



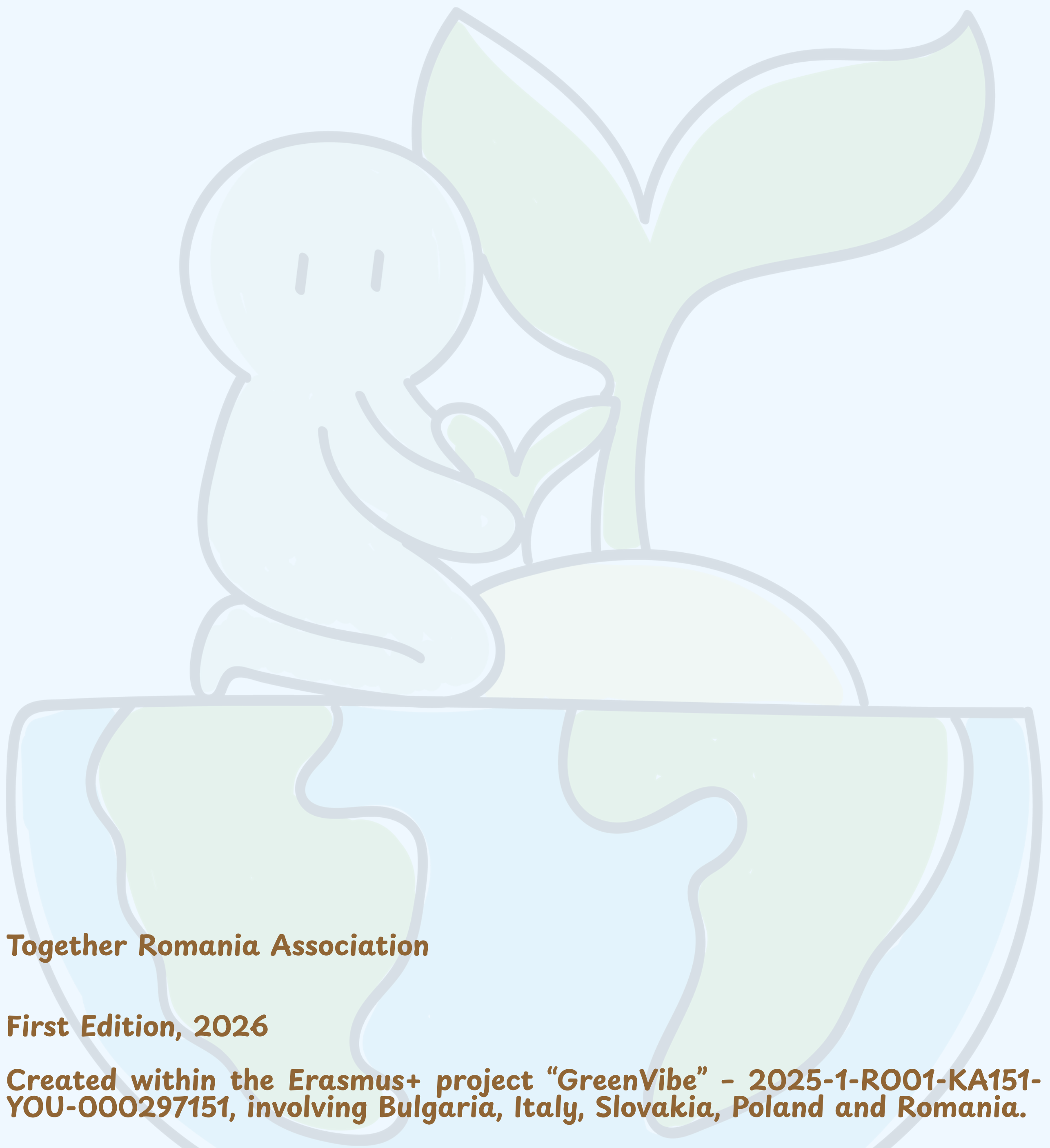
*Together Romania
Association*

GreenVibe

action manual



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Together Romania Association

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Welcome to ACT GREEN!

We are excited to welcome you to this journey toward a more sustainable future. This manual was created as part of the GreenVibe project to inspire, educate and empower young people and communities to take meaningful action for the environment. It is more than a guide - it is an invitation to rethink everyday habits and discover how small choices can create lasting positive change.

Across the world, environmental challenges such as pollution, climate change and overconsumption affect our daily lives and the future of our planet. The good news is that each of us has the power to make a difference. Through conscious decisions and simple actions, we can reduce waste, reuse resources, recycle responsibly and rethink the way we live.

Inside these pages, you will find practical ideas, easy strategies and inspiring examples that anyone can apply at home, at school, at work, or in the community. Whether you are just beginning your green journey or already living sustainably, this manual is designed to support you every step of the way. The future is built through the actions we take today. Let's act green together.



CONTENT

About the project

How to Use This Manual

Introduction to Sustainable Living

Chapter 1 - REDUCE

Chapter 2 - REUSE

Chapter 3 - RECYCLE

Chapter 4 - RETHINK

30 Green Actions You Can Start Today

Final Message



HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This manual was created to be practical, simple and useful for everyone. You do not need to change your entire lifestyle overnight. Real sustainability begins with small actions repeated consistently. Use these pages as a guide to help you build better habits step by step.

Each chapter focuses on one of the four key principles: **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle** and **Rethink**. You can read the manual from beginning to end or start with the chapter that feels most relevant to your life right now. Every section includes ideas, examples and actions that can be applied at home, at school, at work, or in your community.

Do not aim for perfection. Nobody is sustainable all the time. The goal is progress, awareness and making better choices whenever possible. Even one small change - using a reusable bottle, reducing food waste, repairing an item, or choosing second-hand products - creates a positive impact over time.

You can also use this manual with others. Share it with friends, family members, classmates, youth groups, or colleagues. Many green actions become easier and more enjoyable when people work together.

Keep notes, set personal goals and challenge yourself to try something new each week. Sustainability is not only about protecting nature - it is about creating healthier communities, smarter habits and a better future for everyone.

INTRODUCTION TO SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Sustainable living means making choices that meet our needs today without harming the ability of future generations to meet theirs. It is a way of life based on balance - using resources responsibly, reducing waste, and protecting the environment while still enjoying a healthy and fulfilling lifestyle.

In modern society, many daily habits encourage overconsumption. We often buy more than we need, waste food, use disposable products and consume energy without thinking about the long-term impact. These habits contribute to pollution, climate change, loss of biodiversity and the depletion of natural resources.

Living sustainably does not require perfection or extreme changes. It starts with awareness. Every product we buy, every meal we eat and every journey we take has an environmental footprint. By understanding this, we can begin to make smarter decisions that reduce harm and create positive impact.

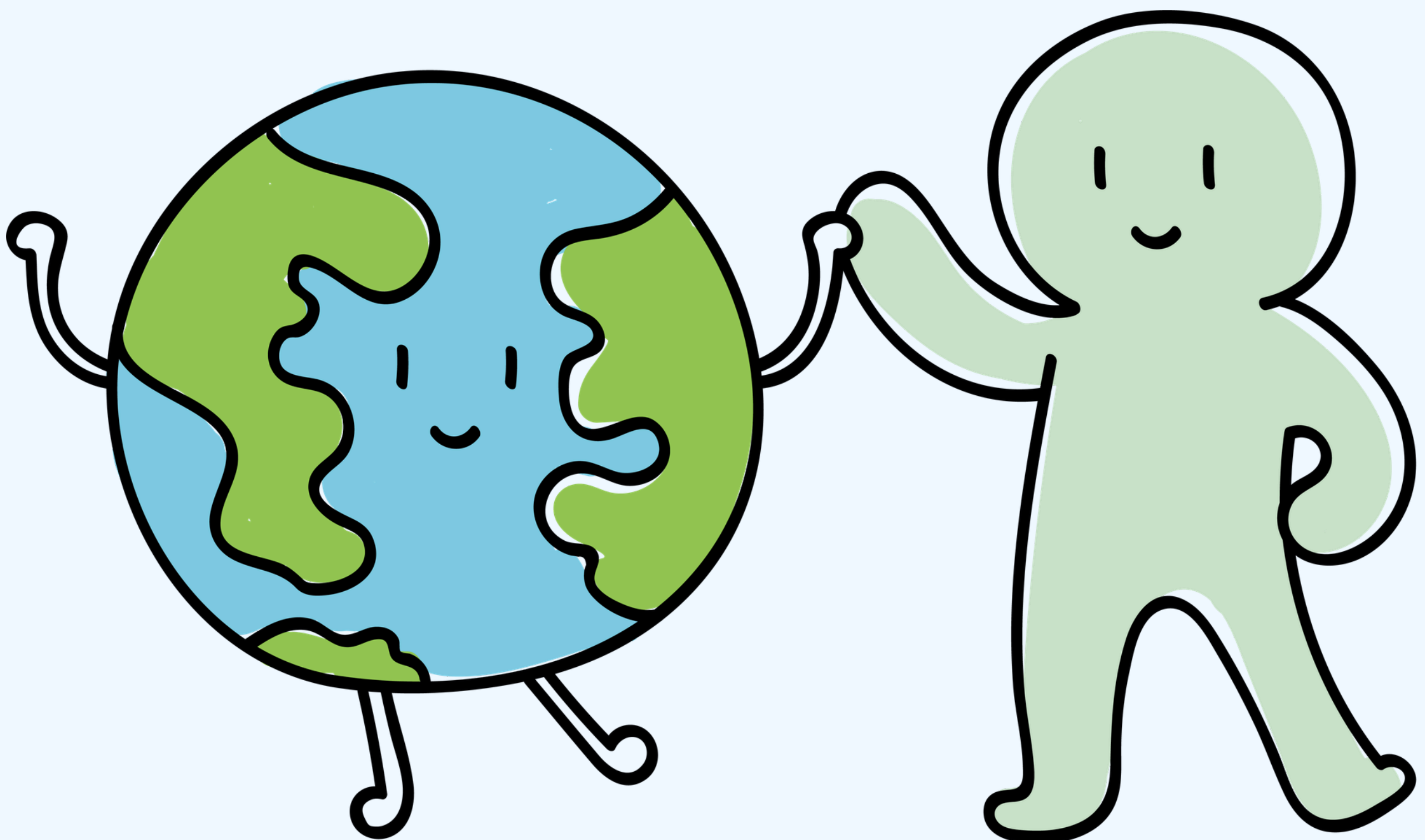


Simple sustainable choices include using reusable products, saving water and energy, repairing instead of replacing, buying local goods, reducing food waste, and recycling correctly. These actions may seem small, but when repeated by millions of people, they create powerful change.

Sustainable living also benefits us personally. It can save money, improve health, reduce stress and help us focus on what truly matters rather than unnecessary consumption. Often, a simpler lifestyle is also a more meaningful one.

Communities also become stronger through sustainability. Sharing resources, supporting local businesses, protecting green spaces and working together on environmental initiatives create more connected and resilient societies.

The goal of this manual is not only to teach eco-friendly habits, but to inspire a mindset shift. Sustainability is not a trend - it is a responsibility and an opportunity. By changing how we live today, we help build a cleaner, fairer and healthier world for tomorrow.

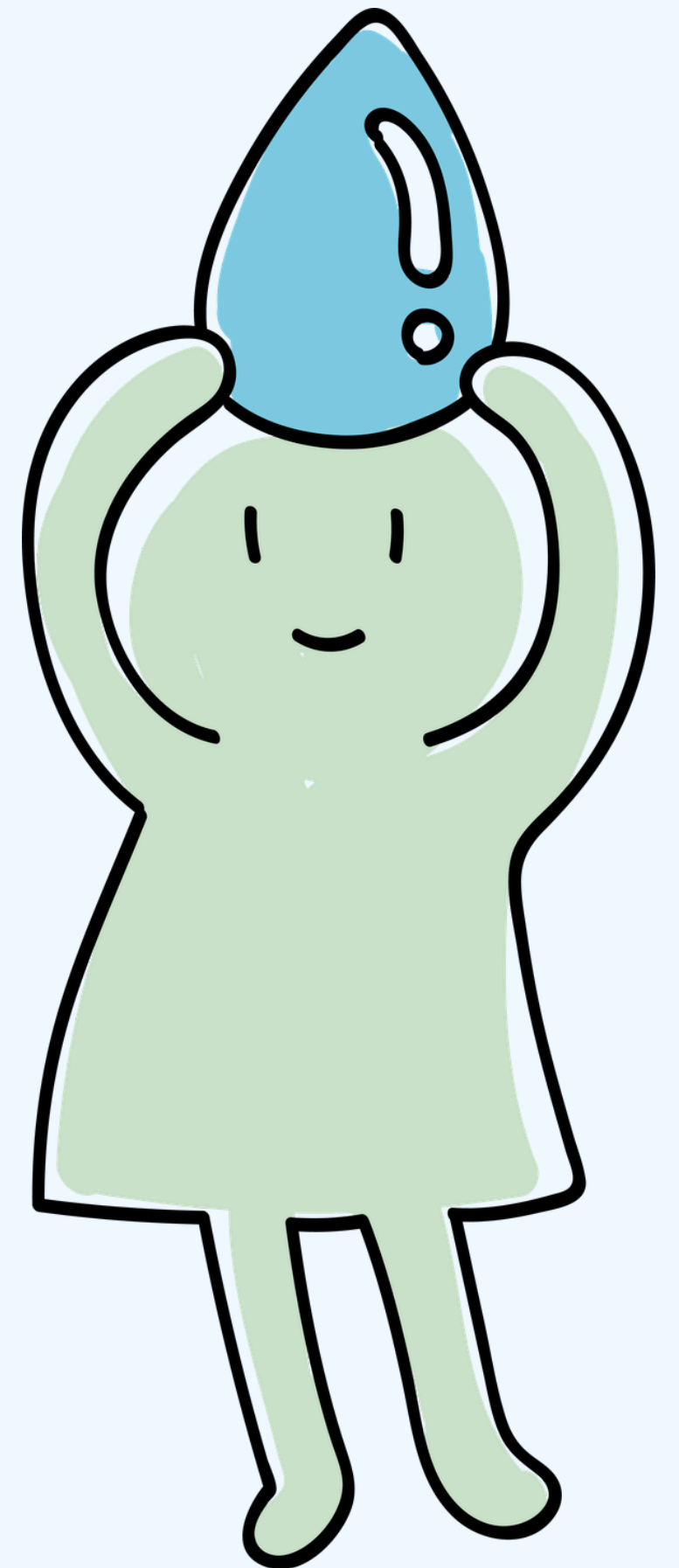


Chapter 1 - REDUCE

How to use less and waste less every day

Reducing means preventing waste before it appears. It is the smartest and most effective environmental action because it saves materials, energy, money and space. Instead of asking "How do I throw this away?", reducing asks "How can I avoid needing this in the first place?"

The easiest way to reduce is to become more conscious of your daily habits. Start by observing what you buy, what you throw away and what you use too much. After one week, you will usually notice patterns such as wasted food, unnecessary shopping, plastic packaging, or high electricity use. Once you notice the problem, you can change it.



How to reduce when shopping:

Always make a shopping list before going to the store. This prevents impulse purchases and helps you buy only what you need. Check your fridge, kitchen, or bathroom before shopping so you do not buy products you already have. Choose durable items instead of cheap disposable ones. Buy products with minimal packaging and prefer refill options when available.

How to reduce food waste:

Plan meals for the week. Buy realistic quantities, not excessive amounts. Store food correctly and place older products in front so you use them first. Use leftovers creatively for lunch, soups, pasta, or salads. Freeze food before it spoils. Learn the difference between "best before" and "use by" dates.

How to reduce plastic use:

Carry a reusable shopping bag, water bottle, lunch box and coffee cup. Refuse plastic straws, cutlery and unnecessary wrapping. Buy loose fruits and vegetables when possible. Replace disposable products with reusable alternatives.

How to reduce energy use at home:

Turn off lights when leaving a room. Unplug devices not in use. Use LED bulbs. Wash clothes with full loads and lower temperatures. Air dry clothes instead of using a dryer when possible. Keep doors and windows closed when heating or cooling a room.

How to reduce water waste:

Take shorter showers. Turn off the tap while brushing teeth. Fix leaking taps quickly. Run dishwashers and washing machines only when full. Reuse water when possible, for example watering plants with collected rainwater.

How to reduce clothing waste:

Buy fewer clothes, but better quality. Choose timeless items instead of fast trends. Repair damaged clothes. Swap clothes with friends or buy second-hand. Donate what you no longer wear.

Simple weekly challenge:

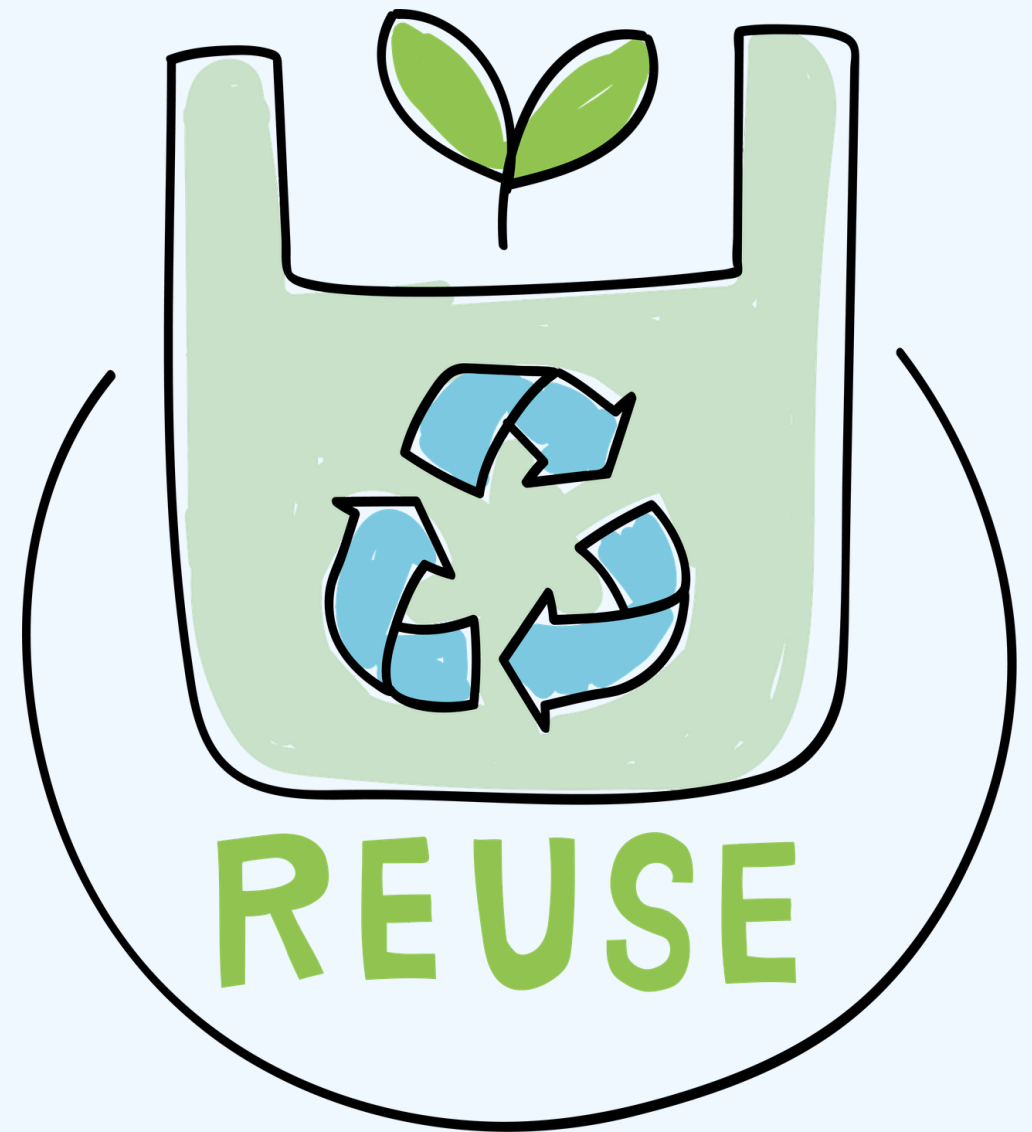
Choose one area of your life each week - food, energy, shopping, transport, clothing - and reduce waste there. Small consistent actions create long-term habits.

Reducing is not about having less. It is about wasting less, choosing better and living smarter.

Chapter 2 - REUSE

How to give things a second life

Reuse means using an item again instead of throwing it away after one use. It is one of the easiest ways to reduce waste and save resources. Every time you reuse something, you help reduce the need to produce new products, which saves energy, water, raw materials and money.



Many things are thrown away long before they are truly finished. Reuse teaches us to look at objects differently - not as waste, but as something that can still be useful. Before throwing anything away, ask yourself: Can I use this again? Can someone else use it? Can it have another purpose?

How to reuse in the kitchen:

Keep glass jars from sauces, jams, or pickles and use them for storing rice, pasta, spices, leftovers, or homemade drinks. Reuse food containers for lunches or freezer storage. Use washable cloth towels instead of paper towels. Save vegetable scraps to make homemade broth.

How to reuse in the bathroom:

Choose refillable soap, shampoo, or cleaning products. Use reusable cotton pads, safety razors, washable cloths, or refill containers. Keep product bottles that can be refilled instead of buying new plastic packaging each time.

How to reuse clothes and textiles:

Repair clothes with small holes, missing buttons, or broken zippers. Turn old t-shirts into cleaning cloths. Use worn towels as floor mats or pet towels. Donate clothes you no longer wear. Organize clothing swaps with friends or community groups.

How to reuse furniture and household items:

Before buying new furniture, check if an old item can be repaired, painted, or redesigned. Wooden boxes can become shelves. Old chairs can be restored. Containers can become organizers. Reusing home items often costs less and creates unique results.

How to reuse technology and electronics:

Use devices as long as possible. Replace batteries or repair screens instead of buying new products immediately. Donate or sell working electronics you no longer need. Use older phones or tablets for music, reading, alarms, or learning.

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How to reuse through sharing:

Not everything needs to be owned individually. Borrow tools, books, sports equipment, or games. Use libraries. Share rarely used items with neighbours or friends. Community sharing reduces waste and saves money for everyone.

How to build a reuse habit:

Create a “reuse box” at home for jars, bags, containers, and useful materials. Before throwing something away, wait one minute and think of another use. Learn simple repair skills like sewing, gluing, tightening screws, or repainting.

Simple weekly challenge:

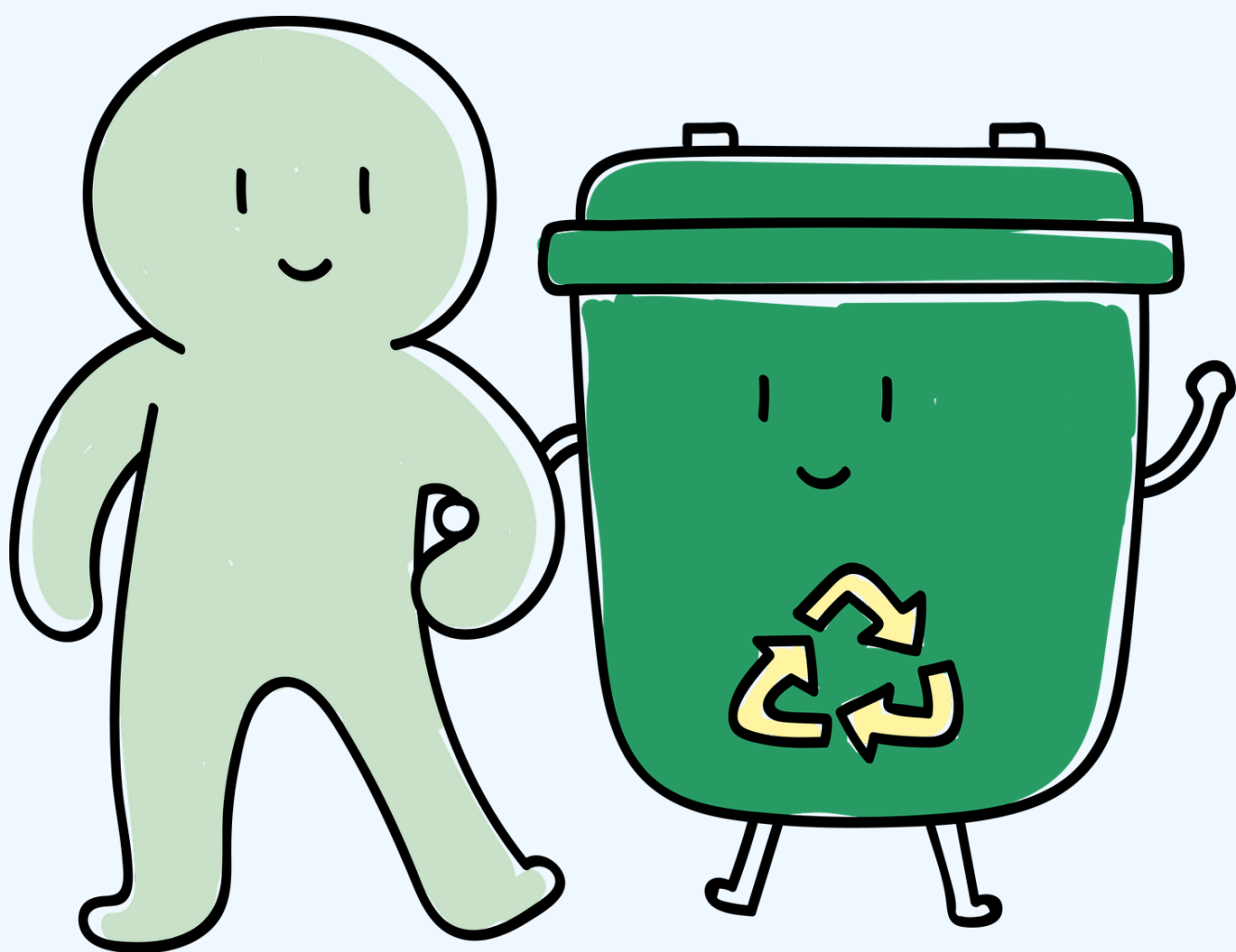
Choose five items this week that you would normally throw away and find a second use for them.

Reuse is not about keeping useless things. It is about extending value, avoiding waste and becoming more creative with what you already have.

Chapter 3 - RECYCLE

How to recycle correctly and make it count

Recycling means turning used materials into new products instead of sending them to landfill or burning them as waste. It helps save raw materials, reduce pollution, lower energy use and keep valuable resources in circulation.



However, recycling works only when it is done correctly. If waste is mixed, dirty, or contaminated, many recyclable items cannot be processed. That is why good sorting habits at home are essential. Recycling is not just throwing something in a bin - it is preparing materials to be used again.

How to start recycling at home:

Create a simple sorting system with separate bags or bins for paper, plastic/metal, glass and general waste. If possible, add a small box for batteries and electronic waste. Label bins clearly so everyone in the household can use them easily.

How to recycle paper and cardboard:

Recycle newspapers, notebooks, boxes, cartons, office paper and clean cardboard. Fold boxes to save space. Keep paper dry and clean.

Do not recycle greasy pizza boxes, wet paper, tissues, or napkins unless your local system accepts them.

How to recycle plastic and metal:

Recycle bottles, cans, food tins, drink cans, detergent containers and many plastic packages. Empty and quickly rinse containers before disposal. Crush bottles and cans if your local system allows it, to save space. Keep caps on only if local rules say so.

How to recycle glass:

Recycle bottles and jars after emptying them. A quick rinse helps prevent smell and insects. Remove lids if required locally. Do not place mirrors, ceramics, light bulbs, or window glass in normal glass recycling bins unless specifically accepted.

How to recycle batteries and electronics:

Never throw batteries, chargers, cables, phones, or small electronics into regular bins. These items contain valuable metals and can also be dangerous. Store them safely at home and take them to special collection points, supermarkets, or recycling centres.

How to avoid common recycling mistakes:

Do not place food waste inside recycling bins. Do not mix materials inside one bag if separate sorting is required. Do not assume every plastic item is recyclable. Always check local rules. Dirty containers and mixed waste can ruin entire batches of recyclables.

How to recycle smarter:

Buy products made from recycled materials. Choose packaging that is easy to recycle. Support deposit-return systems for bottles and cans. Learn the recycling colours and rules used in your city or country.

How schools and communities can help:

Place clear recycling bins in visible spaces. Use posters with examples of accepted items. Organize battery or e-waste collection campaigns. Make recycling easy and people are more likely to do it.

Simple weekly challenge:

Check one trash bag before throwing it away and see how many items could have been recycled properly. Then improve your sorting system.

Recycling is important, but it works best after reducing and reusing. When done correctly, it turns waste into resources and helps build a cleaner circular future.



Chapter 4 - RETHINK

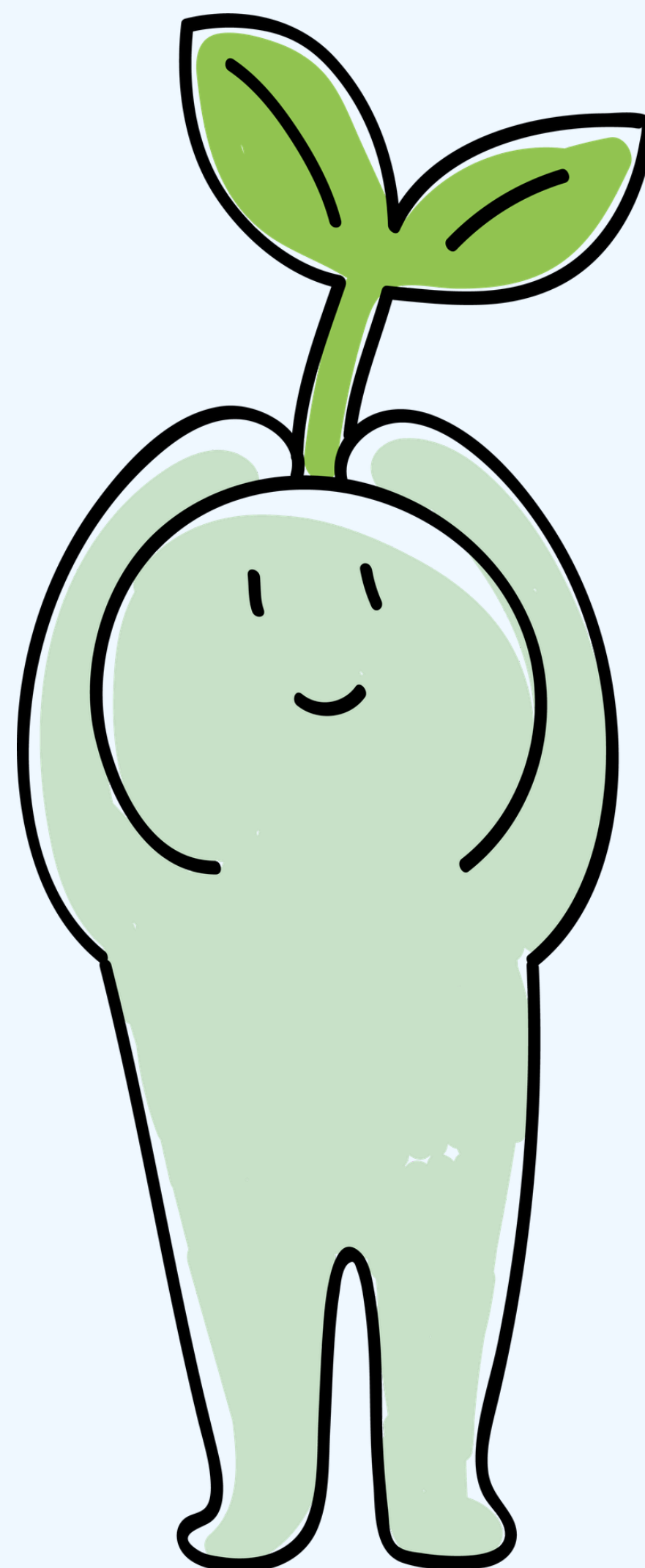
How to change habits and live more sustainably

Rethink means stopping for a moment and questioning the way we live, buy, eat, travel and consume. It is about changing mindset before changing actions. Many environmental problems begin with automatic habits. Rethinking helps us replace those habits with smarter and more responsible choices.

This chapter is important because real sustainability is not only about recycling bins or reusable bags. It is about asking better questions: Do I need this? Is there a better option? What impact does this choice have on people and the planet? Could I do this differently?

How to rethink shopping habits:

Before buying something, wait 24 hours for non-essential purchases. Many impulse buys lose importance after time. Ask yourself if you truly need the item, if you can borrow it, buy it second-hand, or choose a better-quality version that lasts longer. Buy fewer things, but better things.



How to rethink food choices:

Choose local and seasonal food when possible. Reduce overbuying. Eat what you already have before buying more. Try more plant-based meals during the week. Support producers who use responsible practices and less packaging.

How to rethink fashion:

Fast fashion creates waste and pollution. Instead of buying many cheap trendy items, build a smaller wardrobe with clothes you truly wear. Choose second-hand stores, clothing swaps, ethical brands, or timeless styles that last for years.

How to rethink transport:

Not every trip needs a car. Walk short distances, cycle when possible, use public transport, or combine errands into one trip. If traveling longer distances, compare lower-impact transport options. Sharing rides also reduces emissions and costs.

How to rethink technology use:

Upgrade devices only when necessary. Repair before replacing. Reduce unnecessary digital consumption such as unused subscriptions, duplicate devices, or constant upgrades. Use technology longer and more intentionally.

How to rethink daily routines:

Many habits happen without thinking - leaving lights on, buying coffee in disposable cups, wasting food, printing unnecessary papers. Choose one routine each week and improve it consciously. Small changes repeated daily create major impact over time.

How to rethink success and lifestyle:

Modern culture often connects success with owning more. Sustainable living reminds us that quality of life can come from health, time, relationships, community, nature and purpose - not endless consumption.

How to rethink as a community:

Talk with friends, family, classmates, or colleagues about better habits. Organize swap events, repair workshops, clean-up actions, or awareness campaigns. Change becomes stronger when shared.

Simple weekly challenge:

Choose one habit you do automatically every day and redesign it in a greener way. Keep the new habit for seven days.

Rethink is the most powerful R because it influences all the others. When we change the way we think, we naturally reduce, reuse and recycle better.

30 Green actions you can start today

Sustainable living does not begin with big changes - it begins with simple actions repeated every day. Choose a few ideas from this list and start now. Small habits create long-term impact.

1. Carry a reusable water bottle instead of buying plastic bottles.
 2. Bring your own shopping bag when going to the store.
 3. Turn off lights when leaving a room.
 4. Unplug chargers when not in use.
 5. Take a 5-minute shower instead of a long one.
 6. Use both sides of paper before recycling it.
 7. Plan meals for the week to reduce food waste.
 8. Eat leftovers instead of throwing them away.
 9. Buy only what you need, not what is on impulse.
 10. Choose products with less packaging.
 11. Walk or cycle for short distances.
 12. Use public transport when possible.
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13. **Combine errands into one trip.**
 14. **Carry a reusable coffee cup.**
 15. **Refuse plastic straws, cutlery and unnecessary disposables.**
 16. **Donate clothes you no longer wear.**
 17. **Repair one broken item instead of replacing it.**
 18. **Buy second-hand before buying new.**
 19. **Reuse glass jars for storage.**
 20. **Use cloth towels instead of paper towels.**
 21. **Sort waste correctly at home.**
 22. **Recycle batteries at special collection points.**
 23. **Keep your phone or laptop longer before upgrading.**
 24. **Wash clothes with full loads.**
 25. **Air dry clothes instead of using a dryer.**
 26. **Buy local or seasonal food.**
 27. **Spend time in nature and appreciate what you protect.**

28. Share tools, books, or items with friends and neighbours.

29. Teach one other person a green habit.

30. Choose one new sustainable habit every month.

How to use this list:

Do not try to do everything at once. Start with three actions this week. Once they become habits, add three more. Sustainable living grows step by step.

Remember: one person doing many small actions consistently can create real change. Millions of people doing the same can change the world.



Thank you for taking the time to explore this manual and for choosing to be part of a more sustainable future. Every page you read, every idea you apply and every habit you improve is a step toward positive change for our communities and our planet.

This Action Manual was created as a result of the ACT GREEN Youth Exchange, through the energy, creativity and collaboration of participants, facilitators and partner organisations from 5 different countries. Their ideas, experiences and commitment to environmental responsibility made this resource possible.

We would like to sincerely thank all participants for their motivation, openness, teamwork and valuable contributions throughout the project. Your voices, actions and enthusiasm show that young people are powerful changemakers who can lead positive transformation in their communities.

A special thank you goes to the facilitators who guided the learning process, supported intercultural exchange and created a space where ideas could grow into meaningful action.

Finally, thank you to every reader who chooses to take action after reading this manual. Whether you begin with one small habit or many, your choices matter. Together, we can create greener habits, stronger communities and a better future for all.

We also warmly thank all partner organisations for their cooperation, trust and dedication in bringing young people together through this shared European experience.

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NGO Bucharest, RO



Carol I high school
Valea Doftanei, RO



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