



Keep the Holidays Beautiful

Your Guide to Hosting a Sustainable
Holiday or New Year's Celebration



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Understanding the Environmental Footprint of Holiday Parties



The Holidays are a time of joy for many, but amid the celebrations, it's easy to lose track of waste.

Close your eyes for a second; think about all the plastic decorations, single-use party supplies, discarded wrapping paper, leftovers and those “seemed like a good idea at the time” fireworks.

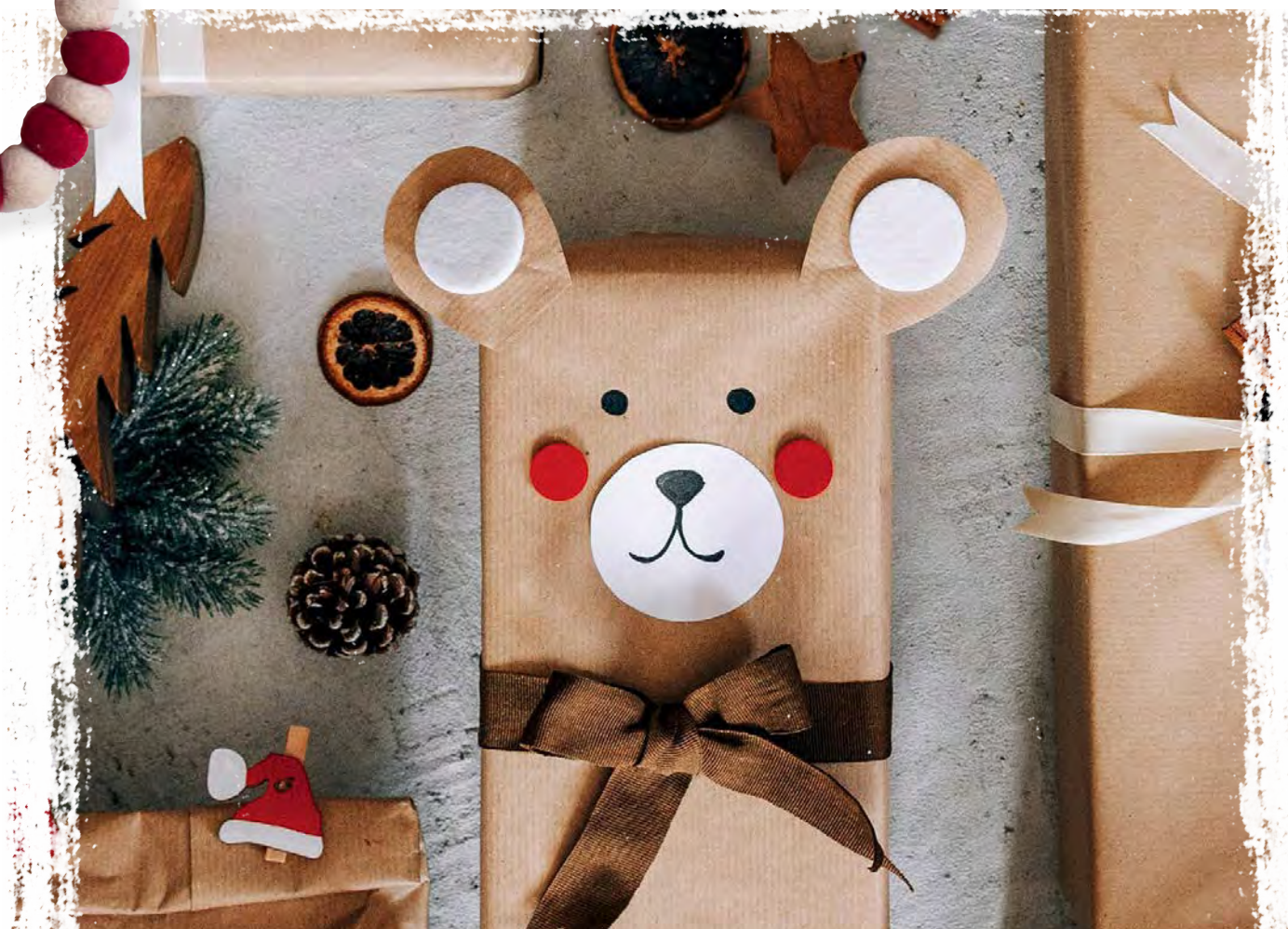
Multiple studies suggest that Americans throw away 25-43% more trash between the Thanksgiving and New Year's holiday period.¹ That's a lot of waste, and it's easy to let the reality of it make you feel less festive about the holiday season.

The good news, though: You don't have to sacrifice fun or elegance to throw an exciting and sustainable party during the holidays! Now is the perfect time to set sustainability resolutions to help foster a brighter, greener future for us all. Across decorations, food, drink and entertainment, we will highlight the many ways to make your holidays beautiful for years to come.

Keep America Beautiful shows that fun and elegance can go hand in hand with sustainability when hosting a holiday celebration. With sustainability resolutions that inspire a brighter, greener future, Keep America Beautiful highlights creative ways to make the holidays beautiful for years to come—from decorations and food to drinks and entertainment—all through simple, do-it-yourself ideas.

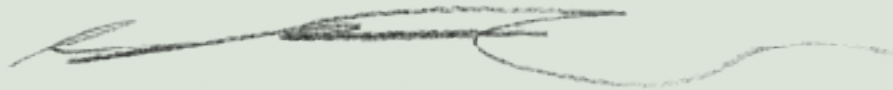
1. <https://scdhec.gov/environment/recycling-waste-reduction/prevent-waste-during-holidays>





A TOAST TO TASTEFUL DECOR

Earth-Conscious Decoration Tips



Decorations create a fun and festive atmosphere. The more memorable, the better! But do you know what lasts well beyond those lifetime memories? Single-use plastics and disposable decorations.

These types of products abound in big box stores during this time of year. While it can be tempting to grab some cheap items next to the checkout counter, it's important to think about the environmental impact.

Instead, incorporate elements that give your gathering ecological elegance:

Nature's bounty:

In the vein of hosting icons such as Martha Stewart, try foraging for natural materials to create table centerpieces, such as flowers, leaves and other forest finery.

Recycled decor:

Use decorations made from recycled materials or DIY decor using items you already have lying around.

If you must purchase a few plastic decorations, don't be too hard on yourself. But do ask: Will they hold up to use next year, or will they live in a landfill for centuries? Never forget the old phrase: reduce, reuse, recycle!



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CHEERS TO GREENER YEARS

Sustainable Food and Drink Tips

It wouldn't be a party without food and drink. But that doesn't mean there has to be copious amounts of waste, either. When planning for your big bash, it's important to be mindful of overconsumption.

40% of all food in
America goes
to waste.



It's a disheartening truth, but nearly half (40%) of all food in America goes to waste. To Help Keep the Holidays Beautiful, here are a few ways to reduce food waste while the good times roll:

✦ **Friendly farmers:**

Be thoughtful when scanning the grocery aisles. Buy organic where you can and consider the carbon footprint of your food. Shopping locally is also a great option!

✦ **Compostable plates and utensils:**

Forget about plastic. There are plenty of biodegradable, compostable items such as plates, cups and utensils that are far more environmentally friendly.

✦ **Reuse or Rental:**

Renting low-cost plates and cups can be nearly the same price as buying disposable ones. Plus, most rental places will do the washing for you! You can always thrift extra dishes and flatware, too.



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ECO-ENTERTAINMENT

Sustainable Party Activity Tips and Ideas



Elegance and excitement aren't characterized by fast-fashion clothes or disposable noisemakers that will spend an eternity in a landfill. Cultivating a great party requires a keen eye for entertainment, as well as a green thumb.

Here are other, more eco-friendly ways to entertain:

✦ **DIY your noisemakers:**

If you want to make some noise in celebration of the new year, try making shakers out of reusable materials. Make it a craft for attendees to enjoy!

✦ **Take and share a sustainable resolution:**

Have guests come up with and share sustainable ideas and resolutions that they plan to take into the near year.

✦ **Bubble drop:**

The infamous balloon drop is an exciting part of New Year's Eve; however, latex balloons are a nightmare — they don't decompose and animals often mistake them for food. Instead, consider a "bubble drop" using an eco-friendly soap bubble solution.

Embracing Sustainable Endings for New Beginnings



Creating memorable holiday moments doesn't have to come at the expense of the environment. A Keep the Holidays Beautiful party delivers all the elegance, excitement and celebration emblematic of this time of year without all the extra garbage.

Every small action, from eco-friendly decorations to mindful food consumption, helps make a larger positive impact on the planet.

Keep America Beautiful is excited to make our New Year's resolution, furthering our commitment to inspire the clean-up and beautification of communities across America.

We encourage you to join us, set your sights on sustainability — and make your own resolution by hosting an eco-conscious gathering of your own.

Subscribe to our newsletter for more ideas about how to contribute to a cleaner, greener and more resilient planet.





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