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Earth Action: Learn How To Shop



By **Gemma Alexander**

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Earth911 is honoring the 52 years of Earth Day with [52 Actions for the Earth](#). Each week through Earth Day 2023, we will share an action you can take to [invest in the Earth](#) and make your life more sustainable. Too often, sustainability is framed as an extra thing to do. But sustainability is not an extra step, it's how you take every step. This week, you can invest in the Earth by learning how to shop more sustainably.

Action: Learn To Shop More Sustainably

Sustainable Shopping

Whatever you are shopping for, sustainable shopping starts in your head. Before you make any specific purchase, ask yourself [four questions](#) to evaluate your decision. A little information goes a long way towards helping you [shop your](#)

[values](#). Learn about different certification systems. W^{CLOSE} is [TCO-certified](#)? What does it mean for a home to be [LEED certified](#)? Are all [cruelty-free labels](#) equal?

Before making large purchases, study Earth911's [buyers guides](#) to inform your choices for appliances and home improvements from [mattresses](#) to [patio pavers](#) and [refrigerators](#). It also makes sense to pay particular attention to small purchases you make frequently. Little things like [paper towels](#) can really add up over time. Earth911's [greener shopping](#) articles focus deeply on individual items from [coffee](#) to [shampoo](#). And of course, we can all learn how to [produce less plastic](#) pollution. Food and clothing are two purchase categories that can have an outsized impact.

Clothes

The environmental impact of the textile and [fashion industry](#) is shocking. Consumers who [quit fast fashion](#) and commit to building a more [sustainable wardrobe](#) can make a difference. EarthDay.org's [sustainable shopping toolkit](#) provides good guidelines: shop less, shop locally and secondhand. Prioritize [natural fibers](#) over [synthetics](#), and choose [organic](#) when you can. Learn how to [care for your clothes](#) so they last a long time, and [swap](#) or [sell them](#) if you can't keep them until they wear out.

Food

The two biggest steps people can take to reduce their [foodprint](#) are to eliminate animal products from their diet and reduce food waste. Even if you're [not ready to quit](#) meat, you can move towards a plant-based diet through meatless Mondays or [meatless breakfast](#). Eating less meat not only [cuts your climate emissions](#), it can also improve your physical and [mental health](#).

There are countless ways to [reduce food waste](#), which benefits your [budget](#) as well as the environment. Use [helpful apps](#) and learn how [meal planning](#) keeps you from buying too much while [cooking ahead](#) ensures you use what you buy. Learn how to [store produce](#) so it keeps longer, and how to use [leftovers](#) to further reduce food waste.

How You Shop

A lot of sustainable shopping is about choosing to buy less and choosing more sustainable products. But you can further reduce your [consumer footprint](#) by looking at the "how" of your shopping habits. Carrying [reusable shopping bags](#) is an obvious first step. Figure out when it's better to [shop online vs in person](#) and always try to avoid [online returns](#); learn whether to have your [groceries delivered](#); and consider how you get to the store and [how many trips](#) you take.

No matter how much or how little you shop, you can do it more sustainably. Let this be the week you learn how.

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