

A ZERO WASTE LIFE

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CHAPTER 1

LEARNING MORE ABOUT PLASTICS

The question about whether plastic is always bad or not is starting to be asked around the world. Many areas of the world are banning plastic in many forms, especially single-use plastic, plastic bags, straws, and plastic that tends to go straight to landfills almost immediately after use. But are there times that plastic is okay? Or is plastic always bad?

Recycling Doesn't Help (Much)

One problem is that many people think that all plastic can be recycled. Sadly, most of the plastic you put in the recycle bin cannot be recycled. In fact, less than 10 percent of plastic gets recycled. Therefore, most of it is winding up in landfills, even when you dutifully put your plastic in the bins.

The Main Problem Is Single-Use Plastic

Any type of plastic that is considered a single-use plastic is usually of low quality and not even made well enough to use in recycling. That includes a lot of the plastic bottles that you drink water and soda from. When plastic is recycled, it becomes lower quality and cannot be used for much since it's considered contaminated.

Another Problem Is Colored Plastic

You know the bottles your detergent comes in? Yeah. Those. They cannot be recycled. If you've been putting them in your bin, you likely don't realize that they're being bundled up and put right into the landfill because they are not reusable at all. The only way you can really reuse them is to keep them and repurpose them. Try buying white or clear containers instead to be assured they have more of a chance of being recycled.

Biodegradable Plastic Is Not Okay

Many single-use plastics like forks are labeled as biodegradable. This makes you think that you can put them in the compost pile, but you can't. No single-use plastic is either recyclable or compostable. They're supposed to break down fast but only in a specialized high heat center made for helping these things decompose. It won't happen in your back-yard compost pile.

Learn Your Plastics

There are several types of plastic to learn about, and yes, most of them are not suitable for the environment. But some are worse than others, such as anything with PVC or BPA.

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The best thing you can do is to stop using plastic for single-use needs. Instead, find alternatives such as reusable glass and metal containers, which are much easier to recycle when you're done with them. Only buy plastic that you plan to keep forever and make sure you only buy it from used sources when you can.

CHAPTER 2

TOP 10 MATERIALS FOR YOUR SUSTAINABLE HOME

Finding sustainable materials for your home requires that you develop an understanding of manufacturing processes. Even the materials listed can become not so sustainable if the growers and manufacturers aren't using eco-friendly practices, so check out any company you want to buy from first.

Bamboo

Bamboo fiber is an excellent material to use for carpets, window treatments, towels, and the like. If you can find textiles made from bamboo fibers, including bamboo hardwood, you can really create a house that is exceptionally eco-friendly, as bamboo thrives quickly and grows in just three years compared to 120 years for a tree.

Rammed Earth

Think of this like building a sandcastle. Only it's sounder, and you can live in it. It's made with a mixture of soil and cement that you compact into forms to make the walls.

Recycled Steel

When you can find recycled steel, it might cost a little more right now, but the fact that you're using something again makes your home even more eco-friendly than if you just used new steel. Consider using something like a steel cargo container to build a house with.

Sheep's Wool

When it comes to using fibers, sheep's wool is very sustainable. Sheep are not harmed when they are sheared, and they can be sheared repeatedly throughout the life of the sheep.

Straw Bales

Did you know that you can build a house with straw? Well, you can, and it usually costs about 10 to 15 percent less if you build it yourself. The labor is intense so that it can add to the building cost, but the cost to the environment is far less than traditional building.

Precast Concrete

This sustainable green product is durable, uses less water, and is a primary material used in most LEED-certified buildings today. But it will cost you a little more for your build due to the process it takes.

You can expect to spend about 8 percent more using precast concrete.

Reclaimed or Recycled Wood

While this type of material is an excellent choice for your building needs, you will end up spending more on it than traditional wood choices. However, the overall cost isn't that much more when you consider other benefits of using reclaimed or recycled wood, such as using something already made and giving it a new life.

Cork

You can build an amazing house with recycled cork blocks. Cork comes from trees, but if you can reuse it, then you're doing something very sustainable. In fact, it's already sustainable due to the way they harvest it. They can harvest one tree up to twenty times compared to one time if you use wood. Cork works excellent for floor tiles, insulation, and more.

Hemp

Using hemp such as hempcrete is a very sustainable product to build with. Right now, you will spend more building your home using hemp, but it's a fantastic building material that holds up and is environmentally friendly because hemp is carbon negative. As more people use it, it will get cheaper.

Soybean Fabric

Soy protein makes an amazing fabric and amazing milk too. The great thing about this material is that it's antibacterial, biodegradable, and it can be light and soft, which is great for curtains, blankets, and fabric coverings for your furniture. It is essential to source only organic soy products to ensure environmentally-friendly growing practices are used.

These materials, in addition to other natural materials like organic cotton, especially if it's recycled, are all excellent choices for building or redesigning your sustainable home.

CHAPTER 3

10 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR LIVING ROOM MORE SUSTAINABLE

Due to the issues the earth is having with climate change and the increase in pollution the world over, most people are trying to reuse, recycle, and repurpose when they can. Even when it comes to decorating, you'll want to be as sustainable as possible to avoid adding more pollution to your environment.

- 1. Don't Buy New Furniture** - One of the most significant pollutants around in manufacturing is furniture and clothing. The chemicals used on the fabrics, the materials used, and more are almost always bad for the environment, except for some natural fibers (although you still can do better by buying used).
- 2. Buy Used Furniture Made from Natural Materials** - When you start furniture shopping, look for good solid furniture made from natural materials that are easy to redo and repurpose.
- 3. Increase Natural Lighting** - If you can, one way to save energy is to use as much natural lighting as possible. If that means adding a window to your living room or a skylight, you should strongly consider it.

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4. Pay Attention to the Adhesives Used in Flooring – Many of the adhesives used in all types of flooring, even natural hemp fibers, use petroleum-based adhesives that are not environmentally friendly.

5. Use Natural Floor Covering – If you can avoid any unnatural fibers in the materials in your home, you'll be much better off, especially when it comes to flooring. It's nice to have carpet for kids but research the options to ensure it's as natural as possible.

6. Consider Adding Solar Power to Your Home – Many communities are offering inexpensive solar options now. If you can get in early on the plans and add solar power to your home, you'll be glad you did.

7. Use Zero or Low VOC Paint – When you paint, make sure that you use low VOC or no VOC paint. This is going to improve the air quality of your home immensely. Houses today are very tight, and it's best not to introduce these chemicals at all as they will get trapped.

8. Create Activity Zones for Your Living Room – When you set up your living room décor, you can cut down on the need for lighting and cords if you zone the areas for a particular use.

9. Use Specialized Task Lighting – Once you create zones, consider how much lighting you'll need, and other factors, you can add specialized task lighting to ensure that you can see well without having to light up the entire living room.

10. Use Salvaged Finds for Decorating – When you decorate, try to find used things that you can turn into décor that is useful and beautiful at the same time. For example, you can turn your hat collection into a fun feature wall near the entryway instead of buying more stuff to hang on the wall.

It's not hard to create a low-pollution environment if you give it some thought before you jump in and buy new. You will be shocked that there is so much out there that looks new but is used. You don't need to spent tons of money to make your home look good while lowering your carbon footprint.

CHAPTER 4

11 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR KITCHEN MORE SUSTAINABLE

One of the places you can really push your sustainability journey to the maximum so that you can lower your carbon footprint is in the kitchen. Food waste, package waste, and the energy used to feed yourself and your family can add up. These eleven sustainability tips for the kitchen will help.

1. Start Composting – One of the first things you can do in your kitchen to help cut down on your waste is to compost anything you use that can be composted. You can set up composting right in your kitchen. If you live in an apartment, you can still do it. Some areas have drop-off places where you can drop off your compostable materials too.

2. Reduce Food Waste – Try to pay more attention to fixing serving sizes for your family to avoid food waste. The average family wastes about 30 percent of the food that they purchase. While most food does compost, most of it comes in packaging that is not that friendly or compostable.

3. Replace Bulbs – As your old incandescent bulbs burn out, replace them with LED bulbs. Don't worry; you can find attractive bulbs that have all levels of brightness today. They use less than half the energy and last a long time.

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4. Put Lighting in the Right Places – When you set up lighting in your kitchen, you'll want to think about the tasks that you do in the different areas and the brightness of the light you need. Put task lighting where it's needed because you don't have to light up everything.

5. Buy Only Energy Star Appliances – When you do need new appliances, always find Energy Star appliances. Today, there are even used options that are Energy Star, so it's not going to be hard to find.

6. Consider the Packaging You Use – When you buy anything, always think about the container it's in. Many plastic containers such as those that have dishwashing detergent and laundry detergent that are fancy colors are not recyclable at all.

7. Don't Be Afraid of Your Dishwasher – Most newer dishwashers use far less water per load than you will if you wash dishes by hand. If you're not sure, test it out by using a basin to measure how much you use compared to what the manual says the dishwasher uses.

8. Decorate with Low VOC Paint Only – When you do paint, use only low VOC paint to avoid contaminating the environment.

9. Use Natural Cleaning Products – One area you can really improve is the type of cleaning products you use in your kitchen. Avoid chemicals and try to use natural solutions like vinegar and baking soda.

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10. Use Reusable Grocery Bags - Stop getting new bags, especially plastic ones, from the grocery store. Instead, use reusable bags for your groceries. If you do end up with plastic bags, try to keep them and reuse them in your home or for shopping so they don't wind up in the landfill.

11. Stop Using Paper Towels - Instead of using so many paper towels, buy a lot of reusable towels that you can use for drying your hands, dishes, cleaning up, and so forth. Just wash them when dirty and reuse.

Being more sustainable in the kitchen is one of the simplest ways to help reduce your carbon footprint. If you want to be more sustainable, you just need to cut down on waste and excess energy use.

CHAPTER 5

12 IDEAS FOR A SUSTAINABLE LIVING

When you decide to go onboard and go full throttle on a new way of life where you cut down on the waste you put into the environment, you will end up keeping a lot more than you think.

If you already own things like that plastic table and desk, you'll want to keep it because it will never compost and it will never be recycled, but if you own dangerous plastic you're eating from, you'll want to rid your home of that and replace it with sustainable and healthier options.

- **Replace Your Light bulbs with LEDs** – You can go ahead and keep your light bulbs until they burn out if you wish, but you'll save about 50 percent of the energy you now use in lighting if you switch. For some people, though, it's just more economical to change the lights as they burn out instead of all at once.
- **Replace Old Appliances with Energy Star Rated Appliances**
– If your appliances are old, they're probably not Energy Star appliances. Thankfully, you can buy used Energy Star appliances now. Your local Habitat for Humanity Re Store probably has more inexpensive energy-efficient, Energy Star options for your home.

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- **Replace Old Plumbing Fixtures with Low Flow Fixtures –**

When it's time to upgrade your house, you will want to investigate the various types of plumbing you have. Changing it out to something more sustainable that uses less water is always going to be a great way to fix this issue as soon as possible.

- **Replace Hot Water Washing with Cold Water Washing –**

When you wash your clothing, you really don't need hot water. You will get them just as clean using cold water and you'll use less energy doing it.

- **Replace Any Single-Use Tools with Reusable Tools –**

Stop buying paper towels, throwaway dishes and flatware, and bottled water. Anything that is only single-use is going to add more pollution to the environment with massive repercussions.

- **Replace Eating Out with Eating at Home –**

Eating more food at home and avoiding fast food is essential to ensuring that you are healthy, but also it helps the environment. You'll use less energy and create less waste.

- **Replace Shopping with Gardening –**

Instead of shopping as a fun activity, take up gardening. When you garden, you produce food for yourself and the animals with less waste.

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- **Replace Last-Minute Errands with Planned Errands –** Everyone runs errands sometimes, but if you batch them, you'll use a lot less energy. Set up your schedule so that "going into town" isn't for just buying milk but for doing more sustainable chores all at once.
- **Replace Unhealthy Cleaners with Sustainable Green Options –** Look at the cleaners you are currently using. Read the ingredients. Check the packaging and try to replace them with homemade or other sustainable options.
- **Replace Your Car with a Bike When Possible –** Anytime you can ride or walk instead of getting in a vehicle with an engine, you're saving the environment. Not only that; you're also going to make yourself healthier, which is going to further reduce your waste in terms of medical care and supplies.
- **Replace Your Alarm with Natural Light –** If you can remodel your home to provide more natural lighting, or consider that when you build new, you'll be able to wake up and go to bed more naturally. This is going to cut down on your energy usage and make you healthier.
- **Replace Your Electricity Source with Solar or Wind –** If you live in an area of the world where you can set up solar or wind power, this is going to be one of the most significant savings you can enjoy.

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As far as what you should keep, keep the stuff that you use every day and repurpose the things you already use in new ways. You really don't have to change yourself that much to live a more sustainable life. Just look at or hold each item and ask yourself whether getting rid of it will make you healthier or not, and whether getting rid of it causes more environmental damage than keeping it. Then moving forward, don't add more dangerous pollutants to your world.

CHAPTER 6

9 EASY INTERIOR DECORATION TIPS

Just because you enjoy making a change to your home now and then doesn't mean you cannot do it sustainably. The real trick is to try to stick to natural materials, buy used, and use low or no VOC paint to change up the look of furniture and walls easily.

1. Decorate with Things You Already Have

Instead of buying all new things, just move around the stuff you already have in a new way. You probably already have plenty of things you can use to decorate your space without buying new ones. For example, an old blouse can become (with a few stitches) a new pillow cover, or that old calendar can become a featured art wall.

2. Repurpose, Reuse, Recycle and Upcycle

Think of the items you own in new ways. An old trash can might become a new planter. That dresser that is falling apart can be taken apart, and the wood can be reused in new ways such as by attaching the drawers to the wall as cabinets to display your collections.

3. Use Paint to Make Big Changes

Paint is probably the least expensive way you can make considerable changes to your environment. Thankfully, you can buy no-VOC paints relatively inexpensively today from your local home store. Painting one feature wall can change everything about your décor. For example, try using one of the lighter colors from a throw pillow or blanket as the base color for a fantastic feature wall.

4. Rearrange Your Furniture

Finding a new way to rearrange your furniture can give you that redecorated feeling without spending a single dime. Rethink each room of your house to be freer flowing, or turn an open concept into a more segmented option by using strategically placed dividers if you want it to be a more cozy feeling for winter.

5. Make Small Changes

Tiny changes can really bring out the décor that you've already put in place. Just getting rid of clutter, improving an area of the house with better organization, refreshing the trim, changing one window treatment, and so forth can make a huge difference.

6. Think about Wellbeing, Not Just Aesthetics

When you are redecorating, instead of thinking only about how something looks, also think about how something works. For example, if you once used fake plants and now you realize they're just dust collectors, get rid of them to open up space and slowly replace with real plants that improve the air quality and look good too.

7. Go with Classic Over Trendy Items

Just like with clothing fashion, decorating has a fashion season too. Every two to four years, whatever you've done that's on-trend is going to be old news, old-fashioned and out of date. Instead, choose classic items that never go out of style or that can be easily changed. For example, a solid wood basic dresser can be repainted and the knobs changed, and it'll look totally new, as opposed to that gold and glass obscenity you bought in the '80s.

8. Only Select Sustainable Materials

When you focus on selecting the most substantial materials available to you, you'll also end up with the most long lasting and classic choices. Natural materials always last longer and look better, anyway.

9. Host a Fun Swap Party

A fun way to get new items for decorating purposes is to host a fun swap party. Everyone can bring any decorative items (either with a picture of it or the real item) and then let each person choose from the pile.

Keeping your home decorated and comfortable is a priority for many people who like to enjoy their homes. You can do that and still be sustainable if you're conscious about the materials you're using and reusing.

CHAPTER 7

9 TIPS TO ACHIEVE YOUR ZERO WASTE TARGET

Choosing to embark on a zero -waste lifestyle is a commitment that most people should consider getting involved in. When you stop sending materials to landfills, you'll create less pollution and you won't miss it. It's just about changing your mindset about things.

1. Don't Buy Things You Do Not Need

This seems so simple, but you'd be shocked at how much stuff you already have that you don't even use. Each thing you own that is not being used has an environmental impact that already happened through manufacturing and then eventually, when it goes to a landfill. If you stop buying things you don't need now, you can avoid adding more to the environment in the future.

2. You Need Less Than You Think

The truth is, most of us need less than we think of everything. Most first-world countries waste about 30 percent of their food purchases, for example. If you collected all your waste for a year, it could probably feed another family.

3. Don't Buy Single-Use Packaging or Tools

Things like plastic straws, throw-away cups, plastic knives, and so forth are unnecessary. The same can be said for paper towels. You can use washable towels instead of single-use and cut down on so much trash, you won't believe it until you start seeing it for yourself.

4. Stop Eating Processed Food

Processed food not only comes in wasteful packaging, but it also comes with wasteful manufacturing practices. You can buy some bulk processed food like crackers and whatnot from Trader Joe's and Whole Foods but if you cannot get it without the packing, it's not worth it. It's not good for you anyway.

5. Reuse Anything You Can Instead of Tossing It

If you do buy things that have wasteful packaging, find a way to repurpose and reuse it in a new way so that you don't add to the landfill. If you have anything that will not compost, try to find further use for it instead of tossing it.

6. Recycle Anytime You Can Do So Sustainably

If your local area offers a recycling program, make sure to ask about the things you send. Often, they take more than what is really recycled. For example, the colored plastic laundry detergent bottles will be accepted, but they are not actually going to be recycled. They're going to be sent directly to the landfill. So now, not only is this product going to the landfill but you'll also be using extra energy to get it there.

7. Buy Locally

When you buy locally, you eliminate the environmental damage that transporting products causes to the environment.

8. Ask Family and Friends to Avoid Wasteful Gifting

Send out a family newsletter via email about your new zero-waste policy. Ask that gifts are sustainable or ask them to skip physical gifts and gift you with their love and presence. Even if they don't stick to it, you stick to it.

9. Compost Your Waste

Even if you live in an apartment, you can compost your waste. Depending on where you live, there may even be an organization that allows you to drop off your compostable waste for them to compost in the community garden.

Living a zero-waste lifestyle will encourage you to start experiencing more, because you'll find that you have more money than you did before you bought things without thinking about their environmental impact. Now you can really enjoy that hike and your time off because you're not just taking care of stuff anymore; you're taking care of yourself and your environment instead.

CHAPTER 8

TOP 8 LIGHTING TIPS

One issue when you're trying to be sustainable and not harm the environment yet have an attractive and well-lit house is choosing the right type of sustainable lighting ideas. Here are eight ideas to inspire you.

1. Replace Your Incandescent Bulbs

The first thing you need to do as the lights burn out is to replace them with newer green lights such as LED lighting. LED lights are no longer ugly and offer the brightness and shades that you need, while lasting longer and using far less electricity.

2. Use High-Tech Lighting

It might seem to be an added expense, but some of the high-tech features that allow you to control the intensity of the lights easily or put them on a timer so they go off if you forget, are very helpful and good to help you lower your carbon footprint. Plus, many of them look amazing.

3. Use Task Lighting

You don't have to make the entire area bright with your lighting. Use ideas that focus on specific task lighting that is only used when you're doing that task. For example, a light over your stove, on your desk, by your nightstand, and in the bathroom mirror. These areas need brighter lighting, but your entire living room doesn't.

4. Design Your Working and Living Areas to Use More Natural Lighting

If you're lucky enough to be starting from scratch with your sustainable designs and décor in your home, consider building rooms with a lot of natural lighting. That will eliminate most of your need for lighting, other than in the evening.

5. When Buying New Fixtures, Avoid Unnatural Materials

It's always going to be more sustainable to reuse something that has already been made instead of buying something that has to be made and manufactured. When you buy new lighting fixtures for yourself, try to focus on natural materials only if you're not going to find used.

6. Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle

Just don't buy anything new if you don't have to. There is so much décor and used items to buy at thrift stores, the Facebook Marketplace, and other markets that you don't really need to buy something that is being newly made. You can find excellent options that you can upcycle and make new again.

7. Buy LEED Rated Lighting

When you do buy new lighting, go ahead and buy LEED rated lighting. This means that it's been rated as more sustainable and environmentally friendly. You'll use less electricity, and the materials will usually be more sustainable and landfill friendly.

8. Put the Lighting in the Right Place

When you design your spaces, really consider the right place for the lighting. If you design your home to make use of natural lighting, you'll need fewer lights. Ensure that you place them where you need to use them for maximum effectiveness for the lighting you choose.

Use your imagination to create sustainable lighting solutions for your environment. Buy used and upcycle items to make creative lighting solutions. If you do buy new, make sure you find LEED rated lighting solutions that make your job much easier and your environment much more sustainable.

CHAPTER 9

TOP 9 UPCYCLING HOME DECORATION TIPS

When you decorate your home, you want to ensure that what you are doing is both beautiful and sustainable. The sad fact is that when you buy anything new, it has to be manufactured – which leads to waste. Thankfully, you can make your home look amazing without purchasing a single new thing by upcycling things you already have or by buying used.

1. Turn Old Window Shutters into a Headboard

You are likely to find many old shutters at any Habitat for Humanity Re Store very inexpensively. You may even have some of your own taking up space in your attic or garage that can be repurposed wonderfully. Just paint the shutters to match your décor and fix it to your wall where a headboard would go on your bed.

2. Use Mason Jars to Make Lanterns

Look at thrift stores and the Goodwill to find old mason and canning jars with lids to turn into awesome lanterns. You'll need jars, paint, ribbon, wire, wire cutters, and a few other materials to make these lanterns. You can watch a YouTube video about this here.

3. Use Old Metal Trash Cans as Planters

Look at any thrift store and you're likely to find the old kinds of trash cans for sale cheap. You don't need them to look brand-new to make planters out of them. Drill holes in the bottom, fill with rocks, then soil, then your plants. You can keep them on your porch, inside, or even in the elements, and they'll just look better with time.

4. Make Attractive Wall Displays of Accessories

If you have expensive purses, belts, scarves, and even shoes, you can create an attractive wall display of these things that you love. There is no reason to hide them in the closet. Dedicate one wall to your accessories using hooks or other creative methods of hanging them that makes them easy to grab but also look good while not in use.

5. Use Old Clip Boards as Picture Frames

A clever idea to create a feature wall in an office is to find old clipboards that are not being used anymore. You can often find these at second-hand stores like the Goodwill or Salvation Army. You can leave them as they are and clip your pictures to them, or you can paint them to make them more colorful.

6. Use Anything for Containers to Keep Stuff Organized

One thing that makes any home look more decorated is keeping clutter down. And the best way to keep clutter down is to keep it in different types of containers. For example, if you have a lot of beads or buttons you save, why not paint an old ice cube tray to match your décor to hold the small stuff. Using an old mirror on your dresser to keep your watch, phone, and rings also helps the area look better.

7. Use Drawers from a Broken Dresser as Shelves

At second-hand stores, they will often have parts of dressers for sale. You may wonder what in the world you can do with that if you don't know how to fix the wood. Well, you can use the drawers as shelves. Take the drawers and forget the rest. Paint them to make them match your décor, then mount on the wall. Then you can put your important stuff inside to frame them up nicely.

8. Use Pictures from Old Calendars as Wall Art

You don't have to spend a lot of money on art to make your home beautiful. Instead, find old calendars with famous or attractive images and artwork at second-hand stores. Carefully cut the images away from the calendar portion. Mat and frame the pictures and put them around your home in strategic places.

9. Create a Perpetual Calendar with Old Paint Chips

If you really like DIY, a fun idea is to create a perpetual calendar that you can use whenever you want. You only need a glass frame, a whiteboard marker, and old paint chips you can get free. Watch this YouTube Video to see more about making this awesome calendar.

Upcycling is not just fun; repurposing is also good for the environment and your wallet. Making something old new again is a great way to maintain your sustainable living goals. By making your surroundings beautiful without adding to the pollution, you'll feel good about it too. What type of upcycle décor have you created?

CHAPTER 10

TOP 8 BENEFITS OF PLANTS

Plants offer a wide variety of improvements to any environment that you add them to. In the yard, they can provide food for animals and for you, as well as improve the local air quality. In the home, they can offer both edible and beautiful décor options that are natural and sustainable.

Improves Air Quality

Plants improve the air quality in your home and in the environment when planted out of doors. Plants like the peace lily, a typical indoor house plant, can work to remove VOCs in your environment. Of course, you should also work toward cutting down your use of contaminants, but plants do make your air quality better.

Carbon Sequestration

The reason your plants make the air quality better is that plants capture the carbon from the atmosphere and store it in the roots and stems. Because of this, plants – especially green plants – are a good thing to help reduce the carbon in your environment.

Promotes Biodiversity

When you grow plants that are friendly to your local environment, you will attract more species, due to the fact there will be more moisture and better soil in the area that is actively being planted.

Attracts Wildlife

The various plants you grow can attract the type of wildlife that you'd like to attract. You can grow plants that attract birds, bees, butterflies, and whatever you want to attract. It takes a little research for your local area, but you have the power to turn your yard into a wildlife refuge.

Offers Energy Savings

When you are strategic about the plants you grow, you can grow shade trees in the areas you need them so that you can cool down your yard and home.

Cools the Environment

More plants outside cool your environment. An adequately planted shade tree can change the environment in more ways than you may imagine right now but that you'll really notice in ten years' time.

Reduces Noise Pollution

Strategically planted trees and shrubbery can also make your home quieter because you can significantly reduce the noise pollution in your home and your yard with them.

Reduces Soil Erosion

Properly landscaped yards will do better in bad weather and help avoid soil erosion. Using yard covers like clover, for example, not only attracts bees by giving them an environment to thrive, but it cuts down on soil erosion too.

Plants offer a myriad of benefits to your environment inside and outside. The main thing you need to do is only plant native plants and consider the type of wildlife and insects you want to attract before planting. Also, try to use only natural planting and gardening practices so that you don't add to pollution by using chemical pest repellants and the wrong type of plant food.