



# Environmental Moments

# Eco-Friendly Gift Giving

*December Edition*

## *Eco-Friendly Gift Giving*

Giving and receiving gifts is one of the most anticipated parts of the holiday season. However, picking out the right present for the recipient and decorating it in wrapping paper and bows can be one of the most stressful. Thinking about the environment may seem like nothing but an additional complication, but it can be easy to keep a few items out of the landfill this holiday season. These small changes can add up, especially since, “According to Stanford University, Americans generate 25% more trash between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Eve than during the rest of the year” (Schweitzer). Additionally, many of these tips have secondary benefits that can ease your holiday shopping stress this year.

## *Give Fewer Items*

Often, our stockings are stuffed with many little gifts, which means more wrapping paper along with the items’ packaging. “When purchasing gifts, forego lots of inexpensive and poorly made items and opt for fewer quality items that will last longer” (Sustainable). These will ultimately be more meaningful as they can enjoy something special for years to come. Additionally, buying fewer quality items means less time spent searching for multiple appropriate presents and wrapping them all.

## *Buy in Store*

It’s convenient to do your holiday shopping online, but, when possible, choosing to get gifts in store is much more environmentally friendly. Reducing shipping means, “you can avoid a whole lot of packaging and fuel used to get the item to your doorstep” (Life). Also, you can group up stores close together in a shopping trip to save on gas. Buying a product in store also means you can look at it in person before making your purchase, which can help avoid surprises as to an item’s contents, shape, or size.

## Gift Cards

Gift cards are usually not preferred because there is little to open Christmas day and it doesn't feel specific to the person. However, they are still a favorable option over spending money on many items decorated in gift wrap that stay in the recipient's closet. So, if you are at a loss for what to get the person who has everything, a gift card is a fail-proof option.

## Experiences

"If you're stuck for present ideas, give an experience instead of an object" (Life). Experiences can come in many forms: online classes, in-person workshops, gym memberships, tickets to shows and concerts, gift cards to restaurants for date nights or a spa day incursion, and many others. The potentials are endless and customizable for the person receiving it, and there is barely any waste involved in giving an experience. These can be much more meaningful than additional objects the person doesn't need. Just be sure it relates to their interests and is in their area.

## Recyclable Wrapping Paper

Many people do not know that most wrapping paper is recycling contamination. While using alternatives such as reusable gift bags avoid this issue, if you want to have the experience of ripping open presents while being more mindful, selecting recyclable gift wrap is an option. Wrapping paper that is laminated, has glitter, or is metallic should not be tossed in the recycling bin. To recycle gift wrap, consider purchasing paper-based or pre-recycled wrapping paper as these varieties tend to be safe for recycling.

## Works Cited

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Produced by the  
Utility Arborist  
Association Task  
Force and Davey  
Resource Group:

