

Green Tips for green Readers!

Ten Easy Ways Kids (and their Parents) Can Help the Planet!

- ✿ **Take a trashy trip.** Visit your local landfill, recycling center or transfer station with your parents, school, or group. Get to know what's recyclable in your community and what happens to your trash after the garbage truck takes it away. Ask lots of questions. Recycling is different in different places, so knowing your local rules is an important first step. It might be a little smelly, but it's worth it!
- ✿ **Don't be a litterbug.** We all make trash everyday. Make sure that your trash always goes in the proper place – a trash can, of course! Dropping trash on the ground is littering, and it doesn't just make a place look ugly. It hurts the environment by polluting the land and water, and that affects all of us, including animals that can mistake litter for food or get tangled up in trash. Stopping litter is easy – it begins with you.
- ✿ **Reuse. It's like recycling, only better.** So, what do you do with a can or bottle or book or ANYTHING when you're finished with it? The absolute best thing you can do is to reuse things so that they stay out of the trash. Things like drink bottles and grocery bags can be refilled. Books and magazines can be reused as art projects or gift wrap. Old toys or electronics can be donated to a charity that will give them to someone else. Be creative – the only limit is your imagination!
- ✿ **Know your numbers.** Look closely for the recycling symbol (three arrows going in a circle) on plastic bottles, packages or containers. Plastic items that have a number "1" or "2" in the middle of the symbol are the easiest to recycle, and should be accepted by almost every recycler. Some communities require that your plastic bottles have a "neck," so know your local rules (see #1).
- ✿ **Can it!** Metals are among the most valuable materials for recycling. Aluminum and steel cans are always welcomed by recyclers, and most metals can be recycled infinitely (that means over and over again, forever) with no loss of quality.
- ✿ **Look beyond the daily paper.** Paper and cardboard are America's most-recycled materials, and between the classroom and homework, kids use a lot of paper! In addition to newspaper recycling, most communities will accept cardboard (especially the corrugated or "wavy in the middle" kind), magazines, junk mail, catalogues, and phone books. But hold on to your comic books and baseball cards. They might be worth something someday.
- ✿ **Make recycling easy on the road.** Ask you parents to keep two bags in your car or truck to contain your family's trash – one bag for garbage, and one for recyclables. Pre-sorting on the road makes it easier to move your recyclables to the proper containers once you get to where you're going.
- ✿ **Improve your neighborhood with a cleanup event.** Clean neighborhoods are better places for everyone to live, work, shop and play. Join or organize a local cleanup event, and be sure to sort the recyclables you pick up. You'll be amazed at what a difference a little effort can make.
- ✿ **Teach your parents well.** Let's face it, Mom and Dad might have learned about recycling way back in the 1990's. Things have changed a lot since then! Keep your family updated on what you learn about recycling, waste and trash. Talk with them about global warming. Parents can learn a lot from kids, so be sure to set a good example for them.
- ✿ **Tell the world what you think.** Have something to say? Make a poster about litter or recycling, or make a video about trash. Write a letter to your local newspaper about an environmental issue that you care about. Hey, you can't protect the planet all by yourself. "Getting the word out" shows that you care, and can get other people to think about what's important to kids. Speak up!

These tips were suggested by Keep America Beautiful (KAB.org)



Little green

BOOKS

