

# SUSTAIN- ABILITY 101

**Eco-Conscious Living at  
Claremont McKenna College**

**2021 Edition**



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# Top 7 Tips

Only have a minute to read?

## 1. Ask yourself: do I really need this?

This goes for food in the dining halls, freebies at events, lids for cups, online purchases- everything! This practice reduces your waste production.

## 2. Express your opinions.

Want sustainable foods? Ask Collins, the Hub, the Ath, or any campus event coordinator. See a leaky faucet or hyperactive heaters? Fill out a Facilities work order or call (909) 621-8112.

## 3. Want to start a sustainability initiative?

If you have a great idea for increasing sustainability at CMC, apply for funding from the Sustainability Fund.

## 4. Refuse single-use, choose reusable.

Don't take the plastic fork, paper towel, or disposable bag. Consider bringing your own instead!

## 5. Properly separate your waste.

Recycle the recyclables, compost the compostables, and trash the garbage. Failure to sort correctly will send all items to the landfill.

## 6. Buy organic, local, and Fair Trade...

...if possible! This goes for every purchase you make. Support businesses that produce goods in a socially responsible way.

## 7. Sell, gift, or donate unwanted items.

Chances are good that someone could use what you don't need. Do your best to sell or give your items away.

# Reduce

About 11.3 billion tons of trash is produced each year<sup>1</sup>. Solving this issue isn't just about separating waste properly—we need to tackle the root of the problem: production and consumption. If you don't really need it, don't buy or take it.

# Reuse

Reusing is an easy way to reduce the amount of things we need to throw away. Refuse single-use, choose reusable, and BYO (bring your own). Single-use disposable items involve the use of oil, trees, energy, and labor that goes to waste once you toss it out after one use.

# Recycle

Many cities, including the City of Claremont, have single-stream recycling: everything goes into the same bin if it is all clean. Do not put any non-recyclables in the recycle bin—this will send the entire bin to landfill.

# recycling 101

*you may recycle...*

- *all Plastics #1–7—almost all plastic items, not including plastic bags!*
- *aluminum, steel, and tin cans and foil*
  - *glass (all colors)*
  - *paper and cardboard*

## **Plastics**

Condiment bottles  
Cups and lids  
Food containers  
Laundry jugs  
Lotion bottles  
Milk jugs  
Plastic packaging  
Shampoo bottles  
Six-pack rings  
Drink bottles

## **Cardboard**

Cardboard boxes  
Cereal boxes  
Egg cartons  
Food boxes  
Gift boxes  
Juice boxes  
Milk cartons  
Paper bags  
Soda/beer cartons  
Tissue boxes

## **Metal**

Foil  
Food cans  
Metal Hangers  
Pet food cans  
Drink cans  
Hardware scraps

## **Glass**

Drink bottles  
Condiment jars  
Liquor bottles

## **Mixed Paper**

Brochures  
Catalogs  
Copy paper  
Crayon drawings  
Envelopes  
Junk mail  
Newspaper  
Wrapping paper  
Scrap paper

## **Non-Recyclables**

Auto parts  
Bicycles  
Carpet/fabric  
Ceramic dishware  
Clothing  
Drinking glasses  
Furniture  
Garden hoses  
Light bulbs  
Metal lawn furniture  
Mirrors

Plastic lawn furniture  
Plastic pools & toys  
Safety glass  
Soiled pizza boxes  
Styrofoam cups/plates  
Styrofoam packaging  
Used aluminum foil  
Used paper plates  
Used tissue products  
Waxed paper  
Window glass  
Plastic grocery bags

## **Electronic Waste (e-waste)**

E-waste is not recyclable, and it also cannot be tossed into the landfill. E-waste chemicals will contaminate the soil and water of our communities, harming animals, humans, and environment. To dispose of electronic waste (i.e. batteries), please visit the Mailroom, next to Story House.

# In Your Room



## Lighting and Energy Use

- **Turn off the lights!** Easy!
- **Use daylight when possible.** No need for lights during the day if a window is nearby!
- **Share appliances** such as mini-fridges, microwaves.
- **Unplug items when not in use, or plug them into a power strip that you can turn off.** Almost every electronic item, especially chargers, uses “standby” power as long it’s plugged in, even when turned off. *This “phantom load” is responsible for an estimated 5–10% of US residential energy use<sup>2</sup>. Eliminating “phantom load” would be the equivalent of shutting down 17 coal-fired power plants<sup>3</sup>!*
- **Use Rechargeable Batteries.** Saves money and reduces resource consumption and hazardous waste. Check out [StopWaste.org](http://StopWaste.org) for more.
- **Use Energy Star Appliances.** *ENERGY STAR certification is an EPA certification program for products that save energy without sacrificing features or functionality. Check out [EnergyStar.gov](http://EnergyStar.gov) for more.*

## Cleaning

- **Buy non-toxic and green cleaning supplies OR make your own with vinegar and water!** (Suggested eco-brands: Dr. Bronner’s, Seventh Generation)
- **Use water + cloths and rags** (or strips of old clothes) instead of paper towels or disinfecting wipes. They’re cheaper, easy to use, reduce waste, and not harmful to your body. Compost any paper towels you may use.

1 <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/cities/solid-waste-management>

2 Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, (2009)

3 Scheyder, Ernest (April 10, 2009), "Phantom Load: Save Some Cash, Get Unplugged"

# In the Bathroom



## Saving Water

- **Turn off the faucet** while brushing your teeth, soaping up hands, or scrubbing dishes.
- **Take shorter showers.** Reducing shower time by roughly 5 minutes a day saves 3,900 gallons of water a week! Use a song to help keep track of time.
- **If you feel comfortable, talk to your bathroom-mates about an “If it’s yellow let it mellow, if it’s brown flush it down” policy.**

## Saving Energy

- **Take shorter/fewer/cooler showers.** Less hot water = less energy use. *Every 5 minutes you spend in the shower uses around 1.2 kWh of electricity to heat the water- the energy needed to burn ten 100-watt bulbs for one hour.*

## Reducing Waste

- **Use a hand towel or dryer** in the bathroom instead of paper towels.
- **Remember to recycle!** Toilet paper cores, paper towels, and empty plastic bottles from shampoo and other bathroom products can be recycled.

## Personal Care and Cosmetics

- **Avoid microbeads**, which are used in many exfoliating products. *Look for: polyethylene, polypropylene, polylactic acid (PLA), polystyrene, or polyethylene terephthalate. Due to their small size, microbeads end up in our oceans, where they harm marine life and enter our food system. Check out [5gyres.org](http://5gyres.org) for more.*
- **Check the ingredients.** Cosmetics can contain hazardous chemicals. Check out the Environmental Working Group’s Skin Deep database for more info!
- **Avoid DEA, TEA, SLS, and SLES as ingredients.**
- **Consider reusable menstrual products.** These include reusable menstrual cups, like the DivaCup, as well as cloth pads or period underwear.

# Laundry



## Washing

- **Only do laundry when you have full loads.** Machines use the same amount of energy, no matter how many clothes you put in. Pair up with a friend if necessary!
- **Do laundry less often.**
- **Purchase environmentally friendly laundry products.** Look for products that are 2x or 3x concentrated and have natural ingredients. Explore Better World Shopper or EWG's Guide to Healthy Cleaning for eco-friendly brands.
- **Donate leftover laundry products** at the end of the year or **save the rest** for the following semester.
- **Wash using cold water.** About 90% of the energy used by the machine goes to heating water, and advances in detergent mean hot water is no longer necessary.
- **Wear clothes more than once** before you wash them. Jeans, shirts and pants can be worn multiple times before washing.

## Drying

- **Air dry your clothes.** Air drying reduces energy use and lengthens the life of your clothes. You can **check out a drying rack** from CMC's environmental club, SSPEAR! (Email them at [spearcmc@gmail.com](mailto:spearcmc@gmail.com))
- **Clean out the lint screen before using a dryer.** Dirty lint screens cause dryers to use up to 30% more energy.
- **Nix the fabric softener and drying sheets.** Fewer chemicals means a healthier you and a healthier environment. If you must use though, explore EWG's Guide to Healthy Cleaning for fabric softeners and consider reusable wool dryer balls.

# Computing



## Laptop & Desktop Energy Saving Tips

- **Use energy-saving settings.**
- **Set your screen to go to sleep mode** after five minutes of inactivity. **Turn off the computer completely** when you're inactive for more than a hour. "Sleep" settings reduce power use, but it's better to completely shut down.
- **Lower screen's brightness.** The brightest setting on a monitor uses twice as much power as the dimmest setting.
- **Don't use screen savers.** Screen savers were originally created to prevent monitor-damaging phosphor burn, but today's monitors are not susceptible to that. Screen savers can actually use up to twice as much energy as a computer in use.
- **Unplug peripheral devices** (i.e. chargers, speakers) when not in use. They may be drawing phantom load. Plug them into a power strip that you can switch off when not in use.

## Laptop Batteries

- **Keep it cool.** One of the best ways you can extend your battery's life is to keep it from overheating. Don't store your laptop above 80° F.
- **Avoid putting your laptop on a soft surface, or use a cooling pad.** The computer's fan cannot function properly if it's on a soft surface, such as a pillow or blanket.
- **Keep your desk clean.** A messy desk can lead to dust in your computer's vents, which clogs the cooling fan.
- **Do not fully discharge your battery every time.** Lithium ion batteries (used in today's computers) perform better when they're not fully discharged each cycle. It's better to discharge only partially before recharging. A full discharge is needed about every 30 charges.

# Printing



## Work on the computer and avoid the printer:

- **Read and annotate PDFs and Word documents on your computer** rather than printing them out. If you want to digitally annotate or highlight a PDF, use Adobe Acrobat Reader or Professional (installed on all lab and college-owned computers).
- In Word, **use Track Changes** to make edits and comments on a paper.

## Use less paper when you print by:

- **Printing double-sided.** This is an easy way to cut your paper usage in half.
- **Printing multiple pages on one.** Print readings and papers to review with two or more pages per sheet of paper.
- **Printing on scrap paper (one-sided documents).** This is a great option when you don't need a professional copy or final draft.
- **Reducing font size, paragraph spacing, or document margins**

## Be creative

- **Reuse paper as scratch paper**
- **Go paperless in class.** Talk to your professors about using Sakai to turn in assignments, with comments and feedback provided using the Microsoft Word Reviewing tool.
- **Share printed-out readings with classmates.**

# Dining and Food



## Reducing Waste

- **Take only what you can eat.** You can always get seconds, but you can't put back any extra food you take on the first round.
- **Always use your green reusable to-go container and mug** when you take food out.
- **Think twice before using disposable items.** If you need them, take as few as possible.
- **Take as few napkins as possible, or bring your own cloth napkin.**
- **Stock your own reusable diningware.** Get your own reusable silverware, a glass, etc. to keep in your room. Consider dining hall GreenWare!

## Food Choices

- **Eat local, organic, humane and fair trade.** These options reduce chemical inputs, transit, and resource use, and improve local economies and the treatment of animals and workers.
- **Reduce consumption of animal products** (i.e. meat, eggs, dairy). Try cutting meat out of your diet for just 1–2 days a week to start!
- **Express your opinions.** Want to see local, organic, fair trade, and/or seasonal foods? Let Collins, the Hub, the Ath, and any event coordinators of on-campus events know through comment cards and e-mails.

## Compost

- At this time, composting is not available on CMC's campus; composting is however accessible on the Pomona College campus. **Check out a compost bin from CMC's environmental club, SSPEAR** ([spearcmc@gmail.com](mailto:spearcmc@gmail.com)).
- Produce, vegan food scraps, and green waste ARE compostable. Non-vegan scraps and biodegradable plastic alternatives (i.e. spudware) are NOT.

# Getting Around



## No Car, No Problem

- **Ride a bike.** Most things you need are within biking distance. **You can rent a bike + helmet + lock for free at CMC's bike shop, located in Wohlford.** In addition, they offer free and discounted bike repairs.
- **Walk, or get your own set of wheels.** Longboards, bicycles, your legs—all are useful. No need for a car!
- **Rent a ZipCar.** ZipCar provides cars to students over 18 with good driving records. The cars are located on and around the Claremont college campuses and can be rented by the hour or for the day—gas and insurance included! For more details, visit [zipcar.com/universities](http://zipcar.com/universities).
- **Use Public Transportation.** Foothill Transit is available to get around in the immediate area. You can also use the MetroLink, the closest station being on First Street in Claremont. It can take you to Union Station in LA in about 45 minutes—often faster than driving (visit [metrolinktrains.com/schedules](http://metrolinktrains.com/schedules)).

## Have a Vehicle?

- **Carpool with friends.**
- **Make sure your tires are properly inflated.** This increases your gas mileage, saves you money, and decreases emissions.
- **Roll down your windows instead of cranking the A/C.** Running your A/C uses more gas.
- **Use cruise control whenever possible.**
- **Avoid idling.** Turn off your engine and conserve gas if you're waiting for more than 10 seconds in car (i.e. drive thrus, pick-up/drop-off). About 1.3% of US greenhouse gas emissions are simply from car-idling<sup>4</sup>!

4 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2014/12/29/the-biggest-winter-energy-myth-that-you-need-to-idle-your-car-before-driving/>

# Shopping



**Every time you spend money, you're casting a vote in support of the companies and the products that you're buying. Make it count!**

- **Think before buying.** Do I really need this item?
- **Buy Local.** The transportation sector of the US economy accounts for 29% of the country's emissions<sup>5</sup>. By buying locally produced products, you are keeping transportation emissions to a minimum and supporting your local community.
  - Every Sunday, there is a Farmer & Artisans Market in the Claremont Village with over 100 growers and artisan members. Bring your friends and check out this popular market!
- **Bring Your Own Bag!** Reusable bags reduce waste from plastic and paper bags are generally made out of recycled materials. Most stores give you a discount for bringing your own bag (i.e. Target, CVS, Trader Joe's, Sprouts, Vons, etc.).
- **Go Thrifting.** Donate and buy lightly used clothes and appliances from local thrift stores such as Goodwill, American Way, The Grove Vintage, Uptown Thrift Store, Quality Thrift Store, Great Deals Thrift Store, or Lutheran High Thrift to reduce waste, save money, and support good causes.
- **Be Conscious.** Pay attention to ingredient labels and where a product was manufactured. When you can, try to buy certified organic, Fair Trade, and other labeled goods that ensure sustainable and ethically used products.
- **Seek information!** Apps like Good On You aggregate information on brands, analyze their stats, and calculate an approval rating. Also consider doing your own research on your favorite brands!

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/sources-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

# Resources

## **CMC Sustainability**

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CMC's sustainability website provides a brief overview of various current and past campus sustainability initiatives.  
[sustainability.cmc.edu](http://sustainability.cmc.edu)

## **CMC Sustainability Fund**

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The Fund will award grants to student-led projects that improve sustainability at CMC in amounts up to \$2,000.  
[cmc.edu/sustainability/sustainability-fund-0](http://cmc.edu/sustainability/sustainability-fund-0)

## **Environmental Affairs Committee**

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The EAC is an ASCMC senate committee focused on expanding sustainability initiatives throughout campus. All students can apply for EAC and EAC Chair positions.  
[Contact: EAC Chair](#)

## **CMC's Bike Shop**

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The Bike Shop offers free bike rentals/repairs, as well as helmets and locks. Located in the Wohlford basement.  
[cmc.edu/dean-of-students/sao/cmc-bike-shop](http://cmc.edu/dean-of-students/sao/cmc-bike-shop)

## **Roberts Environmental Center**

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The REC is a place for research and education where students, faculty, and practitioners explore innovative solutions to environmental issues.  
[rec.cmc.edu](http://rec.cmc.edu)

## **5C Environmental Facebook Page**

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The 5C Environmental Facebook Page is a collaborative space for environmental groups on all campuses. Join for opportunities and events across the 5Cs.  
[facebook.com/groups/141452836314702](https://facebook.com/groups/141452836314702)

# Resources

## **Huerta del Valle**

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Huerta del Valle is a community garden in Ontario, CA that grows organic food for local residents. The garden hosts volunteer and internship opportunities. [hdv-huertadelvalle.blogspot.com](http://hdv-huertadelvalle.blogspot.com)

## **Pomona Farm**

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The Pomona Farm is a 1.2 acre working farm in the southeast corner of Pomona with fruit trees, vegetables, herbs, chickens bee hives, and the Earth Dome. [farm.pomona.edu](http://farm.pomona.edu)

## **Sustainable Claremont**

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Sustainable Claremont is a non-profit in Claremont that hosts volunteer and internship opportunities for students. [sustainableclaremont.org](http://sustainableclaremont.org)

## **Hixon Center (HMC)**

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The Hixon Center promotes intellectual curiosity and scientific rigor in studying the complex interactions between human life and the natural environment. [hmc.edu/hcsed](http://hmc.edu/hcsed)

## **Bernard Field Station**

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The BFS is an 85-acre natural habitat across the street from Harvey Mudd College that functions as an outdoor laboratory for teaching and research. [bfs.claremont.edu](http://bfs.claremont.edu)

## **Redford Conservancy (Pitzer)**

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The Robert Redford Conservancy for Southern California Sustainability engages interdisciplinary and collaborative environmental problem solving. [pitzer.edu/redfordconservancy/](http://pitzer.edu/redfordconservancy/)

# About This Guide

Hello CMCers!

Thank you for taking the time to read this edition of the Green Guide. We're glad that you're interested in sustainability and taking the steps to learn more about ways to "go green" at Claremont McKenna College. Now more than ever is the time for us as students, faculty, and citizens of the world to protect our environment. CO2 levels reach new heights every year, and the past decade was the hottest on record<sup>6</sup>. But how we each live and interact with our communities makes a difference. Our consumption, habits, and attitudes are powerful. For instance, nearly 17% of all food worldwide is dumped in the trash, and 8-10% of global greenhouse gas emissions are associated with unconsumed food<sup>7</sup>. This is an issue that we should address individually *and* collectively.

This guide provides a comprehensive list of opportunities for you to embrace a more conscious and environmentally sustainable lifestyle. Please refer to the Table of Contents, and let us know if you have any comments or questions. We would love to hear your input.

Sustainability is a constant journey, and a worthwhile one. While we cannot solve all problems individually, we can each do our part to live consciously and lead by example. Your actions affect you, the people you interact with, the people you indirectly impact, and the organisms and environment beyond the people and things you see every day. You can create change, and you can be the change.

Sustainably yours,  
ASCMC Environmental Affairs Committee and Roberts Environmental Center

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20210108-where-we-are-on-climate-change-in-five-charts>

<sup>7</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/03/1086402>

Sustainability 101  
SECOND EDITION  
Claremont McKenna College  
888 Columbia Ave.  
Claremont, CA 91711

Adapted from Sustainability 101 @ CMC (First Edition) The Little Green Book (Pomona College Sustainability Integration Office), The Green Guide (Pitzer College Office of Sustainability), Guide to Sustainable Living (Harvey Mudd College Hixon Center for Sustainable Environmental Design)