

## Fashion Action

Healthy & Green Fashion  
Innovative Design

### Special Events

- Eco Wedding
- Green Birthday
- Green Father's Day
- Green Graduation & Gifts
- **Green Holiday**
- Green Mother's Day
- Green Vacation & Travel
- Green Valentines' Day
- Halloween
- Tips to Save Money & Go Green
- Waste-Free Gift Giving

## Step into Spring



Shop all step into spring



## Upcycle Your Holidays, Help the Planet

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Decorating for the holidays can be expensive, but it also generates large amounts of waste. **Wrapping paper, holiday cards**, packaging, and unwanted gifts are all thrown away at the end of the holiday season, placing a strain on the landfills that contain them and the natural resources that created them. By using our Hearts guide to upcycling old items into holiday decorations or refashioning your existing decorations, you can save both money and resources while ensuring that your home is looking beautiful for the holiday season.



### Quick Facts: The Truth About Holiday Decor

- **\$47+ spent on holiday decorations:** Americans spent over \$6 billion on Christmas decorations in 2011! The average person is expected to spend \$47 on holiday decorations and an additional \$18 on seasonal flowers like poinsettias.<sup>[i]</sup>
- **25% more waste during holiday season:** Americans generate an *additional 1 million tons* of waste during the holiday season (Thanksgiving to New Year's Day), increasing to 5 million tons from 4 million – that's a 25% increase. Just the tossed Christmas cards could fill an entire football stadium.<sup>[ii]</sup>
- **31 million tons of CO2 storage destroyed:** Each year, 31+ million trees are cut down for Christmas. <sup>[iii]</sup> Each tree stores one ton of CO2 over its lifetime,<sup>[iv]</sup> so our Christmas decorations remove 31 million tons carbon sinks each year.

### Take Action! Upcycle for Waste-Free Holiday Decor

1. **Cleverly upcycle secondhand finds:** Vintage, craft-friendly items can often be found secondhand for very reasonable prices. Check out your local secondhand stores to see what you can find, and search online for possible craft ideas. You could paint an elaborately designed ceiling medallion to create a festive **medallion wreath**. You could decorate old jars and turn them into **tea lights** or **soap dispensers**. You could take an old shutter, paint it, and use it as a **display for holiday cards**. Let your imagination run wild!
2. **Upcycle items you have in your house:** You'd be surprised at how many items in your house can be upcycled into holiday decorations, especially wreaths. Make a wreath out of **folded craft paper or wrapping paper, pages from an old book, or candy canes** from last year. Use fabric scraps, colored paper, and buttons to create **framed Christmas tree art** that you can display on your wall or mantel. Make **papier-mâché letters** to spell out a holiday greeting. Or, turn your old wool sweaters into **container covers** or coffee sleeves.
3. **Refashion old decorations:** Old decorations don't have to be thrown out just because they're out of fashion. You can make a few updates, and they'll look like brand new decorations. Do you have an old holiday sweater that doesn't fit anymore? Turn it into a **decorative pillow**. Are your Christmas ornaments scratched or cheap? **Redecorate them** with ribbons, glitter, or beads. Do your snowflakes, stars, or flowers look faded or dated? Try **painting** them and perhaps adding some glitter to give them a fresh look.
4. **Upcycle holiday cards:** You don't have to throw out last year's holiday cards; you can turn them into upcycled decorations such as **gift tags** or **paper Christmas trees**. You can even turn this year's holiday cards into a decoration by creating a classic **ribbon card hanger** and placing it on your wall.
5. **Create edible decorations:** Another way to avoid holiday waste is to make your decorations edible – yum! **Gingerbread houses** are always a popular choice and a fun activity for holiday get-togethers. **A tree fashioned out of strawberries** makes a lovely centerpiece (and a delicious dessert if you supply some chocolate or whipped cream!). **White chocolate marshmallow dreidel pops** make a toy that is both fun and tasty.
6. **Get more inspiration:** If you're not particularly crafty, you can purchase **upcycled holiday cards** and **upcycled decorations** through Etsy. Find inspiration in *Martha Stewart's Handmade Holiday Crafts: 225 Inspired Projects for Year-Round Celebrations*, available on **Amazon**. Find seasonal and holiday edible craft ideas in the **Rice Krispies Treats Cookbook**. Or read *The Christmas Holiday Guide to Upcycling* for even more ideas.



### Dig Deeper: More about Holiday Impacts

- Find out more about **How much household waste gets tossed every holiday season?** from the Discovery network.
- The Conservation Fund has more information on **zero-carbon living** you might find informative.

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