

# 'Tis the Season...

## To Switch to Eco-Friendly Gift Wrap

The holidays are a time when family and friends gather to exchange great food and gifts. However, it's also a time when a lot of waste is exchanged, particularly in the form of wrapping paper. To many, the ritual of gift wrapping is as important as unwrapping one. By simply changing the way we wrap gifts, we can reduce the amount of waste this ritual can create.

Unlike newspapers and flyers, wrapping paper cannot be easily recycled. This is due to the heavy inks, glitter, foil and sticky tape that generally come with it. Before placing your wrapping paper in your curbside or community recycling bins, make sure that it is 100% paper.



### How to Make a Simple Gift Bag:

**Step 1:** Go through your pile of scrap fabric or non-wearable clothing and choose material to make your bag. Don't forget to choose material for the lining too.

**Step 2:** Cut two pieces of fabric and two pieces of lining material, all identical in size.

**Step 3:** Put a piece of lining material on top of fabric, fold over top edges and sew with a simple running stitch ( $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the edge). Repeat with second set of fabric.

**Step 4:** Stack both sets of fabric with lining facing out. Make sure that the hemmed edges are both on top.

**Step 5:** Sew the three un-hemmed edges and voila, you have yourself a gift bag! Additionally, you can attach Velcro onto the bag so it can be reused after the holidays as a lunch bag.

### Eco-friendly Gift Wrapping Tips

- Give textile rags or non-reusable clothing a second life by sewing them into gift bags. Fabric gift bags can be reused after the holiday season to hold your groceries or lunch. Learn how to create a simple gift bag by following the step-by-step instructions above.
- Try the ancient Japanese wrapping technique called [Furoshiki](#). It does not require tape, ribbons, bows or even scissors. Furoshiki only requires a piece of scrap fabric and a few simple knots. The number of Furoshiki users has declined over the years due to the popularity of plastic shopping bags however it is making a comeback.
- Wrap the gift in recyclable cartoons, horoscopes, sports section of the local newspaper, wallpaper scraps, outdated maps or your old 2011 calendar.
- Make the wrapping a part of the gift by using a scarf, book bag or tea towel.
- Skip the glitter and create your own Christmas stamps with wood, rubber or foam. Save the stamps and use them again the following winter.
- Instead of using ribbons and bows, collect pine cones, maple leaves and branches from the yard to decorate gift wrap.

