Waste lifestyle.

This way you will have a starting point whenever you need motivation.

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To give you a boost of perseverance, **DID YOU KNOW?**



- **Over 40% of the plastic produced is disposable. Only 10% end up in recycling. The rest of the plastic ends up either in landfills, incinerators or in nature.**
- **Since 2016, Germany has had the highest recycling rate in the world, with 56.1% of all waste it produced last year being recycled. This was possible because of “The Green Dot”, the first-ever dual recycling system in the world for collecting waste from households and businesses.**
- **Whether shopping for food or clothes, at the office or on holiday - in Europe each person produces on average about 502 kilograms of waste per year, which is over 1 kilogram per day.**
- **A new study published in the journal Global Change Biology found that the rate of plastic consumption of marine fish has doubled in the last decade and is increasing by more than 2% per year. Their results showed that 386 species of fish - two-thirds of all species - ingested plastic. And of these, 210 were species that are commercially fished.**



At HOME (almost) Zero Waste

These items and actions have a very large carbon footprint: food, clothing, transportation. In my diet, I recommend eliminating products of animal origin that have a very high impact on the environment through the production of feed, processing of meat, dairy products and related products. Also there is an ethical side: when you become vegan, you also look at the ethical aspect. The two give you satisfaction, and you feel good with your choices.

Irina Breniuc, environmental activist and responsible consumer

No plastic!

Most of us have all kinds of plastic bottles in the household, from the bathroom soap device to the washing and cleaning solutions around the house. Avoid this type of waste.

You can replace the disposable coffee capsules with an original coffee, sold in bulk, which you can prepare in the press or kettle.

Make your own products!

Look for tips and ideas online. You can store your household products either in airtight jars or in various glass containers. The jars are ideal for storing dry food.

Look for alternatives!

- If DIY projects are too time consuming, choose to replace plastic packaging waste and disposable products with sustainable alternatives. Look for packaging made of cardboard or recycled materials. When it comes to detergent, you can choose the powder version, it often does not contain preservatives.
 - Replace straws, napkins and other disposable products with more sustainable alternatives. Use glass or metal straws and reusable textile wipes.
 - Replace paper towels for cleaning the house with clothes you no longer use (eg an old cotton T-shirt).
- 



Buy from local producers!

This reduces greenhouse gas emissions, supports local businesses and reduces waste.

- Buy your products from stores without packaging!

Save energy and water!

The goal is not necessarily to simply use less energy (although that also helps) but to think about how you can use energy more efficiently.

This type of waste cannot be put in a garbage bag or in a recycling bin, but it can certainly affect your home and the environment.

Here's what you can do:

- Use the appropriate thermostat settings
- Turn off the lights when not in use
- Switch to LED bulbs
- Lower the water heater temperature
- Disconnect all unused chargers or devices.
- When making tea or coffee, overfilling the kettle is a habit that many of us have, but boiling more water than necessary wastes both water and energy. The next time you make a tea, boil only the amount of water you need.
- Turn off the water in those situations where you do another action that does not require water consumption at the same time, such as brushing your teeth or washing dishes, until they are rinsed.



PERSONAL CARE (almost) Zero Waste

- Replace the plastic toothbrush with a more durable alternative such as a bamboo toothbrush. The renewable raw material is compostable, and the hair of the toothbrushes is usually made of organic plastic or natural bristles.
- You can save waste with toothpaste. Many zero waste stores now sell toothpaste tablets, and tablets can be easily stored in a box or jar, or toothpaste in a recyclable glass container.
- Use unpackaged alternatives to cleansing wipes, such as washable cotton floppy disks.
- Use 100% recycled and unbleached toilet paper, individually wrapped in paper.
- Prepare your own cosmetics, such as a natural and economical scrub, using the morning coffee grounds. Online you can find guidelines and recipes.

AT THE OFFICE (almost) Zero Waste



Currently "at the office", for some of us it can mean home, so in addition to the changes we already make at HOME, we can add:

- Reduce paper consumption at the office and at home!

You can do this by choosing to switch to electronic invoices, use reusable textile services.

- Use a reusable kit! Reusable bag, reusable water bottle and stainless straw.
- Avoid food waste! Food waste produced by employees of an Indian company was reduced by 80% after employees were provided with information about the number of people who could have eaten food they had wasted. This demonstrates that individual awareness can have a significant impact on reducing the amount of waste produced in the office. Donate or compost unwanted food and separate it from other types of waste when you throw it away.
- Use recyclable, compostable and reusable office supplies!
- Use paper clips. They are as practical as staplers and can be reused.

- Use colored pencils as a highlighter. Being made of wood, they are easy to biodegrade or recycle.
- Use recycled office supplies, such as recycled paper.
- Separate recyclable waste, such as paper, metal, plastic, and glassware.

CLOTHING (almost) Zero Waste

- **Avoid compulsive shopping!**

When you see an item you like, wait a day or two before you buy it.

- **Donate!**

Donate clothes that you no longer use, but that are in good condition (see page x list of stores). Old clothes that are not in good condition can be reinterpreted (cleaning cloths, washable cleansing pads, baby wipes, etc.).

- **Be sustainable!**

When you buy a clothing product, choose a product made of natural or recycled materials. Read the product label. Look for certified materials because this certification offers you the guarantee of the quality of the material but also the guarantee that its production took place in optimal conditions, by a fairly paid staff. The fashion industry is considered one of the industries that contributes to the prevalence of modern slavery.

"The low price of some products that consume other resources must be rethought: cotton, for example, consumes a lot of water. There are places in the world where people have run out of water due to cotton processing. Cotton is an important resource, but we must reuse it a second and a fifth time."

Andrei Coşuleanu – environmental activist and founder of Act For Tomorrow

- **Buy used clothing from second-hand stores!**

"We all have clothes in our closets that, for various reasons, we no longer wear. It is important to sort them periodically and give them a new life by donating them to those in need. It is not just about the gesture of solidarity and help for the vulnerable, but also a proof of responsibility for protecting the environment, by avoiding the waste of resources consumed in the production of clothing."

Ana Derumeaux - Red Cross Romania - Sector 6 Branch

IN THE COMMUNITY (almost) Zero Waste



Get involved in civic groups that have actions at the local level: for example, talk to the sanitation service to collect waste separately.

"You can also go further and promote causes like "Keep it in the ground" that militates for the preservation of fossil fuels in the ground or promote the concept of "decrease" which is about how we make living sustainably according to nature as to respect the limits that the earth gives us. For that we need to reduce consumption. "

Irina Breniuc, environmental activist and responsible consumer

Involve your friends, family and neighbors. You will be able to see an extraordinary local impact! Take a community garden, bike rides or organize a Yard Sale event. Even if the actions seem small, when they are done by a larger group of people, we will have "communities transitioning" to a more sustainable lifestyle.



LOCAL (towards) Zero Waste STORES

- **Zero Waste Bucharest**

No waste. Ethical. Vegan.

Address: 20, Buzesti str.

<https://www.facebook.com/magazin.zerowaste>

- **Epicerie Nasul Rosu**

Organic vegetable farm

Address: 12, Cornescu str., Piața Floreasca area.

www.nasulrosu.ro

- **Pukka Food**

Store for sale in bulk

Address: 13, Piața Amzei str.

www.pukkafood.ro

- **The Spice Shop**

Store for sale in bulk

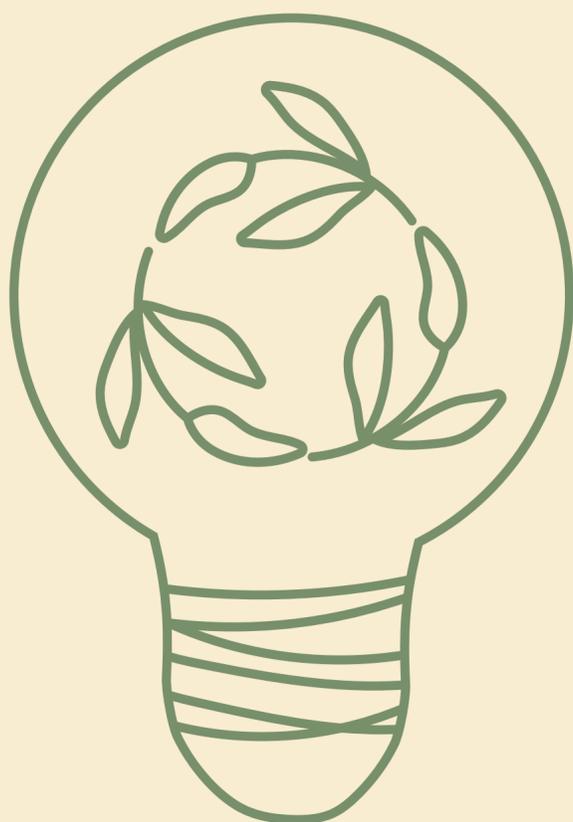
Address: 15, Tudor Stefan str., Dorobanți area

<https://www.facebook.com/MagazinuldeMirodenii>

- **Esen9**

Online store with eco friendly and reusable products

<https://esenoua.ro/>



- **Eștiverde**

Care products

Address: 4, Delureni str.

<https://estiverde.ro/>

- **OTOTO**

A Shop with everything

Address: 5, D. I. Mendeleev str.

<https://www.facebook.com/ototobucharest/>

- **Bioritmo**

Store for sale in bulk

Address: 165, Calea Floreasca

<https://www.facebook.com/BioritmoRomania>

- **Green Life**

Store for sale in bulk

Address: 4, Ziduri Moși str., Piața Obor, 1st floor

<https://www.facebook.com/greenlifebio.shop>

LOCAL STORES or Second Hand

- **Atelier Merci**

Social business - Produces clothing from natural, certified fabrics

www.ateliermerci.ro

- **Bine Boutique**

Charity Boutique - Reuse, recycling and sustainability

Address: 29, Biserica Amzei str.

<https://bineboutique.ro/>

- **Atelierul de Panză**

Social enterprise - cloth bags

<https://www.atelieruldepanza.ro/magazin/>

- **Remesh**

Social business - accessories from outdoor advertising materials

<https://remesh.ro/shop>

- **Atelierul de Adidași**

Professional shoe cleaning.

Address: 10A, Bd. Magheru.

<https://atelieruldeadidasi.ro>

Other websites with tips for home & office

www.hartareciclarii.ro

www.recicleta.ro - programul BiroulEco

Reciclează la bloc:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1702137066582409>



WITH HUNDREDS OF CREATIVE IDEAS YOU CAN REACH ^{ALMOST} ZERO WASTE

Living with almost zero waste at first sounds like a big change. However, in reality, there are a lot of small changes that can often be easily integrated into everyday life.

Sources:

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<https://chariotenergy.com/chariot-university/reduce-waste-at-home/>

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this guide, do not forget to
TURN OFF THE LIGHT!**



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