

# Inside

Resourcefulness and responsibility go a long way towards a sustainable home or workplace. Part of this is making the most of everything you have around you and producing as little waste as possible. Some waste is inevitable, in which case it's the responsibility of every household or workplace to seek out the least environmentally damaging way to dispose of unwanted stuff.

## one

Technology advances so fast that in a matter of a few years many appliances are considered obsolete. Buying high quality appliances that last, choosing energy-efficient models, and having appliances repaired rather than replaced helps to negate this. Big purchase items such as fridges, washing machines, televisions and mattresses should be seen as long-term investments. When we are upgrading these items disposing properly of those being replaced will ensure they do not end up in landfill. Firstly, if it works, sell or donate it so someone else can use it. Otherwise many local councils have a recycling drop-off point where you can take computers, cathode ray televisions, refrigerators and e-waste. Some council hard waste services or organisations will collect items from you for recycling. All it takes is a quick search online to find a service local to you.

[choicemagazine.com](http://choicemagazine.com)

## two

There are many common household items that ideally should never find their way into landfill. These include batteries, old phones, cables, electronic accessories, printer cartridges, compact discs, CFL light globes and plastic bags. Having boxes in your house dedicated to collecting these items makes the task easier; then you just drop them at your local recycling collection point. Officeworks has an extensive take-back recycling program for office and e-waste. Plastic bags and soft plastic packaging are now being collected for recycling at bins located in Coles supermarkets.

[redcycle.net.au/redcycle/](http://redcycle.net.au/redcycle/)

[planetark.org](http://planetark.org)

[mobilemuster.com.au](http://mobilemuster.com.au)

[officeworks.com.au/retail/landing/About-us-environment-products](http://officeworks.com.au/retail/landing/About-us-environment-products)

## three

Honeycomb blinds are a highly insulating type of window treatment. According to Luxaflex, the Duette Architella model honeycomb blind can increase the R-rating of a single-glazed window from R.13 to R.78. Honeycomb blinds work well when fitted into the recess of a window frame. This seals the edges of the honeycomb structure, trapping warm air inside and creating the insulating effect. The blinds stack up very small when raised which leaves your window view clear and looks tidy. They come in a range of opaque polyester materials, allowing you to also use them to reduce the amount of heat gain into a room, while still preserving a soft view to outside and allowing in plenty of light.

[luxaflex.com.au](http://luxaflex.com.au)

## four

Shoppers are presented with a dazzling array of cleaning product choices on supermarket shelves. Most conventional cleaning products are composed of nearly identical ingredients and water. The environmental cost of transporting heavily diluted and over-packaged products is high. Buying highly concentrated plant-based cleaning products reduces the cost and waste involved and removes the potential harm of having chemicals in your home. You simply refill your own spray bottles and mix with water as needed. You need very few different products to clean a whole house, as dirt does not know if it's located in a bathroom or a kitchen, on a floor or on a wall.

## five

This time of year we are naturally more connected with the outdoors, and find ourselves noticing how dirty our windows are. Give them a good old-fashioned clean with either a microfibre cloth or some old newspaper and white vinegar in water. It works a treat and you can compost the vinegar-soaked pages afterwards.

[chiclean.com.au](http://chiclean.com.au)

## six

Wall-to-wall patterned coverings can be stuffy and overwhelming, yet some original designs have a unique appeal. Before you start ripping off original wallpaper, consider keeping one feature wall papered as a nod to the room's history. If the paper features a relief pattern, repairing and painting over it will preserve some textural interest. Adding wallpaper to an interior can be expensive, so maximise the impact by choosing an area that can be seen from many different viewpoints. You can find sources of bespoke, hand-printed, non-toxic and vintage wallpapers online. Use a paper rather than vinyl-based wallpaper, printed with non-toxic inks and VOC-free wallpaper paste rather than the self-adhesive varieties.

[flashbackfabric.com.au](http://flashbackfabric.com.au)

[wilding.net.au](http://wilding.net.au)

[paperhands.co.nz](http://paperhands.co.nz)

