

Sustainability Tips



While DePaul has committed to making our campus more sustainable, each of us must also aspire to reduce waste and conserve resources.

Here are some of the many small ways that you can live more sustainably. Small changes accumulate to a large impact.

Around the House or Dorm

- Turn off power strips at night and lights when not in use. Unplug appliances that are not in use and consider getting a surge protector.
- Ask your building/dorm if they compost. If not, there is an easy way to sign up for a local compost company like [WasteNot Compost](#). Make sure you look up what can and cannot be composted.
- Get yourself a coffee pot and avoid the single-use Keurig pods. If the dorm has a coffee pot, invest in some delicious coffee from [Ethical Bean](#), [Café Mam](#), or [Chicago Fair Trade](#) to fill the pot with. It's time to ditch the K-Cups!
- Wash your laundry on cold and your dryer on medium heat or hang-dry your clothes.

Around Campus

- Look for recycling and compost bins around campus. Familiarize yourself with what can and cannot be recycled [here](#).
- Bring your own tote bag/backpack when shopping at the campus store to reduce plastic bag waste and bring your lunch in a reusable lunch bag/box.

- When ending a class if you have room in your notebook, use it for your next class. If not, recycle all notebooks, give away gently-used binders/folders to Goodwill or a fellow student, and recycle all paper items.
- If you have a car, consider commuting some days to reduce your weekly emissions. Consider ride-sharing and [Divvy bikes](#), accessible in many locations on DePaul's campus, or walking to get your steps in! You can also carpool with your peers or use [DePaul University's Vinnie Van](#).
- Check out various [Eco Clubs](#) on campus such as:
 - DePaul Urban Gardners
 - DePaul Trees
 - Student Government Association
 - DePaul Fair Trade Committee
 - DePaul Net Impact
 - And more!

When Traveling

- When packing, consider items like a reusable straw, small reusable containers for snacks and pills, and reef-safe sunscreen without harmful chemicals such as [Raw Elements](#).
- When planning your trip, look up the Sustainable City Guide of the place you are traveling to like [thegoodtrade.com](#).
- Always use the [Leave No Trace](#) rule whether you're in the city, forest, or countryside.
- When touring a city, consider a biking or walking tour. If not, try renting an electric car or taking public transportation, it's a fun way to see more of the city!
- Shop local while you're traveling. Avoid chain stores and markets outside tourist destinations, which are likely to sell cheaply-made imported goods.

Grocery Shopping

- Show off your cute tote bags when you grocery shop and you'll be the envy of every other plastic bag user. If you forgot your reusable grocery bag, ask if they have paper bags over plastic.
- Utilize farmer's markets since they do not tend to use as many plastics and you get fresh non-processed foods, plus free samples!
- When visiting the deli counter for cheese and deli meats, ask for paper wrapping.
- Look for non-perishables packaged in paper, metal, or glass, and avoid plastic and styrofoam packaging in general when shopping.
- Check out [this list](#) of sustainable grocery stores around Chicagoland.
- [Imperfect Foods](#) is a great service for getting fresh fruits and vegetables that would otherwise be thrown out due to appearance.

Clothes Shopping

- Avoid fast fashion clothing stores like Forever 21, H&M, Zara, Urban Outfitters, and most stores you see in malls. Go thrifting at Goodwill, Brown Elephant, Village Discount, or other thrift shops in your area. There you can find amazing deals and great clothes that will last you years. Plus, thrifting saves on the waste produced by fast fashion.
- Consider these alternatives in sustainable fashion:
 - [Terraklay](#): 5247 N. Clark St. Chicago, IL 60640
 - [Mata Traders](#): 5112 N Ravenswood Ave Chicago, IL 60640
 - [Planet Access](#): 4727 N. Lincoln Ave. Chicago, IL 60625
 - [Allbirds](#): 843 W Armitage Ave Chicago, IL 60614
 - [The Guild](#): 3717 N Southport Avenue
 - [Production Mode](#): 2233 S Throop Street
 - [SHUDIO](#): 1152 W 18th Street
- Avoid Amazon shopping when you can. They wrap everything in single-use plastic
 - If you're going to shop on Amazon, select the Amazon Day shipping option so they use less packaging materials.
 - And check out [Amazon Second Chance](#) for some sustainable options.
- For a special event, consider borrowing clothes from a friend/family member or renting clothing instead of buying. Check out [Rent the Runway](#) for more info.

Other Sustainable Shopping Items

- Trade your plastic zip bags for reusable silicone bags like [Stashers](#).
- Try plastic-free, compostable lip balms from [Poppy and Pout](#).
- For plastic-free toilet paper packaging [Who Gives a Crap?](#)
- For sustainable cleaning products, shop at [Blueland](#).
- Need deodorant? Here's a compostable option from [Ethique](#).
- Use eco-friendly bamboo toothbrushes, which can be found at places like Walgreens.

Sustainable Companies That Are Making it Easier to Live Eco-Friendly:

- Check out [Eco and the Flamingo](#), Chicago's first Zero Waste General Store.
- The [Refilleri](#) and [The Unwaste Shop](#) do refills and household supplies.
- [The Earthling Company](#) has sustainable hair care products and soap.
- [Sheets Laundry Club](#) has plastic-free laundry detergent.

Living sustainably is about conscious, everyday efforts to reduce waste and support local businesses.