Planet-Friendly Hacks

Simple Tips and Budget-Friendly Advice for Sustainable Living

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PLANET-FRIENDLY HACKS

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INTRODUCTION

Hello! In picking up this book, you have chosen to leap into the fantastic world of sustainable living and, for that, Mother Nature would like to say "thank you". Hopefully, this lovely little book will provide you with some new ideas about how you can reduce your carbon footprint and live a more eco-conscious life.

As I'm sure you are aware, our earth is beautiful but our ecosystem is fragile. If we all keep living the fast-paced, high-carbon-footprint, disposable lifestyles we've come to know and love, then we're sure to irreparably shorten the time we've got on our wonderful planet. However, it isn't *entirely* too-little-too-late! Every single one of us could make a change to protect our home, so why not use a few of these hacks to help you along the way?

In this book, you'll find seven chapters featuring hacks, recipes and handy craft ideas to help you live with a more planet-friendly mindset.

Avoid purchasing new things for these DIYs; the most planet-friendly way to do them is to reuse what you've already got lying around. It's also worth finding alternatives if you don't have all the right equipment. Go on, get creative!

From eco-friendly cleaning products to sustainable self-care solutions, from creating capsule wardrobes to adopting greener habits on your travels, there's something in here for everyone wanting to live a more planet-friendly life.

The Low-Down on Climate Change

The concentration of carbon dioxide in the air was recorded as 419 ppm (parts per million) in 2021 – the highest figure it's been for over 3 million years.

Humans are responsible for releasing 26.4 gigatonnes (that's the weight of approximately 160 million blue whales!) of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere every year.

Sea levels are rising at a rate of 3.6 mm per year, and by the year 2100, they could have risen another 1.1 m. That would mean 2 billion people (approx. one fifth of the population) would lose their homes and be forced to move further inland.

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Landfills don't just take up space, they also produce a *lot* of gas; which is mostly carbon dioxide and methane.

If the population keeps growing at its current rate, the annual worldwide waste is likely to grow to 3.4 billion tonnes by 2050. Given that the United Kingdom is nearly out of landfill space, this is very concerning.

Climate change massively impacts the weather, and, whether that comes in the form of freak storms or severe droughts, it's having a huge effect on those in developing countries who are forced to flee their homes. By 2050, 200 million people could be displaced due to climate change.

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By considering the world's needs as well as our own, we can live cleaner, happier lives.

Cleaning Hacks

How many eco-unfriendly products feature in your cleaning routine? We're so used to harsh chemicals and disposable dishcloths that we often forget how damaging they are to the planet. Want to ditch those harmful habits and swap your landfill-bound wipes for some DIY reusable ones? Well, read on and learn...

DODGY DRAINS?

Is the stench of your drain getting you down? Then, this hack for cleaning drains without expensive and toxic chemicals is perfect for you.

Try pouring 125 g (4½ oz) baking soda down the drain, followed by a mixture of 250 ml (8½ fl oz) white vinegar and the juice of half a lemon. Leave it for 5 minutes, then pour approximately 3.5 litres (118 fl oz) hot water down the drain to clear the mix away. Now it should smell citrusy fresh!

DIY DISHWASHER TABLETS

Did you know that most dishwasher tablets are made with toxins, phosphates and plastic, which are wrecking our waterways and killing our marvellous marine life? Here's a simple hack to wash your dishes without harming our fish.

Your one-way ticket to beautiful, clean dishes

METHOD:

1. Mix together 120 g (4 oz) washing soda (there are tips on how to make this on page 14), 240 g (8 oz) baking soda, 120 g (4 oz) Epsom salts, 120 g (4 oz) lemon juice and around 40 drops of your choice of essential oil. Your mixture should feel damp, so add a few more tablespoons of lemon juice (one at a time!) if it's too crumbly.

2. Firmly press your mixture into an ice tray (make each "tablet" no more than 2 cm (⅘ in.) thick if your dishwasher has a tablet compartment).

3. Leave them to dry out for around 24 hours.

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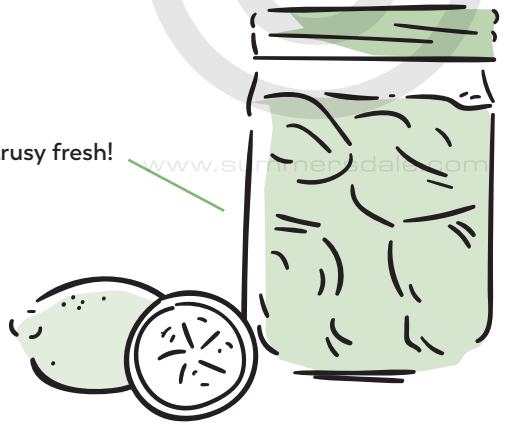
4. Once hardened, carefully remove them from the tray and store in an airtight container.

5. Just pop one tablet into your dishwasher as usual and let it work its magic.

HOMEMADE WORKTOP WIPES

When life gives you lemons, make cleaning wipes! Here's a hack for minimizing your kitchen waste and making a super-citrusy, non-toxic, all-purpose cleaner. You'll need some lemons, distilled vinegar, old T-shirts, fresh mint, tea tree oil and a large jar. It's best not to use these on marble, granite or wood surfaces, just in case they're damaged by the acidity.