

# What is a Green Office?

Sustainable Living  
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Creating a green or sustainable office means that you are committed to reducing impacts on the environment, creating a healthy place to work and saving money. Use this Green Office Checklist to create an environmentally friendly workplace.

## Energy Conservation

- Turn off lights, computers, printers and monitors at the end of the day.
- Use a power strip or unplug electronic devices when not in use to prevent energy waste commonly called “phantom power”.
- Install occupancy sensors in offices to automatically turn off lights when you leave the office.
- Don't forget to turn off lights in public spaces (hallways, bathrooms, etc.) at the end of the day.
- Utilize the most energy efficient light sources, such as LED.
- Activate power management features on office equipment.
- Use teleconferencing and video conferencing to save on travel.
- Carpool to meetings.
- Purchase Energy Star® office equipment.

## Office Products

- Buy recycled when ordering paper products (at least 30% post-consumer content).
- Use Sustainable Purchasing guidelines for the office.
- Eliminate those Styrofoam cups; provide reusable coffee mugs.
- Buy products with minimal packaging - not individually packaged.
- For items with limited shelf life, avoid buying more than necessary.
- Buy items that can be recycled at the end of their life and recycle them.
- Purchase green certified products.

## Reduce-Reuse-Recycle

- Always copy on both sides of the paper.
- Put information/newsletters on-line and direct customers to on-line information
- Set-up an office recycling program, complete with a coordinator to encourage recycling efforts and answer questions.
- Use on-line resources for phone books/calendars or other information.
- Collect ink cartridges and batteries for proper recycling/disposal.
- Eliminate junk mail and mail addressed to staff no longer present.
- Use the economy/fast mode on printers for drafts.
- Save used paper for scratch/note paper.
- Keep files on disc and eliminate hard copies.
  - Utilize a work station paper recycling bin.
  - Route memos instead of making copies.
  - Update mailing lists regularly.
  - Repurpose envelopes and boxes.



# More Green Office Tips



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## Junk Mail and Catalogs

- Reduce the waste of paper and disposal by reducing unwanted catalogs and junk mail. For links to “opt out” visit: Federal Trade Commission Consumer Protection at [www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt063.shtm](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt063.shtm)

## Green Office Products

- Look for and compare **green certified** products to those you are currently using ([www.epa.gov/greenerproducts/related/#one](http://www.epa.gov/greenerproducts/related/#one)).
- Use **green certified** cleaning products for the office.
- Look for office products and packaging made from **recycled** materials and that are **biodegradable**.



## Easy Tips to make your Meeting or Conference Green

- Make a **friendly announcement** at the beginning of the program instructing attendees which items are recyclable and what bin each item should go in.
- Make all **copies two sided** or offer any information and materials to those that request it via **Email, DVD, or jump drive**.
- Provide **recycling bins** for paper, cans, and plastic in meeting rooms.
- Provide **wooden coffee stirrers** rather than plastic straw stirrers. **Do not use Styrofoam**.
- Use **reusable name tags** and provide a place to return them at the end of the meeting.
- Offer beverages in **containers that are reusable** and serve water or other drinks in pitchers.
- Include **vegetarian meals**, and have meals planned using **local, seasonal produce**.
- Use **china and linens** to prevent waste; or use paper plates, napkins, cups, and utensils that are **biodegradable** or made from **recycled material**.
- Offer **snacks in bulk** and not individually wrapped. Serve food and snacks that require **minimal serving containers**.
- **Coordinate with the meeting venue** to ensure that **energy** for lights and air conditioning will be **turned off** when rooms are not in use.



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