

- Dye your tea towels Black: Tea towels are one of the most quick grabbed things in kitchens and end up with all sorts of stains meaning they look unsightly and often need replacing. By buying or dyeing them black they last so much longer and its easy to get the colour back with a wash full of Dylon.
- Check your bulbs: The old style bayonets are cheaper to buy but more costly to run. Switch up to energy saving bulbs
- Bags For Life...are for life How many times have you binned a bag for life? Because it's ripped? They replace and recycle your old bags. All them 5p's and 10p's add up. 5 – 8 bags a time at least 12 times a year that's between £3 & £4.80 a year just for my main food shop not including all them home bargains trips, shop or mini shops in between.
- Think about what could be available where you live. I live in a seaside town so there are lots of hotels and B&B's that regularly change ownership and they sell everything including the kitchen sink. I have come across furniture, kitchen supplies, art, new towels and bedding all for cheap enough that I have stock piled some for future use.
- Also a seaside town is going to need a lot of wholesale supplies from food to toilet roll , to cleaning products. See if there are any wholesalers near by that stock bigger bottles, packages, etc
- Add soda crystals to your washing powder. I have a big family = loads of washing. I bulk out my washing powder by adding a cup full of soda crystals. I also love the smells of biological powder but it costs a bomb so I double it up by mixing it with a cheaper non bio.
- Old towels, tea towels and t-shirts make for ace rags for cleaning windows, skirting and buffing up your footwear
- Odd socks can be used for heating packs, put one sock inside the other, half fill with rice and tie at the top, pop in the microwave for 1 – 2 minutes. Also great to make sock puppets with buttons and ribbon from old clothes.
- If your old clothes really have no place to go let the kids put on a fashion show, it's great for creativity and they are sure to surprise you with their new swag while providing some entertainment
- Instead of keeping lights on for the young ones to use the bathroom at night, consider battery operated spotlights along the stairs.
- From hand soap, to shampoo my kids love pumping them product bottles a million times and using too much, tie an elastic band or thin bobble around the neck to stop them using too much.
- Alternatively switching to shampoo bars will ensure less waste
- Introduce Charge Times for devices. Phones/laptops and tablets don't need to be left on charge all night a quick top up hour before bed so they are ready for the next day should be sufficient.
- Decrease your wash loads by vacuum packing away out of season clothes if they will be used again. If its in the drawer or somewhere they can access it chances, are they will wear it, if it's weather appropriate or not. This way they will also get full use out of the seasons clothes they have.
- The same with plates/cups etc. Ideally you need one set of everything for each person in the house and a couple of sets for guests. The more you have, the more you use. Unless it's teaspoons of course, you always need and loose thousands of them buggers!
- Period pants & cups – the initial outlay for these can be expensive but they really do pay for themselves. If you are struggling to afford menstrual products Morrisons in the UK have an

“Ask for Sandy” imitative and will provide products free otherwise please contact a local charity, foodbank or school and they will help you get what you need.

- Send out a ‘No Obligations’ post before the festive season kicks in. A lot of the time people feel obliged because they are close friends or family or you feel obliged because you know they usually get you something. Something simple like, “This year’s been tough & funds are tight, it’s Christmas soon to our families delight. This year we’ve opted to give you our time, over a mince pie & a bottle of wine”
- This way there doesn’t have to be any difficult conversations. You could offer personal vouchers instead, of a skill you have, a night off with babysitting duties or a day out later in the year, put up some shelves. These little things often mean more too.
- Check out your local community groups and church halls by Googling “Christmas Activities (area)”
- Also check out local Libraries, Museums, Art Galleries, coffee shops and childrens centres and parks who usually have a raft of info and free events on a host of info about what is happening in your local area
- As the festive year is coming really think about what you can upcycle from old Christmas things. I have updated a wreath I have had for many years about 4 times with a trusty glue gun and old decorations. There will also be plenty on pinterest to inspire you
- Also consider your festive meal plans. For the two weeks over Christmas have a note pad and list the 14 days over xmas. As plans come in add them to the list so you know what days you will be home. It will be easier to see what days you need meals for.