

5 tips for an eco-friendly festive season shopping

The festive season, a time of generous gift giving, also places an immense strain on the environment. Extravagant wrapping paper, ribbons and unwanted gifts become cash in the trash as non-recyclable waste finds its way to landfill sites. But with WWF South Africa's innovative green gift and wrapping ideas, it's possible to transform your festive season shopping into a truly Earth-saving adventure.



Source: [Pexels](#)

Justin Smith, head of business development at WWF South Africa commented: “Three of the biggest harms caused to the environment during the festive season include plastic waste through excessive packaging, food waste and carbon footprint by means of the energy that goes into producing and procuring various gift items.”

WWF South Africa shares five suggestions to enhance your journey to go green and help save the planet and its precious wildlife this holiday season:

1. Grow green fingers

Shop at a local nursery for indigenous herbs, plants and clay pots that you can personalise. If you already have your own herb garden, simply pluck and plant into the pot. Not only will you be able to ‘wrap’ this special gift with a colourful reused ribbon and save the planet from new gift wrap waste, but you will encourage the recipient to get busy growing their own herbs. A gift that keeps on giving.

2. Bake and bottle a sweet treat

Use those stylish glass coffee jars of different sizes that you have stashed at home and fill them up with home baked biscuits and crunchies. If you don't have any glass jars at home, place a request on your local social media pages and you will be surprised how many neighbours may just be willing to help out with a few.



One-quarter of businesses say they cannot reduce their environmental impact

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3. Cut your carbon footprint

Support local markets, small businesses and entrepreneurs while cutting your carbon footprint. Take a morning to browse local markets for purchases like jams, preserves, marmalades, garments and soaps which make great stocking fillers while helping to keep money flowing in your local community. Buy fresh foods like eggs, cheese and vegetables from them too when it's time to plan your festive season provisions.

4. Select pre-loved gifts

Thrift shops and local church fetes are gold mines for many delightful pre-loved gifts such as trinkets, handbags and jewellery, vases and vanity cases. The secret to giving a pre-loved gift successfully though, is knowing the recipient's tastes and styles well enough to match them with the treasure when you find it. Admittedly this can take time and its best to shop all year round for pre-loved gifts that you can store at home and pull out for birthdays and festive gifts.

5. Wrap it up wisely

Gift bags and boxes, wrapping paper, magazines, newspapers, cloth napkins, ribbons and gift bags can all be repurposed or reused. Store reusable shopping bags and small boxes to repurpose as gift wrapping.

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