

# Green Tips to Recover from Holiday Clutter

- 1 Mulch that tree.** If you've chosen to use a live tree this year, make sure it's disposed of properly. If your city doesn't have a curbside pickup program, find out where you can deliver it so it can be mulched or used for landscaping, not landfill. For info about your area, check out [Earth911.com](http://Earth911.com).
- 2 If you fake it, make it last.** Roughly 130,000 fake trees are imported to the U.S. from China each year. Fake trees are made from plastic, aren't recyclable and can last in the landfill for more than 500 years. If you don't want it anymore pass it along to someone who does!
- 3 Got paper?** Paper is the number one thing clogging up our landfills. Some, wrapping papers are recyclable. If it's super-shiny or glittery, it probably has to go in the trash. Simpler, plainer papers can be tossed in your curbside recycling bin. Try to reuse bags and bows.
- 4 Holiday LEDs?** If you've finally swapped out your energy-sucking incandescent string lights for holiday LEDs, then you are aware of the average energy savings of 80%. It's no wonder the switch is so appealing! To find out more about these decorative lights visit this site: [www.holidayleds.com](http://www.holidayleds.com). You can also recycle your old lights here.
- 5 If re-gifting is wrong, why does it feel so right?** Re-gifting doesn't have the tacky rep it once did, but it does require some decorum. It's better than filling your storage shelves with stuff you'll never use.
- 6 Gift cards, reborn.** Got a gift card to Express but you're so much more JCrew? You can swap or sell the gift cards that you don't want for ones you do. Check out: [Cardavenue.com](http://Cardavenue.com) or [Swapagift.com](http://Swapagift.com).
- 7 Greetings, Earthlings.** Every year, 2.65 bil holiday cards are sold in the U.S. You can donate your cards to St. Jude's Ranch for Children, where old cards are recycled into new ones, which are then sold to help children who were the victims of abuse, neglect and abandonment. Keep this year's holiday cards to make into tags for next year's presents.
- 8 Don't be e-wasteful.** Receive new electronics as a gift? Know how to get rid of your old ones properly. Some manufacturers have take-back programs; some municipalities also hold e-waste and toxic waste pickup days (visit [Earth 911](http://Earth 911)).
- 9 Stop the catalogs.** It takes 14 mil trees to produce the mail-order books we receive annually, and the majority end up in landfills, emitting harmful greenhouse gases. Call to be removed from lists, or sign up with service like Catalog Choice (free) that helps keep your name off junk mail lists on an ongoing basis.
- 10 Make way for the new.** If you're clearing out old stuff to make space for the new, use services like craigslist, eBay, or freecycle, or donate to thrift stores to find a proper home for your now-unwanted goods that still have some life in them.

