

GUIDE TO GREEN LIVING AT COLUMBIA

Introduction:

This is a guide written by Columbia students, for Columbia students. Its goal is to provide you access to information on all the different ways you can contribute to conserving natural resources and reducing Columbia's ecological footprint. Read through the guide to find more helpful tips that range from how to donate your unwanted clothing to where you can find organic food on campus. Environmental stewardship is just getting started at Columbia, and we need students like you to keep it up by living green and living well!

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Calendar Tips

September

Get involved -- Join a green student group! They will be hosting a **Green Move-in, including greening NSOP Activities and selling used items through the Save Green Sale**. Learn about Eco-Reps and other campus groups at [The CU Green Umbrella Website](http://www.cugreenumbrella.com) (www.cugreenumbrella.com).

October

Be Green Tip: Make sure your clothes don't smell scary, here are some green rules for laundry: 1) always wait until you have a full load 2) wash on the cold-water setting and 3) use eco-friendly detergent (available at JJ's Place and detergent vending machines).

November

Be Green Tip: Go Cold Turkey! Unplug appliances before leaving for Thanksgiving. Also, celebrate No Shave November by (1) going all out and not shaving at all, or (2) using less water when shaving by not leaving the faucet running the whole time.

December

Be Green Tip: Have a Happy Holidays! Unplug cellphone/ipod chargers, TV's, microwaves, etc. when not in use; they suck up a lot of power when left plugged in!

January

Be Green Tip: We know it's warm when Columbia heating goes on, but try not to open the windows and let out all of the warm air!

February

Be Green Tip: Celebrate the shortest month of the year by striving to do things quickly: showering especially! Try the Navy shower method by only turning on the water when rinsing: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fiinau9XEBw> (See Columbia University Greenborough House's efforts to reduce shower times)

March

Be Green Tip: Make your Spring Break a green one by unplugging appliances and closing windows. Also, celebrate spring by working in the Columbia University Food Sustainability Project's garden

April

Be Green Tip: Find a way to get engaged in Earth Day! Columbia University and the Earth Institute put on a variety of events for students who want to learn more, or are interested in green activities

May

Be Green Tip: Make sure your Move-Out is green. Participate in Give + Go Green; learn more at www.columbia.edu/cu/housing/docs/begreen/ggg.html and http://www.columbia.edu/cu/housing/docs/begreen/green_move_out.html

Guide to Green Move In & Move Out

- The Save Green Sale: Trick your room out with lightly used goods from students who were going to throw them away last spring. Fridges, lamps, shelves, and lots of other things are up for grabs. Support CU EcoReps and get inexpensive digs for your room in the process. Look for advertising during NSOP and the first week of school.

- Make sure to pack a water bottle, or keep your eyes open for free ones given out during NSOP. They will help you cut down on your waste and stay hydrated all year long! New York City tap water is some of the cleanest in the world, so just fill it up straight from the faucet.
- Recycle your cardboard boxes after you're moved-in by dropping them off in your residence hall main lounge.
- Participate in the **Give and Go Green Program** at the end of Spring term. Donate your unwanted clothing, appliances and extra food, which will go to Salvation Army and City Harvest. Look for emails from Housing and Dining closer to the end of the year for more information about GGG.

In Your Residence Hall Room

Whether you do all of your studying and socializing in your residence hall room, or you spend most of your time in the city and only go to your room to sleep, these tips apply to every Columbia student.

- It's a no-brainer, but when you leave your room, **turn your lights off**.
- Speaking of lights: **Make your desk lamp or torch more energy-efficient** for FREE! Housing provides long-lasting, energy-conserving fluorescent bulbs from the Hospitality Desk in Hartley Hall. These bulbs give off the same light as an incandescent at a fraction of the energy use. For more info on the bulbs, e-mail ecoreps@columbia.edu -- and drop off old bulbs at the Lerner Hall Recycling Center, in the lobby of Lerner, as they may contain mercury.
- **Look for Energy star-labeled mini fridges to conserve energy**. You can save even more energy by adjusting your fridge to a moderate setting instead of cranking it to the coldest temperature.
- We all feel like we're at the mercy of the residence hall heating systems – it's always too hot, so we open our windows. But the cold air on one floor can make the building thermostat turn the temperature up even higher! In the winter, you can avoid this vicious cycle: **don't leave your window wide open** for hours at a time. If your room still feels way too hot, turn your heater to a LOW (not "off") setting and send a maintenance request to Facilities at <https://www.facil.columbia.edu/services/> And don't forget to **close your windows when you go out of town** or leave for vacation.
- Air-conditioning is a big energy consumer in the hot months of the year. If you have a unit in your building, be sure to **turn off the A/C** when you leave your room. When the A/C is on, try to keep it at a low energy-saver setting.
- A word from Facilities: to keep all of your heating and cooling units working efficiently, **don't block the units** with furniture or clothing.
- Your laptop, video game system, TV, DVD-player, cell phone, and iPod charger still consume energy when left plugged into the socket, but not actually charging anything. If you **unplug your gadgets** when you don't need them, the energy savings add up.
- At any time during the year, you can **donate clothing** at any of the New York City Goodwill (www.goodwill.org/page/guest/about) or Salvation Army locations (www.salvationarmy-newyork.org/). The Broadway Presbyterian

Church at 114th St. and Broadway also accepts clothing donations during business hours at the red doors on 114th Street between Broadway and Riverside.

Computing

Our computers are our lifelines, but they are also huge energy drains. Fortunately, you have lots of options on how to make your own computer greener.

- You can make sure to **buy green** when buying a computer or computer-related devices. Keep in mind that laptops use 50% to 80% less energy than desktops, and LCD screens use 50% to 70% less energy than their CRT counterparts. Also, look for the Energy Star label on any computer or electronic device that you are buying.
- **Set your computer to sleep or hibernate mode** when it's not in use, and go ahead and **shut it down** if you aren't going to use it for more than three minutes (on average, that's when energy to turn it on is outweighed by the energy needed to keep it running). And PS: screen savers don't "save" any energy at all!
- Help us save some trees by **always printing and copying double-sided**. Every Columbia computer lab printer has this option under the drop-down list of printers.
- If you have to get rid of it, **donate your old computer to Columbia** or to a community organization like Per Scholas in the South Bronx: See www.perscholas.org/recycling/recycling.html. If you have questions about donating your old computer, contact ecoreps@columbia.edu

Recycling

Don't believe the rumors that recycling doesn't happen on campus, or that recycling has been cancelled in Manhattan. Both at Columbia and in the city, recycling is back in a big way, so here's how to make the most of their services.

- Do you know what can or cannot be recycled? Columbia recycling follows the same guidelines as the New York Department of Sanitation: <http://facilities.columbia.edu/sustainability/recycling>
- Check out the new EcoReps Recycling Posters located in all first year dorms, and soon in all Columbia dorms, to learn more!
- The following items go in the green "All Paper" bin:
 - Paper:
 - white, colored, and glossy paper (staples OK; no spiral bindings)
 - [mail and envelopes](#)
 - wrapping paper (remove ribbon and tape)
 - paper bags
 - paper trays
 - newspapers, magazines, and catalogs
 - phone books, soft cover books (paperbacks, comic books, etc.)
 - Cardboard:

- smooth cardboard (food boxes — remove inside & outside plastic wrappers — shoe boxes, tubes from paper towel and toilet paper rolls, cardboard from product packaging)
 - egg cartons
 - corrugated cardboard (flattened boxes)
- These items go in the blue “Bottles and Cans” bin.
 - Glass
 - Metal:
 - metal cans (such as tuna, empty aerosol cans, empty and dried-out paint cans with lids removed)
 - aluminum foil wrap & trays
 - wire hangers, pots, and pans
 - Plastic: ITEMS WITH A LARGER BODY THAN NECK can go in the recycling bin – that means no deli or yogurt containers or plastic cups.
 - Milk and juice cartons: these can be recycled as well in the blue “Bottles and Cans” bin – just give them a quick rinse first so they don’t start to stink.
- You can **recycle used batteries** at specially marked drop-off locations in the ground floor of every residence hall. Make sure to cover the ends in tape to prevent fires.
- If you are ever unsure on where to dispose of an item, **check the complete list of recyclables** at: <http://www.environment.columbia.edu/tools/waste>
- **Look at the bin you’re dumping in!** If trash gets in a recycling bin, that bin is contaminated and often, nothing inside of it can be recycled.

Kitchens

It's great to take advantage of the residence hall kitchens for your cooking experiments – just remember that kitchens are also where we dump most of our trash and use up a lot of energy with cooking appliances. Here's how to make your kitchen as green as possible:

- The gas stovetops and ovens can be tricky to learn, and you might be letting the gas run unnoticed. **Follow the gas oven use guide** posted in your kitchen, and if you still are unsure, contact the Hartley Hospitality Desk.
- Crock pots and microwaves are extremely energy-efficient, besides being fast. Next time you need hot water for coffee, tea, or soup, **consider using a crock pot or just nuking a ceramic cup of water** instead of boiling too much on the stove.
- Plastic grocery bags add up to a huge bulk of trash; in fact, plastic bags make up 5% of NYC’s total solid waste, and take up 14% of its landfill volume. And paper grocery bags are even worse for the environment: manufacturing paper bags creates about 70% more air pollution than plastic bag production. **Instead of paper or plastic, try bringing a stylish reusable canvas bag** the next time you go to buy groceries. If every New Yorker used just one less plastic bag this

year, it would save the city \$250,000 dollars in landfill and disposal costs. If you do have plastic bags, you can recycle them at most local businesses.

In The Bathroom

We run in and out of our bathrooms so quickly that we often don't think about all of the resources we use when we're in there. So the next time you're there, consider these tips:

- **Be water wise.** The five New York boroughs depend on the Croton, NY watershed and the Catskill/Delaware watershed systems for all of their water needs. Every time we let water go to waste, we are diminishing these reservoir levels and increasing New York's vulnerability to drought. Here's how to conserve this valuable resource:
 - Do you let the water run when you are shaving or brushing your teeth? Why not just turn it on when you need it, or plug the basin? For each minute you **turn off the faucet**, you conserve between three to five gallons of precious New York water.
 - We love those long, hot showers, but keep in mind that each minute uses 1.6 gallons of water, plus the energy needed to heat it up. **Savor that shower, but try shortening it** by a few minutes.
 - Leaky sink and shower faucets can keep us up all night with dripping sounds, and also can add up to a big water waste. A faucet leaking 30 drops per minute wastes 54 gallons per month. Save your sanity and some water: **report leaky faucets by calling Hartley Hospitality Desk** or by filling out a maintenance request at www.facil.columbia.edu/studentwor/.
- Columbia's hardworking housekeeping staff keeps your toilet paper stocked on a fixed schedule – so **you don't need to hoard rolls of T.P. in your room**; it only deprives it from your dorm mates and also creates surplus demand for the whole floor. Ease up on the trees and contact your housekeeping staff or the Hartley Hospitality Desk when you are running low.
- **Part of living green is buying green**, so keep your eye out for toiletries, feminine hygiene, and bathroom **products that source organic ingredients or use recycled content** – these products are usually better for your body as well! (check out your products at www.goodguide.com)
- Try to **use the lowest-wattage models** of electric hair dryers, shavers, and other beautifying appliances – and be sure to **unplug them when you're done**. Remember that just 15 minutes of blow-drying releases 1.2 kilograms of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Common Space/Lounges

The residence hall lounges are more than just spaces for a party or for watching the big game – they are also another place for green living. Here are some tips on how to do it:

- Is that television blaring in the lounge when nobody's there? It only takes a second to **turn off** -- or simply **unplug** -- that bad boy when it's not in use.

- **General cleanliness** can be a conservation measure as well. The less you stain and litter in your common room, the less toxic cleaners and fluids our housekeeping staff has to use.

Laundry

Sure, laundry is a chore, but at least this guide will help you to save water and money, as well as reduce pollution while you're doing it.

- Did you know that all on-campus student laundry facilities have Maytag Front Load Washers, which save 20 gallons of water per cycle? This means **you only need a third of the usual detergent** amount – so you can use less and save your money.
- Try to **do laundry only when you have a full load** – this is also a money-saver too.
- **Use the cold-water wash** instead of the hot water setting. Your clothes will be just as clean, but you will conserve 80% of the energy used to wash them.
- Look for non-toxic, biodegradable or **environmentally-friendly laundry detergents**. These are available in most stores, Jay Jay's Place, or in your detergent vending machine in some dorms.

On Campus/Purchasing

You can practice environmental stewardship even after you step out of your residence hall. Keep in mind these ways to be green in the way you eat, drink, and buy:

- When you're in any Columbia building, **look at the bin you're dumping in!** There should be separate waste bins everywhere for paper, bottles and cans, and regular waste, so toss your trash accordingly. If you notice a bin is missing, contact the Facilities Service Center at (212) 854-2222.
- Become part of a larger urban local food movement by joining the local **Community Supported Agriculture** group, started by CU students. Member participants pay a lump sum for a full or half season's share of fresh, local, and/or organic produce delivered right next to campus. For more information about CSA in New York City, updates on the local food movement, and how to become a member, send an e-mail to the Morningside Heights CSA at: morningsideheightscsa@gmail.com
- For the late-night munchies, you can buy (mostly) **healthy, organic food at the student-run food co-op in JJ's Place, called Corefoods**. Check them out at night from 8:00pm to 4:00am (The hours changed I think) in the basement of John Jay, where you'll find everything from cereal to dried mangos, soymilk to soda. To get more involved, sign up as a volunteer and get a membership discount. The co-op is always open to new suggestions and members,
- Ahh, the joy of coffee. Make your coffee purchase especially gratifying by **choosing Blue Java coffee at any of the Columbia dining locations**. They only serve **Fair Trade and organic certified coffee, and Rainforest Alliance-certified espresso drinks**. While you're at it, **bring a reusable mug** that won't create waste. Blue Java mugs are available at Butler Cafe, Café 212, and Blue

- Java Dodge, and you get coffee refills at a discounted \$0.99 when you use them on campus.
- Look out in John Jay Dining Hall for **locally sourced fruits, veggies, eggs, and other products**, and dig in! These foods support the local economy, are fresh and delicious, and use less energy in transportation.
 - Check out the Dining website link about their commitment to more environmentally-friendly foods: http://www.columbiauniversity.org/cu/dining/docs/environmental_stewardship/our_green_initiatives.html)
 - Check out the student-run Food Sustainability Project to get more involved in the local food movement: <http://gosustainable.blogspot.com/>.)
 - Speaking of John Jay, **watch your waste** – and your waistline – by only getting as much food as you will eat. Unused food that you don't put on your plate can be donated to City Harvest.
 - It also costs a lot of money to cart away the food waste from John Jay, which means that less can be spent on making our meals even better. Do the environment *and* yourself a favor: make sure you take only what you plan to eat. With the **Waste Less, Get More campaign**, for every 100 lbs of waste reduced, 100 lbs of food will be donated to a local soup kitchen and John Jay will invest more in your dining experience!

Give and Go Green

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/housing/docs/begreen/ggg.html>

Guide to Green Move-Out

http://www.columbia.edu/cu/housing/docs/begreen/green_move_out.html

Off-campus

According to SustainLane's 2006 US City Rankings, New York was rated as the seventh most sustainable city out of the 50 largest cities in the US (Check out the whole list at www.sustainlane.com/article/895/). Here are some great ways to keep this big city green:

- Purchase fresh, seasonal produce at one of the **local open-air greenmarkets**. Every Thursday and Sunday from 8:00am to 6:00pm you can find one on Broadway, between 114th and 115th Street, right in front of Alfred Lerner Hall. They also have great breads, jams, pastries, and dairy products available. More limited options are available Saturdays on the southeast corner of Morningside Park, at Manhattan Ave. and 110th Street. For more NYC greenmarkets, check out www.cenyc.org.
- **Biking** is one of your healthiest and most entertaining ways to go green! Not only will you save money on transportation, but you also gain a whole new perspective on NYC. You can find a cheap used bike on www.craigslist.org, www.greatusedbikes.com, New York Cyclist at 110th St and Central Park West, or at Recycle-a-bicycle (www.recycleabicycle.org)....just make sure to get a helmet and a good lock (Columbia's Security Office in Lowe Library offers discounted locks), and bike extra carefully! There is bike parking all over

Columbia's campus, or you can store your bike in your room. Find good maps of New York's bike paths at: www.transalt.org/info/maps.html#nyccycling.

- **Explore the green spaces of NYC:** you can find all of New York's parks at www.nycgovparks.org/. Also, the New York Botanical Gardens in the Bronx are worth a visit.

Next Steps

- Keep up-to-date on Columbia's latest efforts in environmental stewardship: www.columbia.edu/cu/environment and <http://www.cugreenumbrella.com/>
- Contact the CU EcoReps if you would like to apply to join our team, and we can work with you to designate how you can help based on the number of hours you are willing to volunteer: ecoreps@columbia.edu
- For more information on anything mentioned in this guide, check out the "Sources" section.
- Want to do even more with the movement for environmental stewardship at Columbia? Check out your many options for student group involvement at: www.columbia.edu/cu/environment/index.html.
- Volunteers are always welcome at Morningside Park: check out www.morningsidepark.org/.
- For more NYC green action, check out Eco-logic: a group started by Columbia/Barnard graduates to connect people to eco-friendly services, products, and events in New York City. <http://eco-logic.com/>.
- Some recommended reading: The Big Green Apple: Your Guide to Eco-Friendly Living in New York City by Benjamin Jervey.

SOURCES: We realize that the urls listed below are cumbersome and a little out-of-control. But for those of you looking for stats, websites, sources and more information on the things found in the G2GL – here you go:

Intro:

- What's an ecological footprint?: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecological_footprint
- Calculate your own footprint: www.earthday.net/footprint/index.asp

In Your Residence Hall Room

- Compact Fluorescent Bulbs (CFL) www.commondreams.org/headlines06/0703-05.htm
- Energy Star Appliances: www.energystar.gov/
- Energy consumption for plug-in appliances: <http://standby.lbl.gov/index.html>
- Give and Go Green Program: – Check out the success of the Spring 2006 program at www.columbia.edu/cu/housing/docs/about-us/ggg.html

Computing

- Laptops vs. desktops energy use: www.eu-energystar.org
- Setting computers to sleep mode: www.energy-solution.com/off-equip/configuring-monitors.html

- Benefits of computer shut-down:
www.greencampus.harvard.edu/ceip/documents/brochure_small.pdf

Recycling

- New York City recycling: www.nyc.gov/html/nycwasteless/
- Report on benefits of recycling: www.nrdc.org/cities/recycling/recyc/recyinx.asp

Kitchens

- Kitchen conservation tips:
www.climatesolutions.org/pubs/pdfs/tipsEnergyconserve.PDF
- More kitchen and home conservation tips with stats: www.unison.co.nz/?t=85
- EPA info on plastic bag waste: www.epa.gov

In the Bathroom

- EPA info on New York City's water supply: www.epa.gov/nerlesd1/land-sci/ny.htm
- Water use statistics:
www.yubacity.net/documents/Water%20Conservation%20Program.pdf
- New York City waste water: www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/wastewater.html
- Eco-friendly toiletry options:
www.herbsgardenshealth.com/Natural_&_Organic_Toiletries.htm
www.greenchoices.org/toiletries.html
- Hair dryer and other appliance energy use calculator:
www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/your_home/appliances/index.cfm/mytopic=10040
- Greenhouse gas emission calculator:
<http://yosemite.epa.gov/oar/globalwarming.nsf/content/ResourceCenterToolsCalculators.html>

Laundry

- Benefits of front-load washers: www.eartheasy.com/live_frontloadwash.htm
- Cold-water wash energy conservation:
www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/phecc/strat_W4.cfm
- Eco-friendly laundry detergents: froogle.google.com, search for biodegradable laundry detergent. **New this year:** JJ's Place will be selling the complete line of Ecover products (www.ecover.com).

On Campus

- Fair Trade information: www.transfairusa.org
- Rainforest Alliance Certification for coffee: www.rainforest-alliance.org/certification
- More info on biodegradable containers:
www.wbcsd.org/web/publications/case/natureworks_full_case_web.pdf
- Columbia Security offers subsidized bike locks:
www.columbia.edu/cu/publicsafety/publicsafetyervices.htm