

Green practices for a better future

In conjunction with earth day which falls on april 22, let’s work hand-in-hand to nurture Mother earth the way she nurtures us, in line with this year’s theme: ‘invest in Our planet’.

Ecology · Consumer Goods · Lifestyle · Healthy Living · United Nations
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BACK in 2012, the United Nations introduced a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) with the objective of addressing environmental, political and economic world challenges. With climate change on the rise, our generation is more conscious than ever to continuously reduce carbon footprint and adopt greener living, with some stepping up to even become eco-warriors.

Today, the world is constantly abuzz with words such as sustainability, zero-waste, eco-friendly, low-impact – and the list goes on. We see it, we hear about it, and we (sometimes) practise it. But what does it actually mean and how can we play our part to help? As a whole, the United Nations Brundtland Commission defined sustainability as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. There are many facets of being sustainable – whether in business, construction, fashion, economics or even right in our

In Malaysia, we see an uptrend of both sustainable and plantbased products and produce. Simply put, many are beginning to adopt a more sustainable lifestyle or minimal waste approach – not only in food consumption but also in the products used.

For starters, here are some quick and easy ways of going green:

- 1. Switching to reusable bags
With the implementation of the No Plastic Bag campaign in line with the Malaysia Roadmap towards Zero Disposable Plastic 2018-2030, we have seen a positive uptake from Malaysians flaunting different designs of reusable bags. Carrying one is not only a fad, it’s now regarded as being environmentally friendly and cool, which pairs well with your overall (grocery shopping or in general) #OOTD look!
- 2. Opting for products or produce sans the unnecessary packaging

Many brands are going package-

less or have started using sustainable packaging to lessen landfill waste. For instance, brands are packaging their products in reusable aluminium, recycled cardboard, biodegradable or compostable packaging made from plants, as well as

recycled paper boxes and packaging which can be repurposed into a bookshelf or pet house! Even when shopping for groceries at the market, pick out produce which is not sealed with plastic or styrofoam.

3. Repairing, upcycling and recycling

Kintsugi is the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery pieces, which has become a popular practice today. The common reasons for not repairing a broken item are attributed to having no tools, space or knowledge. At present, there are many DIY or repair resources and communities available to learn from. Repairs prolong an item’s lifespan and prevent them from going to waste. Whereas upcycling can be a fun activity done with loved ones, such as turning an old shirt or a

pair of jeans into something new such as a functional bag.

Meanwhile, recycling has been a long-ingrained habit, and segregating recyclables correctly can save a lot of time and energy for landfill workers.

4. Encouraging the use of reusable utensils and containers

In an effort to significantly reduce single-use plastic and waste, bring your own personal food container or cup when taking away your favourite bites and thirst-quenchers!

5. Consuming moderately or choosing food with low carbon impact

While not everyone’s palate is the same, consuming food with lower carbon impact does have its advantages, such as lowering greenhouse gas emissions. Apart

From leaving a lower footprint, switching to a better-for-you alternative keeps your health and wellbeing in check, while still consuming a deliciously nutritious and wholesome meal. There has been a sprout of plant-based, vegan, and vegetarian eateries in Malaysia over the past few years which happen to be very Instagrammable too! Alternatively, we can do our bit by advocating for schools or workplaces to serve plant-based meals once or twice

a week as a means of giving back to Mother Earth.

6. Wearing sustainable fashion

Fashion is a big part of our lives. What we wear acts as a statement and represents our personality. With fashion brands putting a stop to fast fashion, the global fashion industry is reorienting its practices towards sustainable practices in sourcing, production, distribution, marketing and consumption. The best way to go about this as consumers is to educate yourself about sustainable clothing, buy less and shop for quality over quantity, choose natural materials such as organic cotton, linen or hemp, and purchase from brands that are ethical and practise transparency and sustainability.

7. Growing your own crops

A relaxing pastime can be in the form of growing your own vegetables, herbs or even plants at home. Nothing beats watching your literal fruits of labour! Surrounding yourself in greenery at home can be therapeutic, teaching us a thing or two such as slowing down amidst the daily bustle. Plants not only add to the aesthetics of homes or living spaces, but also boost positive energy. Some beginner-friendly herbs or plants you can try a hand at growing are cilantro, mint, lemongrass, pandan, chilli, rose-

mary, curry leaves, kaffir lime, aloe vera and basil – all of which can jazz up your home cooking!

8. Using products that are natural, organic and eco-friendly

It’s easy to overlook this bit. Products such as pesticides can cause acute and adverse health effects when used extensively. Natural, organic, plant-based isn’t necessarily limited to just food, as brands have introduced natural and organic everyday products. At the end of the day, many have their own take on what is sustainable, and what constitutes greener living. But with each small step taken, it will eventually yield a big and positive impact; the key thing is to begin.

Without the intention to shift our mindset and habits, nothing will change the situation we are in to make our environment a better place to live in. Together, we can work towards making the earth a greener place for generations to come. So, let’s take this opportunity to get rid of unpleasant habits and do our best to protect Mother Earth. After all, it’s the only home we have to live in.



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