

Healthy Homes

Top 10 eco home tips from **Nicola Jones** of Earth Balance interiors (www.holistic-interior-designs.com)

1. Reduce your buying habits – Opt out of consumerism, buying for trend and fashion. Only buy new materials and products when necessary. Repair, renovate and refurbish what you already have.

2. Reduce waste – By reducing the amount of things you buy, this helps limit the amount of waste you create in your home; packaging, unwanted products, food waste and so on. Help lower the demand on landfill sites – an environmental nightmare!

3. Reduce and save energy – Be mindful of the amount of water, electricity and fuel you use at home. All created using non-renewable resources which create huge amounts of carbon emissions. The biggest offenders are heating, cooling, ventilation, appliances, electronics and artificial lighting.

4. Reduce synthetics in your home – Made from petroleum-based materials, these toxic substances are found in carpet, paint, varnish, textiles, sealant, adhesive, plastic casing. The manufacturing process uses phenomenal amounts of energy and releases carbon emissions. In your home these chemical substances offgas hazardous VOCs (volatile organic compounds) and lower the quality of air, causing risk to health.

5. Reduce the amount of space you need – Large houses need far more energy and resources during construction, occupancy, renovation and demolition. Do you use only 20pc of your living space? Are there any areas rarely used, yet still heated, lit and furnished? Something to consider: the amount of space you need is probably less than you think.

6. Choose materials and products that have a low impact on the environment, e.g. sustainable timber, renewable natural materials, recycled content, reuse and renovate second-hand items, ability to recycle after use, resource efficiency and long life spans.

7. Recycle – Anything you throw away goes into landfill sites. Recycle as much as you can from aluminium cans, glass and plastic bottles to giving your old furniture to charity shops.

8. Natural lighting – Maximise the amount of natural light in your home to reduce the amount of energy and resources you use as well as for your own wellbeing. Consistent natural light increase productivity, lifts your spirits and gives a general feeling of comfort.

9. Improve air quality – Indoor air pollution can be five times the concentration of outdoor pollution. It is broken down into: combustion pollutants, biological pollutants, VOCs (volatile organic compounds) and heavy metal pollutants. Keep your home well-ventilated and humidity under control with natural and mechanical ventilation methods to improve the air quality and lower the hazard to your health.

10. Buy locally – Choose local retailers who stock products from local manufacturers using regional materials and local labour. This will help reduce the energy used for production and need for transportation, which are huge contributors to the carbon footprint of a product (embodied energy).

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Eco Source book

Salvage & reclaim Yards

Mac Salvage Warehouse 749 South Circular Road, Islandbridge, Dublin 8, 01 679 2110
Victorian Salvage & Joinery Company 46-47 Townsend Street, Dublin 2, 01 672 7000
Wilson's Conservation Building Products 123 Hillsborough Road, Dromore, Co Down, 048 9269 2304
McGovern's Corner 87 Cork Street, Dublin 8, 01 453 5979
Michael Duffy & Sons 10 Parnell Street, Dublin 1, 01 726 928

AURO Natural Paints

www.honestonehouse.com

Range of natural mattresses & paints

www.healthbuild.com

Irish websites for the online recycling community:

www.jumbletown.ie
www.freecycle.org

Second-hand and Antiques

www.christybird.com Dublin

Other useful sites:

www.ecoshop.ie
www.ecoshakti.com
www.econatural.com
www.cultivate.ie
www.valoeearth.ie
www.ecocentric.co.uk
www.handmadewallpaper.co.uk
www.dunfordwood.co.uk
www.urbaneliving.co.uk
www.oneecohome.co.uk
www.reelfurniture.co.uk
www.vivaterra.com
www.finefayre.co.uk
www.bynature.co.uk
www.organic-furnishings.co.uk
www.linenfabrics.co.uk