



Green Guide to Sustainable Living at San Diego State University





Sustainability at SDSU

Here at SDSU, we are committed to spearheading sustainability efforts and setting an example of leadership in the San Diego region.

Your voice matters! Several of SDSU's remarkable achievements such as the LEED Double Platinum Student Union, the establishment of campus bike paths and installation of hydration stations were made possible through the advocacy and support of students. We hope this green living guide inspires you to continue making a difference on our campus.

Discover how to engage in SDSU's sustainable efforts through clubs, organizations, academics, or by simply learning more about sustainability. We appreciate your dedication to making our campus greener!



Welcome to the **Green Guide to Sustainable Living** at SDSU!

The Green Guide to Sustainable Living – your ultimate resource for eco-friendly living on campus. Within these pages, you will find a plethora of practical tips and insights to seamlessly integrate sustainable living into your college experience.

From simple yet impactful actions to exciting opportunities to get involved in SDSU’s sustainability community, this guide empowers you to to actively contribute to making SDSU a greener, cleaner place to live and learn.

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Waste

What happens to your trash after you throw it away? There is no “away” when it ends up in the landfill. It can take up to a million years to break down and landfills also release greenhouse gases and toxic chemicals into the environment.

Waste Tips

Think reduce, reuse and recycle as the first steps to minimize waste

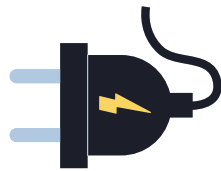
- Reuse scrap pieces of paper before recycling.
- Think before you print. If you do print, print double-sided.
- Thrift for clothes and items rather than buying something new.
- Choose reusable alternatives over single-use items.
- Decorate your room with DIY or thrifted home decor.
- Not sure which bin to use? Review the campus guidelines.



Scan QR Code
to view SDSU
Campus Waste
Guidelines

E-Waste

- E-waste includes:
 - Light bulbs
 - Electronics
 - Anything with a cord or battery
- Enter a service request in your housing portal for Special Pick-Up for Disposal, and we will collect your e-waste.
- Drop off used batteries in the battery collection bin near your community front desk.



Did you know?

Starbucks offers a 10¢
discount if you bring
in a reusable cup

Recycling

Recycling Tips

- Remove any food or liquid before you place items in the blue bin or recycling chute.
- Recycle plastic bottles, containers, lids and packaging with symbols ♻️ to ♻️ with the lid/cap on.
- Recycle clean aluminum foil.
- Break down your boxes before placing them in the bin.
- *Important*: Do not recycle flimsy plastic packing material or air pillows from your packages.

Give-It-Up Program

Give It Up is a long-standing donation initiative that helps to minimize excess trash that ends up in landfills during move-out. At the end of the year, donate unwanted clothing, books, bedding, household items and more to the Veterans Thrift Store by placing your items in the donation bins. Your items will be reused, support their efforts and will be kept out of landfills.

Reusables

- Using reusable items and alternatives instead of single-use items is often a cost-effective option that drastically decreases your waste over time.
- Use our campus’s many hydration stations to fill up a reusable water bottle.

You can also donate non-perishable, unopened food items to the San Diego Food Bank by placing food into the designated bin. Donating to the Give It Up Food Drive will support and feed the community and decrease food waste during move-out.





Composting

What Is Composting?

Composting is the process of breaking down organic waste such as food scraps into nutrient-rich soil that can be used to nourish plants. By composting, we can divert a significant amount of waste from landfills and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



48% of waste in landfills is food waste

Compost Bin Locations

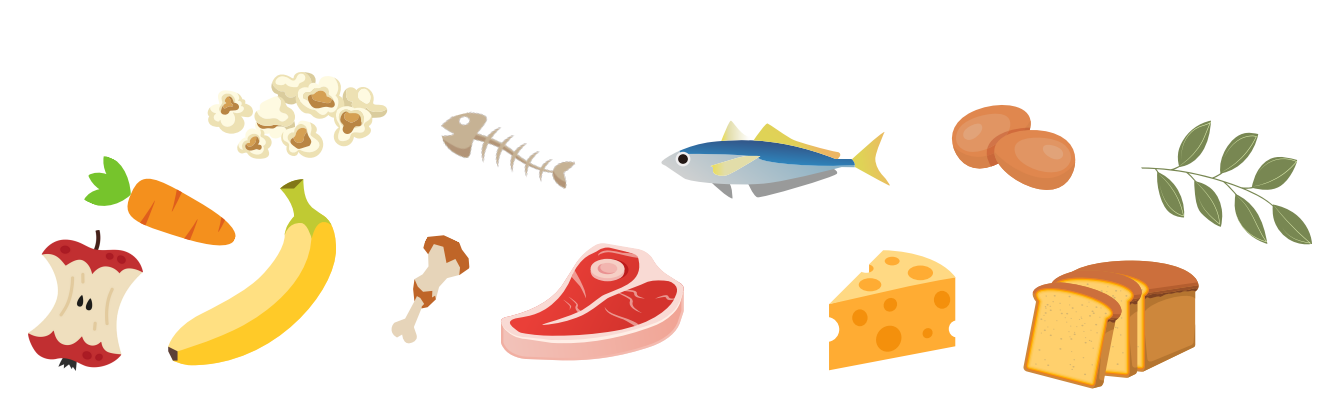
SDSU offers compost bins at multiple locations across campus, including the Student Union, Charles B. Bell Jr. Pavilion and in your residential community. Before throwing your food in the trash, look out for a nearby green bin.

Composting In Our Residential Communities

- We've teamed up with the Office of Energy and Sustainability to roll out a composting program across our residential communities! Look in your community kitchen for the compost stations.
- Not sure what's compostable and what's not? Check out these handy guidelines we've created for you to ensure the collection bins stay uncontaminated.



Scan the QR Code to view Composting Guide




Composting In Your Room

- Get your free compost caddy for your room, suite, or apartment! Visit your community kitchen's compost station, scan the barcode on the paper bag basket and fill out a quick form.
- Line your personal compost caddy with free paper bags from the compost station – paper is 100% compostable, as long as it's plastic-free.
- Empty your personal caddy into the communal bin weekly to prevent odors and be sure to keep your caddy clean!



Fun Fact



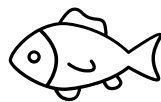
In spring 2024, our residential community donated a total of 5,306 pounds of food, which equates to 4,421 meals! Students also donated a whopping 82,550 pounds of unwanted items to the Veterans Thrift Store.

Food

Tips for Eco-Friendly Eating Habits

Increase

- Seasonal and locally produced fruit and vegetables.
- Plant based proteins such as nuts, seeds, grains and beans.
- Mindful eating - focus on what you are eating, where it came from and how it nourishes your body.
- Seafood that is caught or farmed responsibly and poses a low environmental risk. Search the [Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch List](#).



Reduce

- Dairy consumption.
- Red meat – if you eat meat, opt for chicken or turkey, which require less land, food and water. They also do not emit nearly as much methane.



- Food waste - take only what you can eat.
- Items in plastic packaging.

Beware of the “expiration” date!

- Before throwing out food, check to see if food has truly gone bad by using your five senses and best judgement.
- Sell by date: for sellers to know when to remove products from shelves.
- Best/use by date: the last date of “peak quality”. This does not mean the product is no longer safe for consumption.

Aztecs Rock Hunger



- Aztecs Rock Hunger is an annual campaign supporting the San Diego Food Bank and SDSU’s on-campus food pantry and Economic Crisis Response Team.
- In the month of October, you can donate excess funds from meal plans at the end of the night at SDSU markets, Starbucks and eateries. \$1 = 2 meals!

Edible SDSU

Did you know that SDSU has edible fruits that grow on campus? An [interactive food map](#) by Sustainable SDSU identifies all of the fruit trees on campus for anyone that wants a quick bite in between classes!



Scan the QR Code to view Interactive Food Map

Associated Students (AS) Food Pantry

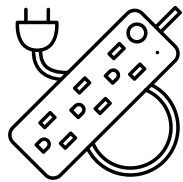
- [The Food Pantry](#) provides nutritious food and food program referral services for SDSU students experiencing food insecurity. There is no limit to how often you can come and all you need is your SDSUcard to enter.
 - Location: North-East Landing, Second Floor Aztec Student Union



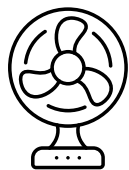
Energy Conservation

Easy Energy Conserving Tips

- Set your laptop and other electronics to energy saving mode.
- Turn off the lights whenever you leave a room, and use natural light whenever possible.
- Rather than plugging each cord into the wall, use a power strip to save energy. Turn the power strip off when you are not using it.



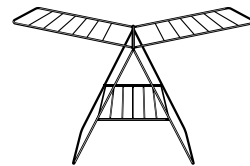
- Unplug electronics from the wall once they are charged.
- Use a personal fan instead of turning on the AC.



- Close your windows when the heat or AC is on.
- Use your window blinds/shades to help control the room's temperature.

Sustainable Laundry Practices

- Wash your clothes in cold water. It washes your clothes just as well and uses less energy.
- Use a drying rack instead of a dryer.
- Only wash full loads of laundry.



- Use concentrated, environmentally friendly detergent.



- Wash and dry your clothes outside of the peak energy hours of 4-9 p.m.

Fun Fact

You can save up to 20 gallons of water per load by waiting until you have enough clothes for a full load.



Products & Purchasing

Sustainable Products and Alternatives:

- Reusable dryer balls over single-use dryer sheets for the same effect. Dryer balls can be used hundreds of times.
- Avoid plastic wrapped products and shop in bulk.
- Buy toothpaste tablets instead of tubes.
- Swap disposable items for reusables such as razors.
- Select bamboo, wooden, and glass household products over plastic options.
- Look for products made from recycled material over those made with raw materials.
- Purchase shampoo and conditioner bars instead of bottled products.

Finding Eco-Friendly Alternatives

- Check out the eco-friendly products at the SDSU Bookstore.
- Farmers markets offer local produce, plants, clothing and more sustainably-grown items.
- Search “Refill bulk stores near me” to find current refill stores in San Diego where you can refill products such as shampoo, soap and more.
- While searching for products on Amazon, look for the leaf icon and label to identify products with sustainability features.

Every small purchase holds the potential for a significant, lasting impact on both your local community and the environment. Take proactive steps by seeking out sustainable options and alternatives when making your purchasing decisions.

Transportation

Sustainable Methods of Transportation

Explore the numerous sustainable methods of transportation that are available for on-campus students to travel around campus and San Diego.

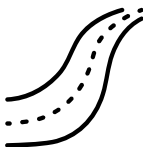
- Bike: Storage is available near your residential community. Around campus you will find bike racks and convenient bike lanes.
- Zip Car: Vehicle share on campus 24/7. Discounted annual membership fee, hourly rates and daily rates. Join in minutes and drive on demand.
[SDSU Zip Car Link](#)



- Metropolitan Transit System (MTS): Make use of our trolley system for easy transport all around San Diego. Monthly and semester passes are available via the [Aztec Parking Portal](#).
- Walk: SDSU is a walkable campus—enjoy the fresh air of sunny San Diego and walk to your next on-campus stop.
- Electric Vehicle (EV) programs: ChargePoint stations have been installed with lower pricing and offer student discounts.



- Through the Youth Program, students 18 and under can ride MTS and NCTD services for free!



- Bus: [Check out bus and trolley route schedules and stops.](#)



Scan the QR code to access an interactive campus transportation map that displays the locations of bike racks and lanes; bus, shuttle, and trolley stops; and rideshare pick-up/drop off.

Green Room Certification

What is Green Room Certification?

The Green Room Certification program is here to recognize your stellar sustainable living efforts! Get involved by completing the [Green Room Certification Survey](#) on the Housing website. Once you've finished your survey, we'll deck out your door, proudly showcasing your gold, silver, or bronze green room status! Join the movement as a trendsetter in sustainable living and let your green room shine as a symbol of eco-friendly excellence.

Our campus offers an array of opportunities for passionate students to become more involved with sustainability initiatives and projects!



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SDSU

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