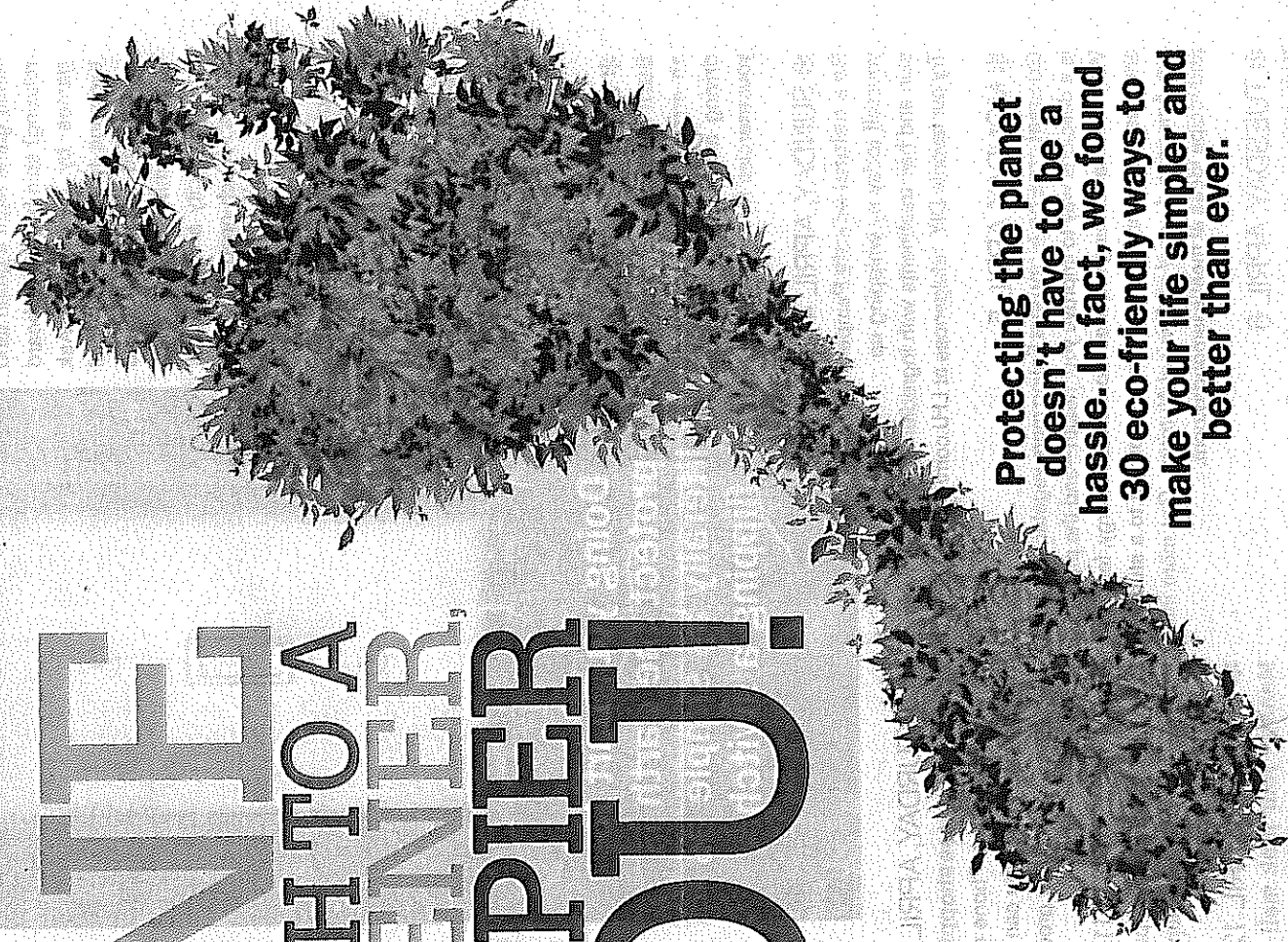




Living Beautifully
Family Time
Animal Affairs

home

ONE MONTH TO A GREENER, HAPPIER YOU!



**Protecting the planet
doesn't have to be a
hassle. In fact, we found
30 eco-friendly ways to
make your life simpler and
better than ever.**

YOU LIKE THE IDEA OF GOING GREEN. In theory, at least. But if it means revamping your entire lifestyle? No, thanks. It's not that you don't want future generations to inherit a healthier planet, but your life is already hectic enough. While you hate to admit it, the thought of rinsing out used zip-top bags or line-drying your towels gives you a headache. Besides, will the earth even benefit from the actions of just one person? The answer is yes—and you'll reap rewards, too. That's because many of the simple things you can do to protect the environment can also help you reconnect with family and friends, boost your mood, and conserve cash. Be good to the planet—and yourself—every day this month with these simple tips.

BY JANA BANIN

*** THURSDAY, APRIL 1**

Turn out the lights Give family game night a green (and relaxing) spin by playing board games by candlelight. Ask everyone to turn off their cell phone and make the TV and radio off-limits as well. You'll save electricity and give your senses a much-needed break.

*** FRIDAY, APRIL 2**

Encourage your kids to do green chores Put a quarter in a jar each time they do something helpful and earth-friendly, like taking out the recycling. At the end of the month, let them choose how the family should spend the money.

*** SATURDAY, APRIL 3**

Burn calories, not fuel Run an errand on foot instead of driving and consider the trip your exercise for the day.

*** SUNDAY, APRIL 4**

Be a natural beauty Pamper yourself today by whipping up skin and hair treatments with ingredients from your pantry. Try our favorite DIY indulgences at LHJ.com/beautyrecipes.

*** MONDAY, APRIL 5**

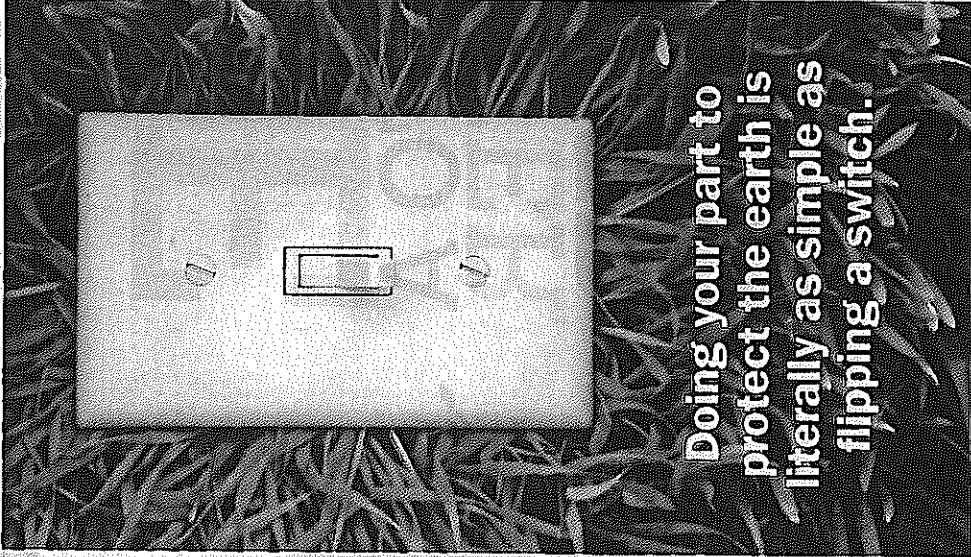
Go meat-free on Mondays Eating more vegetarian meals is a delicious way to improve your health—and the planet's. Why? Animal farming requires more water, energy, fertilizer and pesticides than plant farming, according to a study in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. Get more info and recipe ideas at meatlessmonday.com.

*** TUESDAY, APRIL 6**

Relax and recharge outdoors Participate in the Great American Cleanup. To find a volunteer event in your area, visit Keep America Beautiful's site, kab.org.

*** WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7**

Swap your stuff Update your wardrobe the green (and super-cheap) way by hosting a clothing swap. Ask your



Doing your part to protect the earth is literally as simple as flipping a switch.

friends to bring their unwanted clothes to your house, serve snacks and presto: You have got a party and a new-to-you spring wardrobe. Don't feel like organizing a swap yourself? Check out clothingswaps.com to find one in your area.

*** THURSDAY, APRIL 8**

Join the carpool lane Are you meeting a friend for lunch or a shopping session at the mall? If she lives nearby, tell her you'll swing by and pick her up. It's less wasteful than taking two cars and it gives you more time to spend together.

*** FRIDAY, APRIL 9**

Enjoy a no-cook lunch Save time and electricity by making a salad with fresh vegetables and nuts. Another perk: "Food in its least-processed form has more nutrients," says Lauren Slayton, R.D., director of Foodtrainers, a nutrition-counseling center in New York City.

*** SATURDAY, APRIL 10**

Make a paperless shopping list Download the Shopper application to your iPhone or iPod Touch (myshopperapp.com). As a bonus, you can organize your shopping list to match the layout of your grocery store.

*** SUNDAY, APRIL 11**

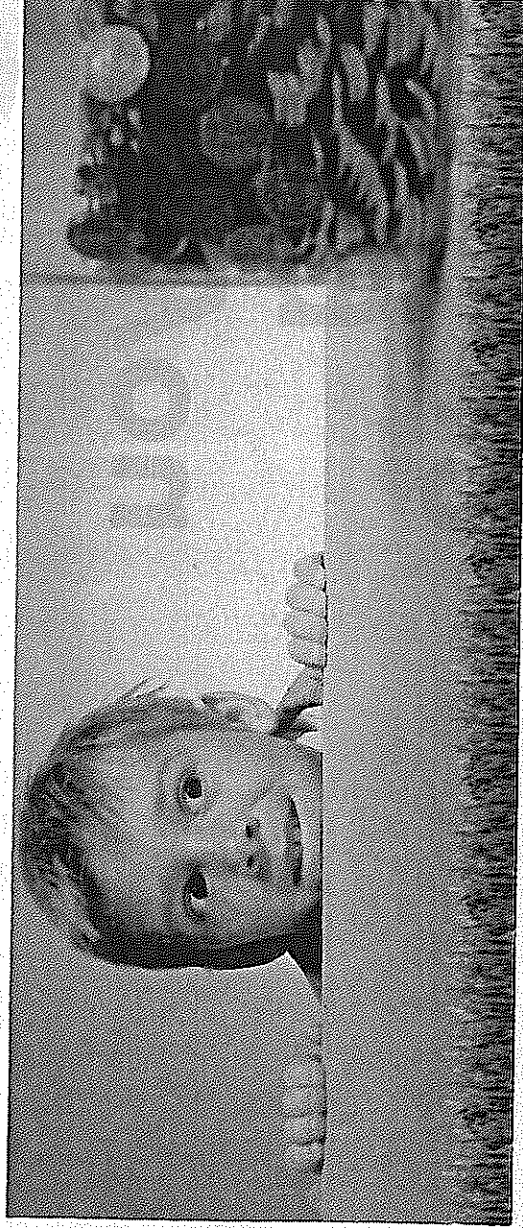
Dine in style Swapping paper for cloth napkins creates less waste—and it gives family mealtime an elegant vibe.

*** MONDAY, APRIL 12**

Manage your junk mail Sick of being inundated with credit card, mortgage and insurance offers? Tell the consumer credit-reporting companies to take you off their mailing lists at optoutprescreen.com.

*** TUESDAY, APRIL 13**

Catch up with your friends over coffee that has earned fair-trade certification. That means the beans were



produced in an environmentally sustainable way on farms with fair labor conditions. For a list of vendors that sell these green beans, go to transfairusa.org.

* WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14

Buy in bulk Shopping at stores such as Costco and Sam's Club isn't just kind to your wallet. Because larger items usually require less packaging, it's an earth-friendly move, too.

* THURSDAY, APRIL 15

Go offline Shut down your computer today (or just in the early morning and evening if you need it for work); you'll save power and your sanity by cutting back on screen time.

* FRIDAY, APRIL 16

Indulge your inner beauty junkie Why not try an eco-smart version of your hair and makeup staples? Our faves: Biologie's Colorcaretherapie Delicate Care haircare line (packaged in 100-percent-recyclable materials) and Physicians Formula's new Bamboo Wear face powder, which comes in a refillable compact.

* SATURDAY, APRIL 17

Take a trip to a farmers' market Locally grown produce requires less fuel to transport and it's fresher, too. Find a market near you at localharvest.org.

* SUNDAY, APRIL 18

De-clutter without trashing the earth Instead of hauling your unwanted stuff to the dump, get your neighbors together and host a street-wide yard sale. Sure, it may take a little effort but think of it this way: You're basically getting paid to clean your house!

* MONDAY, APRIL 19

Cut the engine For every two minutes your car idles, it uses about the same amount of gas it takes to travel a mile, according to the Consumer Energy Center. If you've arrived early for school pickup or your husband has just run into the grocery store for a few things, turn off your car.

* TUESDAY, APRIL 20

Ignore a few chores Go ahead, let the laundry and dirty dishes pile up. Washing anything less than a full load of either wastes water and energy, not to mention your time.

* WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21

Bring a mug to work Sip coffee from a real cup instead of the landfill-clogging disposable kind.

* THURSDAY, APRIL 22: EARTH DAY

Give green gifts No one expects to get an Earth Day present, but why not surprise a friend or relative with a cute reusable shopping bag? EnviroSax's totes are just \$8.50; choose from a variety of cool designs at envirosax.com.

* FRIDAY, APRIL 23

Catch an eco-themed flick Ooh and aah at amazing never-before-seen footage of life beneath the sea in DisneyNature's new film *Oceans*, in theaters this month.

* SATURDAY, APRIL 24

Send someone your love the planet-friendly way Botanical Paperworks' greeting cards come with a unique surprise gift: the seed-embedded, paper sprouts wildflowers when the recipient plants it (six cards for \$20 at botanicalpaperworks.com).

*** SUNDAY, APRIL 25**

Take a hike. Learn about conservation issues and get in shape at the same time with your local Sierra Club. The organization's free outings—which include hiking, bicycling, canoeing and more—are perfect for families. Find out more at sierraclub.org/outing/chapter.

*** MONDAY, APRIL 26**

Compost the easy way. Not thrilled with the idea of letting smelly garbage rot in your backyard? An indoor composter might be the perfect solution. Check out the variety of options at compostbins.com; many are the size of a small trash can and cost as little as \$25.

*** TUESDAY, APRIL 27**

Save water and add romance. Waste less H₂O by showering with your husband today.

*** WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28**

Protect the earth—and your bank account. Think you can't afford to buy green products? Find coupons and comparison shop for everything from bamboo bath towels to biodegradable trash bags at pristineplanet.com.

*** THURSDAY, APRIL 29**

Spend less time in the kitchen by making dinner in a slow cooker. It uses less energy than a conventional oven. Try out one of the simple, delicious recipes at hj.com/slowcooker tonight.

*** FRIDAY, APRIL 30**

Plant a family herb garden. It's a great win-win activity: Your kids will connect with nature and feel a sense of pride watching their garden grow, and you'll always have fresh seasonings on hand.

DETOX YOUR CLEANING ROUTINE

Sure, harsh chemicals in household cleaners can make stains and grime disappear, but many planet-friendly products are equally up to the task—and they're a lot kinder to the environment.



Martha Stewart Clean wood floor cleaner leaves floors shiny—no filmy residue here—and the nontoxic formula is gentle on the finish.

Green Works natural bathroom cleaner, made by Clorox, has a fresh, mild scent, and its plant- and mineral-based ingredients are tough enough to tackle soap scum and rust.

Method laundry detergent is the most concentrated detergent on the market: One little 10-ounce recycled bottle plastic and less plastic and does up to 25 loads of laundry.

Arm & Hammer Essentials fabric softener sheets are free of petroleum-based softeners—the stuff that can leave residue on your clothes.

J.R. Watkins window cleaner relies on coconut oil to eliminate dirt and fingerprints.

Simple Green pet stain and odor remover is nontoxic, biodegradable and safe to use on almost any surface in your house. Available in dog and cat formulas.

Scotch-Brite Greener Clean soap-loaded scrubbers, made from recycled plastic and biodegradable soap, are the perfect tool for scouring pots and pans.

—Sonia Harmon