

Eco-Friendly Autumn

Practical and easy ways to create a planet friendly Autumn.

Tutorials, recipes and suggestions to help you use, sort, borrow, swap, make and thrift your way to a low waste life.

First 10 pages FREE!

Full version is free to Patreons and the paperback is available on Amazon.



By Lisa Cole from www.less-stuff.co.uk and
Claire Lyons from www.thefrugalfamily.co.uk

About the authors

We both believe that little changes can make a huge difference to our lives and the planet.

Lisa lives with her teenager and too many cats.

She is an author, graphic designer and masters student who writes about gentle decluttering, simple living, saving money and being sustainable, she is not a minimalist!



www.less-stuff.co.uk specialises in....

- gentle decluttering for non minimalists
- eco-friendly living
- getting organised
- seasonal living
- making life simpler

**Less
stuff**
easy ways to find
the balance in life

Claire has four young children and runs two businesses from home - as well as managing a very naughty Labrador.

Her passion for living an ethical and frugal life in the real world is infectious.



www.thefrugalfamily.co.uk specialises in....

- entertaining kids on a budget
- eco-friendly family life
- mental health and wellbeing
- school holiday survival
- saving money

**The
Frugal
Family**
♥

Huge thanks to Lynne Jones who spent patient hours proofreading.



Contents

Autumn is a special time of year, when the heat and daylight slowly fade and the cooler darker nights bring freshness and calm. It's when we can harvest, appreciate, and get ready.

This workbook is filled with practical and easy ways to create an Eco Autumn, supporting you to move towards a sustainable, frugal and environmentally friendly life.

We have split the book into 5 practical sections, each with 5 ideas - something to suit everyone.

Use it / Sort it

Make Space for Winter - 4
Food and Menu Planning - 5
Autumn Home Maintenance - 7
Giving - 8
Upcycle Jeans - 9

Make it

Patchwork - 20
Store Cupboard Cold Cures - 22
Conker Washing Soap - 24
Hedgehog House - 25
Zero Waste Seasonal Party - 26

Borrow it

Equipment - 10
Foraging - 11
Seeds - 12
Books and Magazines - 13
Get Creative - 14

Buy it / Thrift it

Flasks - 28
Spring Bulbs - 29
Coats - 30
Hankies - 31
Memberships - 33

Swap it

Stuff - 15
Holidays - 16
Skills - 17
Plastic Free Living - 18
Jams and Preserves - 19

Bonus

Zero Waste Product Guide



Use it / Sort it

Make Space for Winter

As the leaves change colour and the days get shorter we tend to use and wear different things. Even with erratic weather patterns, there comes a time in the year when you know it is safe to put away sun hats and shorts. This seasonal changeover is a great time to really look over what you have used this year and decide if you still want to keep it.

Store and Rotate

Storing out of season items makes lots of sense. It gets them out of the way and you get a chance to check them over for needed repairs. Make sure things are clean, dry and well protected before you box them up. Protect from moths with cedar wood balls, chips or a few drops of essential oil on a scrap of cloth. Remember to label the box!

What can you get rid of?

It is a good idea to declutter summer clothing while you can still remember how hot it gets. Otherwise it is far too easy to get rid of something you might need next year.

Ask yourself these questions to help you decide:

Do I like it?

- Is it just plain ugly?
- Does it have a funny smell?
- Do I like the colour?
- Does the texture feel nice?

Do I use it?

- Is it 2 sizes away from fitting me?
- Have I used it in the past 3 years?
- Have I opened it recently?
- What is its hassle factor?

Will I ever finish it?

- Does it need repairs I am never going to get round to?
- Will I use it if it is mended?
- Do I have the materials to fix it?
- Is it a nasty tangle of stuff that I am never going to disentangle?

Why am I keeping it?

- Am I just keeping it because someone gave it to me?
- Am I keeping it in the hope it will have value one day?
- Is it a part of something else I lost a long time ago?
- Would something else I have do the same job as it?

Have I got more than one of them?

- Do I need that many?
- Is it cheap and easy to replace?

How does it make me feel?

- Does it have bad memories?
- Does it make me feel guilty?

**If you love it; keep it,
if you don't then ditch it!**

Use it / Sort it

Food Audit and Planning

Autumn is a wonderful time of year to have a good clean out, sort out and use up of foods, before planning what we may need to get through the Winter. It's also a good time to have a quick clean out before re-stocking...

Audit the Freezer

1. Audit the Freezer
2. Create a Meal Plan to best use up the freezer contents
3. Defrost the empty freezer

You can do the same for the fridge, and all the cupboards if you feel the urge...

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Shopping List
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

Food Waste Fridge Signs



Use it / Sort it

Autumn Home Maintenance

Stale smells:

Bicarbonate of soda is cheap and removes stale smells. Sprinkle it on carpets, mattresses and sofas and leave for a few hours before vacuuming off.

Mattresses:

Strip bed.

Sprinkle bicarb and Hoover top of mattress.

Turn and rotate mattress.

Sprinkle bicarb and Hoover other side of mattress.

Futon owners - it is a good idea to occasionally roll up your futon to stop it getting lumpy.

Gutters:

Check gutters for leaves and blockages that are easy to remove. Call in for some help if the gutters are too high for you. Blockages can cause big damp problems, so it is a good preventative action to keep them clean.

Carpets and Rugs:

Check for any loose threads and snip off before they become runs.

Use bicarb to freshen up any stale smells before hoovering.

If your rugs are small enough, take them outside and hang them over the washing line for an airing. You can give them a good thwack with a wooden spoon to get the dust out if you like.

If you have any stains, try mixing a tablespoon of bicarb with half a cup of white vinegar. Rub this into the stain, leave for half an hour then sponge off with warm water and an old cloth. Test on a hidden area first.

Clean lampshades:

A shake or a dust down of a lampshade makes a big difference to the amount of light that can get out. Be careful around electrics!

Test detectors:

Check carbon monoxide and smoke alarms. Replace if needed. If you are in the UK a lot of local Fire Brigades will fit free smoke alarms for you.

Wash the windows:

As the days get darker we want as much light as possible in our homes. I like to use scrunched up newspaper to clean my windows. Vinegar works well too.

Check winter bedding:

Half an hour spent mending now will save time and money in the future. Do your blankets have hems that are loose? Is there any stuffing coming out of a duvet? If you really don't want to sew you can use iron-on tape to fix hems and mend small holes.

Air heavy blankets and duvets when you get a sunny day.

Curtains:

Hoover heavy curtains

Wash net curtains and dry in the last of the sunshine if possible

Fridge/Freezer:

Dust or vacuum the back of the fridge - dust collecting on the cooling coils make them less efficient.



Use it / Sort it

Giving

The act of giving can be really good for you. When you help others, endorphins are released to make you feel happier. Altruism can make you feel less alone and help you to get your own problems into perspective too. Generosity does not need to be expensive - simply donating your unwanted items to people who might use them will help both you and the recipient.

You could also volunteer time or skills: for example, a number of projects start in the Autumn particularly with regard to homelessness.

Things you might consider sorting out, and donating what you don't need include:

- Coats - Age Concern have an annual collection
- Shoes/Boots/Wellies - see if you have a local Shoe Aid collection point (single shoes are also welcomed)
- Umbrellas
- Waterproof items
- Jumpers and warm clothes
- Hats, Scarves and Gloves

You may be able to knit or sew winter gear for organisations that support people all over the world living outside.

Other Useful Gifts:

- Make a bag for the homeless: toiletries, wash bag, make-up/aftershave, book, mirror
- Donate to a foodbank
- Children's books to local school or nursery
- Musical instruments
- Costumes to local Am Dram/Theatre Group
- CD's/DVD's to prison
- Books to hospital wards
- Toys to Kids A&E
- Magazines to GP/Dentist Surgery



Use it / Sort it

Upcycle Jeans

There is a lot you can do with an old pair of jeans and some things don't even need sewing.

Aprons

Cut the waistband off at the front but leave the back pockets—wear it backwards with the pockets in front for a very handy apron.

Draft Excluders

Cut one leg off and tie string round the cuff. Stuff with the rest of the jeans and tie the other end with string to make a no sew draft excluder.

Bottle Holders

With a little bit of sewing the legs can be made into reusable bottle holders that make great gifts.

Charging Stations

Back Pockets make remote control holder/phone holder while charging. Leave an inch of fabric at the back of the pocket and cut a wide slit to make a handle that goes over the socket.

Pot holders

Denim is thick enough to use as a pot holder or table protector.

Coasters

Cut long leg seams out and roll up to make coasters.

Rugs

Zig zag or blanket stitch patches together to make sturdy sofa covers that are great for protecting against claw marks and moulting.



Borrow it

Equipment

There are so many items that we buy but don't end up using - either they are too much trouble, too complex to use or we only need them once for a specific job.

We may also have equipment we only need once or twice a year, that we then have to store for the rest of the time.

Instead of buying something new, consider if there is a more frugal and sustainable option for example:

Could you borrow one to 'test drive' and see if you actually use it e.g. a waffle maker?

See if one is available on local free/recycling site or ask for one.

Could you rent what you need e.g. carpet cleaner?

Do you have a local Electrical Library for borrowing small electrical items?

Do you have a local Repair Cafe that may be able to fix something for you?



Could you buy the item as part of a group (family or friends or neighbours) and share it as needed?

You could set a trend by offering to share items you may have but don't use very often... such as a carpet cleaner, food processor, steam cleaner, sewing machine, hedge trimmer, wheelbarrow, drill, sander/DIY stuff, roofbox, tent/camping equipment.

Borrow it

Foraging

The safest way to forage is to stick to things you recognise. Don't take risks and check online or with a few friends if you are in any doubt. If you get the foraging bug (and you are an early riser) there are many fungi foraging courses around the country. Learning from an expert will keep you safe. Remember the basic rules of picking above dog wee height and being careful around roads.

Blackberries

Easy to spot, delicious in crumbles and made into jam. If you don't want to use them at once, spread them out on a baking tray on some baking paper and freeze.

Once they are solid you can tip them into a bag or Tupperware box.

Sloes

Not to be eaten raw, the Blackthorn fruit is so easy to turn into Sloe Gin, which makes a brilliant present ready in time for Christmas. Put the sloes in a large jar and pour over gin and a little sugar. If you freeze and defrost the sloes first you won't need to prick the skins.

Hazelnuts

You may think that there are no hazelnuts this year but try looking under the leaves! You can eat hazelnuts when the outer shell is green too.

Rosehips

Packed with vitamin C and easy to spot. Little red berries are best turned into a cordial to get you through winter colds. Pick after the first frost for the best taste.

Apples

Apples grow all over the place. They line old railway tracks, apparently grown from apple cores thrown out of passing trains decades ago. If you are scrumping just check with the landowner first; often they are grateful for windfalls to be taken away and they make fantastic chutney no matter what variety the apple is.

Chestnuts

Spiky little pom-poms contain delicious sweet chestnuts. Horse Chestnuts or Conkers have smoother casings with just a few blunt spines, these are not edible but can be used to wash clothes if you grind them up!

Sweet Chestnuts are encased in hard spiny coverings and can be roasted or boiled when they are split open.

don't eat conkers!



edible chestnuts

