# Zero-Trash Living

= living in a manner that produces no landfilled garbage or items that cannot be recycled or composted

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## A quick side note before getting started

Going zero trash is challenging at times, but it is also a fun and crazy experience! By default you’re going to have to get a little more organized and you’re going to become more conscious about your actions. But as a result, you’re going to be living more lightly on the earth and making a difference.

This booklet is called ‘Zero-Trash’ instead of ‘Zero-Waste’ as waste encompasses a lot more than just the garbage we produce. Waste encompasses everything we well...waste. That can be energy, food, material things and even time. Food waste and recyclables are a whole other can of worms but for now we are choosing to focus on trash. As you go you’ll notice that the production of trash is linked to many more things and by choosing to consciously think about your garbage, other forms of waste will likely be affected too.

So we call this Zero-Trash as we are focusing on not adding to landfills. But just keep in mind there are other forms of waste out there.
Getting Started

RETHINK:
This basically sums up this experience. Rethink what you need, what you’re consuming and the waste you are creating.

REFUSE:
Say no to things you don’t need (ie: freebies, junk mail, disposable cups). When you accept those free items, more are produced.

REDUCE:
Reduce the things you do need. Declutter your home, buy less, and live more simply

REUSE:
Switch over to reusable everything! Rather than using disposable items, bring bags, cutlery, jars, and handkerchiefs with you when you go shopping or out to eat. Certain fast food or take out places will let you bring your own container, you just need to ask and sometimes call ahead.

RECYCLE (and Compost):
This is the last option as a lot of energy and resources still go into the whole recycling process, and there is a limit to how many times something can be down cycled.

Learn what you can recycle and compost for where you live. You’ll be surprised by the vast amount of items you can compost and recycle with the City of Guelph and the Sustainability Office at UoG.

List for the City guelphapps.elasticbeanstalk.com
List for UoG, www.uoguelph.ca/sustainability/recycling/recycling-programs

The SOffice also has compost bins scattered around campus if you ever need one. Check out a full map at https://www.uoguelph.ca/sustainability/composting/campus-composting
**Tips**

1. **Take a look at your trash.** It's easy to forget about the trash we produce when it's always being taken away. Find out what item's you throw out every week. It's a great starting place.

2. Set aside a **container for the trash** you do produce. Start small and don’t get discouraged. Removing garbage from your life is a process and will take time. So this can start off as a small kitchen bin that you aim to only fill once a week, and you can work your way to a smaller container. When you reach a point when you really aren’t producing much, a jar works well as it seals and is transparent so you can visibly see your waste.

3. **Tell your friends and family,** and more importantly your **housemates** what you are doing and why. I’m sure they will be curious why you suddenly have a jar of garbage. Telling them in advance also prevents awkward situations of them giving you items with packaging. Your friends and family can also be a great support system and can help keep you accountable (if that’s what you want). Having said that, going zero-trash is a personal choice that really doesn’t directly affect other people so they tend to not notice. So if you chose to go about this change quietly, all the power to you.

4. **Plan your grocery shopping** (and meals). In my experience, food packaging and take out containers make up the majority of household garbage. As a result, grocery shopping will likely be the biggest change you make but once you make the switch, you’ll see how easy it is! There is a list of resources below for shopping but making a plan to go grocery shopping will help A LOT.

5. Use Google, talk to friends and **use the Sustainability Office as a resource.** If you have an item you want to recycle but don’t know how or where, chances are we will recycle it for you (see resources section)!

**Alternatives**

1. **Reusable travel mug.** If you drink a lot of coffee or tea, this is going to be your best friend, so make sure you get a mug you like and that’s easy to wash. Disposable coffee cups are not recyclable in Guelph so all of these end up in the landfill.
   - As an added bonus at UoGuelph you pay the price of a small drink whenever you use your reusable mug (no matter its size), and you get double stamps on Hospitality drink cards on Mondays, and double stamps at the Bullring on Thursdays.

2. **Reusable containers.** If you can, opt for glass or stainless steel containers (mason jars are amazing for everything and never spill!).
   - These are great for storing leftovers at home, packing breakfast/lunch/dinner. If you go out to eat at a restaurant, you can pack up your leftovers to go as well.
3. **Reusable water bottle.** Even though plastic water bottles are recyclable they are one of the most prevalent items in landfills and only about 1 in 5 are actually recycled. A 500mL water bottle takes 100mL of oil to produce and another 1500mL of water. All of those resources when you could just drink from the tap, AND it’s about 10,000 times cheaper.

5. **Feminine Hygiene Products.** You can use non-disposable products (aka menstrual cups), which are super convenient and will change your life.
   → You can buy these at the Stone Store, Eco-existence, and most drug stores.

6. **Bathroom Products.** Make your own toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo and conditioner (Recipes below). Alternatively if this is too much, you can buy a shampoo bar and conditioner bar. Say good-bye to Q-tips.

7. In the **Kitchen**, replace your kitchen sponge with a reusable **scrub brush**, paper towels for **reusable cloths** (can make these out of old clothes), sandwich bags for **containers and kitchen towels**, and you can refill your dish soap containers at the Flour barell.

8. **Cleaning Products.** All you need is baking soda, white vinegar and lemon juice.

9. **Handkerchiefs.** You can buy these or make them from old pieces of clothing, which is a great way to repurpose old items you would have thrown out. These are great for drying your hands in public bathrooms, wrapping up treats and of course wiping your nose.

Check out [zerowastehome.com/about/tips](http://zerowastehome.com/about/tips) for a full list

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**Food Shopping Options in Guelph**

Guelph has a range of options on where to buy food and sometimes you may have to go to a few different places to get everything you need. Luckily everything is pretty close in Guelph.

The list below is in no way complete so if you have any comments or stores to add, please send e-mail to sustainability@uoguelph.ca so we can update the list.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bring your own Jars</th>
<th>Fruits and Veggies</th>
<th>Grains in Bulk (e.g. Beans, Pasta, Rice, etc)</th>
<th>Nut’s Trail Mix and Snacks</th>
<th>Bread and Baked Goods</th>
<th>Baking Supplies</th>
<th>Meat</th>
<th>Dairy and Alternatives</th>
<th>Eggs</th>
<th>Coffee</th>
<th>Candy / Sweets</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guelph Farmer's Market</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Meet the Farmers who grow your food!</td>
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<td>The Flour Barrel</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>More Limited Bulk Selection</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Stone Store</td>
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<td>Limited</td>
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<td>More Expensive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bulk Barn</td>
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<td>Goodness Me</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>More Expensive, has spices in bulk that you can buy in your own containers</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Frills</td>
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<td>(have to ask about bringing your own containers)</td>
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<td>Also has a Deli Section</td>
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<td>(have to ask about bringing your own containers)</td>
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<td>Ouderkirk and Taylor</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>Also sells jellies, jams, salsas and a sandwich / deli selection</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Notes:

• All items listed can be bought with no packaging or recyclable packaging
• While not checked off, many baking supplies can be bought in recyclable containers in grocery stores, you just need to check the packaging
• Almost all coffee shops will sell you coffee beans (ground or unground) – just check the packaging. As one of many options, Planet Bean has fair trade coffee in paper bags that you can reuse.
• Some farmers will sell in bulk to you (at a reduced price) if you talk to them; this goes for fruits, veggies, meat, eggs and grains. So while they may not have something on display or advertised it never hurts to ask.

A Different Kind of Grocery Shopping: Community Shared Agriculture (CSAs)

CSAs are weekly fresh farm-picked vegetable boxes. You pay the farmer up front or with instalments throughout the season. In return you receive amazing fresh, local, pretty cheap and usually organic veggies, all without stickers and packaging. Some farms also offer meat, eggs, grains and bread.

Depending on the farm you can choose to pick up your box at the farm, a drop off location in Guelph or some even deliver them (at an added cost).

There is a range of CSAs you can sign up for, to learn more and to see list of Ontario CSAs, check out csafarms.ca. The Food Bank on campus also offers Garden Fresh boxes (similar idea). More info at www.csaonline.ca/foodbank/

When shopping I also encourage you to critically think about how your food is made, whether that be meat, soy products or even vegetables, and how its production impacts the environment.
DIY Recipes

Shampoo and Conditioner

**Ingredients**
- Baking soda
- Apple cider vinegar
- Water
- Essential oils (optional)

**Instructions**
**Shampoo**: Mix 1 part baking soda with 3 parts water. Add essential oils for scent.
**Conditioner**: Mix 1 part apple cider vinegar with 4 parts water. Add essential oils to reduce the vinegar smell and to give back some of the oils lost

For storage, old shampoo or conditioner bottles, or anything with a narrow spout works wonderfully

**Note**: It will take your hair a few days or weeks to adjust so give it time. At first you may notice your hair produces extra oil but this will decrease fairly quickly


Toothpaste

**Ingredients**
- 3 tbsp. Coconut Oil
- 1.5 tbsp. Baking Soda
- 25-30 drops peppermint essential oil

**Instructions**
- Mix all 3 ingredients together
- To use, scoop a little bit out with a spoon or your toothbrush

Recipe from: [wellnessmama.com/1523/natural-deodorant/](http://www.wellnessmama.com/1523/natural-deodorant/)

Coconut Oil Based Deodorant

**Ingredients**
- 6 tbsp. coconut oil
- ¼ cup baking soda
- ¼ cup cornstarch or arrowroot powder
- Essential oils (optional)

**Instructions**
1. Mix baking soda and cornstarch (arrowroot) together
2. Mash in coconut oil (can warm to make easier)
3. Add oils as wanted

**Note**: The consistency of your deodorant and toothpaste depend on the temperature you store it at.

Recipe from: [wellnessmama.com/1523/natural-deodorant/](http://www.wellnessmama.com/1523/natural-deodorant/)
Other Resources
zerowastehome.com
→ The starter of the ‘Zero-Waste’ movement with an amazing blog and +100 tips to get you started

www.trashisfortossers.com
→ An inspiring blog that is very relevant to university students and twenty-somethings

zerowastebloggersnetwork.com
→ A multitude of blogs across the world for you to peruse through, add yourself to the database

www.facebook.com/groups/ZeroWasteWeekHeroes
→ A hilarious facebook group that acts as a support and resource network for people all over the world who are trying to go zero-waste (zero-trash)

www.goingzerowaste.com
→ Tips and facts, with a breakdown of some vocab

paredownhome.com → cool facts

resource.co
→ Lots of news and info about waste in general

www.lifewithoutplastic.com/store/
→ Online store that sells lots of reusable items that are made without plastic and generally last for life.

storyofstuff.org
→ Tackles the issue of stuff

Sustainability Office
Resources
Odd Things We Recycle
• Writing Utensils (can also be brought to Staples)
• Type 4 Soft Plastic Bags (can also be brought to Metro or Zehrs)
• E-waste
• Batteries
• Ink Cartridges
• Paint

E-mail recycle@pr.uoguelph.ca if you have something else

There is a Free Store on campus located by the Bike Centre where you can donate unwanted items and take what you want!

Drop off old egg cartons at the CSA office or give them to farmers at the Farmer’s Market so they can be reused

If making your own products is too much, Lush sells hygiene and beauty products in reusable containers

To get jars, visit a second hand store, or go out and buy yourself a lot of pasta sauce!

This booklet was created by
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