

TOP TIPS FOR A SUSTAINABLE BACK-TO-SCHOOL

1) REUSE SCHOOL SUPPLIES FROM LAST YEAR

The most sustainable thing you can do for the back-to-school season is reusing all the school supplies you already have at home from last year!

2) GET YOUR SCHOOL SUPPLIES SECOND-HAND

If your children used up some of their school supplies, you could look for new supplies second-hand. Look online on Facebook Marketplace to see if someone is selling their stationery and office supplies in your area. Other options include Gumtree or eBay for second-hand items.

3) BUY MORE SUSTAINABLE OPTIONS

It's difficult to be 100% sustainable when it comes to buying school supplies. But some are definitely a lot better than others, so try to opt for the most sustainable options and support eco-friendly brands. For instance, look for products made from more natural materials such as metal, wood, or recycled plastic. Do not forget that quality is also important! Poor-quality supplies break easily, and you will need to repurchase them more regularly. It is especially true when it comes to backpacks!

SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND OTHER ESSENTIALS:

Backpacks:

When looking for new backpacks, consider investing in high-quality ones that your children will be able to wear for several school years. Look out for brands that make backpacks out of recycled materials, or have products that are made to last!

School Supplies

There are more and more options available for people who want to reduce their environmental impact. For example:

- **Pencil Cases:** Pencil cases are often made using synthetic materials, which is not ideal in terms of sustainability. Look for organic cotton pencil cases instead!
- **Pens:** There are many eco-friendly options for pens - you could choose a plant-based pen, or a recycled plastic pen. Even better, consider buying a refillable pen.
- **Rulers & Math Tools:** Buying a ruler and triangle made from recycled plastic can be a great option. Alternatively look for wooden ones (which are also a lot more durable)!
- **A Few Other Essentials:** Find erasers made from recycled rubber to minimize virgin resource extraction, or buy recycled plastic scissors. You can find lots of other school supplies online, so have a look to get exactly what your children need!



Lunchtime:

We recommend investing in a stainless steel drinks bottle and lunchbox to avoid plastic use (or buy an FSC approved wooden lunchbox instead).

In addition, reusable beeswax wraps and silicone bags are other practical swaps to pack sandwiches or snacks in (alternatively consider cutting up the plastic from inside a cereal pack and re-using these)! Instead of disposable cutlery, your children could take utensils from home or use wooden or bamboo cutlery.

Clothing:

Whether you are a student yourself or have kids going back to school soon, you may need to buy a few new clothes. When buying new clothing, opt for natural materials over synthetics. Natural fabrics are breathable and do not shed microplastics when they're being washed. Also, try to invest in high-quality pieces so that they do not wear out so quickly.

You could look if you can find clothing second-hand. However, if you can't find what your children need, consider buying from sustainable brands!

Textbooks:

Back-to-school season means that you may need to buy books for your children. The best way to shop for books is second-hand! You can look on websites like eBay, go to a second-hand store, or borrow them from the library. If you're a student, textbooks are often expensive, so buying them from older students is a great option!

FINAL NOTE

Back-to-school shopping doesn't have to be complicated, even if you're trying to do it sustainably. There are so many eco-friendly supplies now available; we just need to make better choices!

