

6 WAYS TO TURN WASTE INTO RESOURCES

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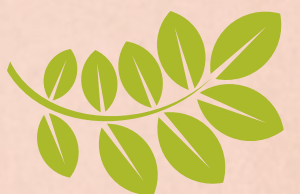


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Humans love consumption and, in the process, create more waste than any other species on Earth. Our consumption creates a big carbon footprint. The waste that we create pollutes the environment and adds to the burgeoning heaps in landfills. The growing size of these landfills poses a big hazard to the environment and to the people living near them. The toxins leaching from these landfills contaminate the soil and the groundwater. The greenhouse gases emanating from them contribute to air pollution and global warming. These landfills are a growing nuisance for the people living in areas adjoining them. To see the harmful effects of the waste created by us we do not have to venture far. In Hyderabad, people living in Dammaiguda and Jawaharnagar are

threatened by the existence of a toxic heap of waste that has piled up next to the Jawahar nagar dump yard. Unbearable continuous stench emanates from this pile and things are made worse when it rains. This landfill attracts rodents, leeches, and other pests adding to the misery in people's life. Not to mention the contamination of the environment caused by toxic chemicals leaching into the soil and water from the landfill. The presence of this landfill has endangered peoples health and lowered the quality of life of people living near it. This is the biggest example of how the waste that we generate hits back at us. It's high time we take action to reduce the waste that we create and send to landfills. Here are a few ways that can help us achieve that.



6 ways that can help us turn our waste into resources

1. Composting: The decomposition of food waste is the biggest cause of methane gas emissions in landfills. If we take care of food waste at the source level, we can reduce the burden on landfills. We can do so by composting. Composting is nature's way of recycling. It can help convert our household waste into productive "humus". Humus is a valuable resource. It helps in enriching our soil and improves its quality. You can start composting at any level. You can compost on your balcony; You can compost in your garden; You can even have a community composting pit and have an organized way of collecting wet waste and maintaining the composting pit. There are many home composting kits available online with guidelines that can help you start your journey of composting at home. You can even have color-coded bins at your events where food is served. This will help in the

segregation of waste. The green waste can go into compost pits instead of landfills thus reducing the burden on the environment.

2. Reduce means cutting back on the amount of waste we generate. By reducing consumption, we reduce the amount of waste generated and solve the problem at the source itself. Less waste to begin with means less mess to clear up. We can reduce our waste by shopping mindfully and buying only those things that we actually need, eliminating single-use items, using reusable bags, containers, and bottles, and also by repairing and mending clothes and appliances instead of throwing them away and getting new ones. We must also follow practices to reduce the consumption of electricity and water at home and office.
3. Reuse means finding new ways to use old things that would be otherwise thrown away. If you reuse something instead of throwing it away, you keep waste out of the landfill and create something new. Here are a few ways you can reuse your things.
 - Don't throw away the glass jars,





plastic containers, or cardboard boxes, instead repurpose them as planters, compost bins, storage bins, or for kitchen storage. Glass jars work very well to store stuff in the refrigerator.

- Store your plastic bags and reuse them to carry products in and out of grocery stores.
- Reuse old newspaper for packing gifts and lining shelves, or even use it as a packaging material for packing fragile crockery when it needs to be moved.
- Convert old bedsheets and towels into washrags instead of throwing them away.
- Create a virtual or real-life resource room in your community where people can share, borrow, or rent common items of use.
- Hold a garage sale for products you are not using.

4. Recycling means processing materials thrown away as trash into new products.

This is the most commonly used Rs of the three Rs. Here is how recycle bin turns into a bin of resources.

- Corrugated cardboard is recycled into paper bags, paperboard, and new cardboard.
- Plastic containers are recycled into

buckets, frisbees, new plastic bottles, and even stadium seats.

- Newspaper is turned into egg cartons, building insulations, paper plates, and even new newspapers.
- Tin and aluminum cans are recycled into bike frames, used in asphalt roadways, or even used to make new tin cans.

5. Upgrade or upcycling is a creative reuse of things that are otherwise considered trash.

In this process waste or unwanted products are used to create something that is of a higher quality and is more valuable. Most commonly upcycled materials are cardboard, glass, plastic, metal and tin cans, wood, paper, fabric, and rubber. Upcycling is a great way to convert your waste into resources and also to unleash your creativity.

Here are a few ideas to upcycle your waste:

- Old rubber tires can be painted and used as planters. They can be refurbished with yarn and ropes and be used as furniture bases.
- You can convert your old jeans into a fancy tote or sling bag.
- You can use old clothes or old plastic sheets and braid them into a colorful rug. Old fabric can also



- be used to make cushions.
- You can use your creativity to convert old CDs and plastic bottles into beautiful chimes and chandeliers.
- You can upcycle old and broken furniture by making frames, planters, or headboards out of them.
- You can support designers that make upcycled clothes by buying from them.
- There are many DIY ideas available on the internet that you can use to upcycle your waste.

6. **Sell, donate, buy second hand:**

It is correctly said, “one man’s trash is another man’s treasure.” There is no point in holding to items that you no longer use or need. Something that is lying unused in your garage or your cupboards may be a valuable resource for someone who has an actual need for it. Here are a few ways you can turn these unused items into resources.

- Hold a garage sale for items you are no longer using. This will not only declutter your house but the item will reach a person who actually has a use for it. You can sell appliances, clothes, sports equipment, bags, books, and

anything that is lying unused in your house. They may be treasured by someone who wants them.

- Buying secondhand reduces the pinch on your pocket and gives full use to an item that is rarely used. It is a good way to utilize the resources to their max.
- Donate items that you don’t use or are not selling. It is a good idea to donate items that you have in excess. They may include books, stationery, clothes, shoes, bedsheets, towels, children’s toys and games, and furniture that you no longer use. Donating will help items that have no longer used in your house reach a person who will actually use them.

In conclusion



If we think proactively and turn our waste into resources, we can control the damage it causes to the environment to a certain extent. It is not easy to change our ways in a day or two. But, if we take baby steps and consciously start to make small little changes in our lives, we can make a big difference to the environment in the long run.

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About Organo Et School

Organo Et School empowers people to embrace eco-living mindsets, behaviors, and habits. We recognize that for any positive impact to be sustainable, it must be long-term and inter-generational.

Organo Et School is a learning initiative set up by Organo in 2017 and has been facilitating field visits and workshops for Schools and Interest Groups. Organo Et School has had over 25+ schools, 6500+ students, and 3000+ adults participate over the last 7 years.

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