

SOME SIMPLE STEPS YOU CAN TAKE

- Buying whole foods (on a budget) & Eat Locally (farmer's market!)
- Add soy in place of meat (GMO free soy)
- Making your kitchen paperless (paper towels are way over rated once you have given them up!)
- CFC light bulbs are simple, but make a big impact
- Switch to non-toxic cleaners
- Downsize and rotate your children's toys
- Switch to gentle eco-friendly hair & skin care
- Start a Garden
- Make a compost bin (great place for food & lawn clippings)
- Turn down the temperature on the water heater
- Turn thermostat up 3 degrees in summer and down 3 degrees in winter
- Turn off lights when leaving a room
- Do laundry in cold water
- Activate "sleep" mode on your home office equipment
- Close curtains during the night in the winter and during the day in the summer

- Only do full loads of laundry and dishes (plus, do them at "off" times)
- Laundry on the line is extra time, but kind of nice...a little tricky in winter, but worth a try!
- Get a stainless steel water bottle and never buy a plastic one again: water is heavy to ship, the plastic is made with oil and frankly, the kids have FUN picking out a fun bottle!
- Backyard chickens are awesome and not nearly the amount of work they seem to be
- Organic fair trade coffee and tea (Trader Joes or Equal Exchange!)
- Give your kids the full recycling bin to play with instead of buying them toys—they have more fun and they'll be more creative. Better yet, have them help you create the recycling bins in the first place....buy fun, bright-colored bins, paint sections on the side with chalkboard paint and let the kids label them
- Buy cds online and rent dvds (no more amassing gargantuan collections!)
- Read a book about how people live in the 2/3s world and you'll be encouraged to make some changes!
- Plastic/canvas reusable grocery bags
- Go paperless on credit card and bank statements

RESOURCES:

Recommended Reading:

Serve God, Save the Planet by J. Matthew Sleeth

One Bite at a Time: 52 Projects for Making Life Simpler by Tsh Oxenreider

Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder by Richard Louv

Simplicity Parenting: Using the Extraordinary Power of Less to Raise Calmer, Happier, and More Secure Kids by Kim John Payne and Lisa M. Ross

7: An Experimental Mutiny Against Excess by Jen Hatmaker (*Jen and her family took 7 months to work on excess in 7 areas: Food. Clothes. Spending. Media. Possessions. Waste. Stress*)

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle by Barbara Kingsolver

Omnivore's Dilemma and **Food Rules** by Michael Pollan

Recommended Blogs:

The Minimalist Mom
<http://www.theminimalistmom.com/>

Sorta Crunchy
<http://sortacrunchy.typepad.com/>

Kitchen Stewardship
<http://www.kitchenstewardship.com/>

Simple Mom
<http://simplemom.net/>
<http://simplehomemade.net/>

Soule Mama
<http://www.soulemama.com/>

DIY CLEANERS

Bathtub / Sink Scrub:

In a bowl, make a paste with baking soda, a squirt of your dish soap, and a squeeze of lemon, to the consistency of frosting. Dip cloth or sponge into paste and scrub. For really stubborn grime, allow to sit 10-15 minutes before rinsing.

Mirror & Glass Cleaner:

2 tsp vinegar
1 quart water

Mix in a spray bottle. Spray on mirror or glass, and wipe clean with old newspaper. (The ink doesn't smear, and it leaves no lint!)

Floor Cleaner:

1/4 Cup dish soap
1/2 Cup white vinegar or lemon juice
2 gallons warm water

Combine in sink or large bucket, and use with mop. You can use this on any floor, unless the manufacturer has specified to avoid all detergents.