**Rethink**

Ask yourself questions like: Do you really need this item? Can you borrow the item from a friend? Can the packaging be recycled? Where was it made? Is there something you could adapt to the needed purpose, or obtain from a waste free source like a garage sale, share shed or thrift store? Think about where products come from and where they go when you are finished using them. Your decisions can reduce the amount of waste you create.

***Become a "Waste Wise" shopper***  
  
DURABLE: Buy products that will last so that you do not need to replace them as often.  
LOCAL: Buy food, products and services that are locally grown; or produced as close to your home as possible.  
USED: Purchase used or reusable products. Often another person’s trash is just the treasure you were looking for. Think creatively.  
RECYCLABLE: Look for products that are recyclable and are produced with recycled content.  
PACKAGING: Avoid products with excess packaging. It is best to buy products with no packaging, or returnable, reusable or recyclable packaging. “Pure” packaging products like glass and metal are a better choice than composite products like tetra packs that are hard to recycle.   
SHARE, BORROW or RENT: Share or trade with others, use the library, rent DVDs and video games, etc.   
DIY (Do It Yourself): You can make a surprising number of things yourself from bread to laundry soap. Try it!   
GLASS: Choose glass over plastic.   
DISPOSABLE: Limit the number of disposable items that you purchase – paper plates, plastic cups, disposable cameras, paper towels and napkins, plastic cutlery, etc.

**Glass vs. Plastic**

Glass weighs more than plastic and therefore more energy is required to transport and deliver goods packaged in glass. However, glass has many other benefits that are not shared with plastic. Glass is inert and does not leach anything into food or drink when stored or heated. Glass is durable and items such as jars or bottles can be reused over and over. Glass can be recycled locally. Whereas, plastic must be shipped long distances to be recycled. **Optimally, choose locally made products packaged in glass.**

**If you must choose plastic remember:**  *Plastics #4, 5 and 2. All the rest are bad for you.*

* *Always check the number on plastic food containers (found in the recycling triangle symbol).*
* *Number 7 plastics can contain estrogen hormone* [*Bisphenol A (BPA)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bisphenol_A) *which is banned by Health Canada – choose BPA-free plastic.*

