I'd like to help the environment but my travel coffee mug stinks

The disposable coffee cup. Have you ever really thought about it? Probably not. Yes, they are convenient. Coffee tastes great out of a nice, clean cup. However, disposable coffee cups have a detrimental impact on the environment.

It is estimated that Americans dispose of billions of paper and foam cups each year, said Ilsa Hershey, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension assistant state specialist, solid waste management programs.

“Unfortunately, a very small percentage of disposable cups are made from recycled materials,” Hershey said. “In addition, no recycling programs in the U.S. accept soiled foam cups for recycling. Paper coffee cups are typically coated with plastic, which makes them difficult to recycle or compost.”

It is not only the cups that are a problem. Adding to the volume of disposable cups are the endless plastic lids and paper sleeves that come with most cups, or the practice of stacking two cups to contain hot liquid. It all adds up to a lot of waste. Hershey said 2.17 million tons of paper and plastic cups and plates were discarded in 2007.

“The production of paper or foam cups involves the harvesting or extraction of virgin materials, the manufacture and distribution of the cups along with disposal,” Hershey said. “Although there are adverse effects through manufacturing ceramic or glass mugs, it’s a one-time process, whereas disposable must be made repeatedly. In addition, foam cups discarded in the environment last for an undetermined amount of time and eventually break down into smaller pieces that endanger wildlife.”

Each year the amount of disposable coffee cup waste increases. How much longer can our environment absorb the resulting waste, pollution and resource and energy use?

“Using disposable cups day in and day out is hardly a sustainable practice,” said Gina Peck, Extension consumer and housing specialist. “It’s much more environmentally friendly to use a reusable coffee cup or travel mug. Drinking from a clean, reusable cup will give you the same satisfaction as drinking from a clean disposable cup.”

The Soap and Detergent Association offers some great tips for keeping that reusable cup clean. To clean reusable plastic cups, check to see if it is dishwasher safe. If not, hand wash, but not with abrasive cleaners. These can scratch the cup and make it more likely to remain stained. Instead, soak the cup in a water and bleach solution to get rid of all odors and stains.

“Consumers can clean the cups with a paste of baking soda and water,” Peck said. “Rinse your cup after each use and wash it as soon as possible. If you can’t get your day started without a cup of joe in the morning, consider using a reusable cup. This will go a long way to reducing the number of disposable coffee cups that find their way into our already overcrowded landfills.”
### Quick ABC’s of Photography

**Follow these ABC’s of fun photography** to capture adorable, memorable details – big and small – that make an event or image special. Below is an easy-to-follow “Alphabet Soup” of techniques and tips that work just as well for special events as for everyday photo opportunities. If you try one or two new ideas each time you break out the camera, you will soon find yourself snapping photos in exciting ways. People will be amazed at the sweet emotions, beautiful images, and fun moments you capture with expert photography.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: <strong>Angles</strong></th>
<th>M: <strong>Mirrors</strong> For a fun and unusual effect, shoot what you see in mirrors, shot windows, calm water, or other reflective surfaces.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B: <strong>Backlit</strong></td>
<td>N: <strong>Natural Light</strong> The sun’s warm glow (especially in early morning and late afternoon) is the most flattering light for your subjects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C: <strong>Chronology</strong></td>
<td>O: <strong>Outdoors</strong> Catch your subjects against beautiful, natural backdrops, but don’t let the scenery overpower the subjects in your photos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D: <strong>Diagonal Lines</strong></td>
<td>P: <strong>Playtime</strong> For best results of action shots, such as a game of tag, use 400-speed film or 800-speed film.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E: <strong>Everyone</strong></td>
<td>Q: <strong>Quick</strong> Be quick with your camera, you don’t want to miss a thing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F: <strong>Frames</strong></td>
<td>R: <strong>Reactions</strong> Keep your camera ready as your subject opens a present, enters a surprise party, or is reunited with loved ones after a long absence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G: <strong>Groups</strong></td>
<td>S: <strong>Self timer</strong> Use this nifty feature to include yourself in at least a couple of your group photos!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H: <strong>Hands</strong></td>
<td>T: <strong>Toys</strong> When they’re engrossed in a game or toy, children will ignore your camera and let you take completely candid shots – this works well with grown-ups and their “toys” as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I: <strong>Individuals</strong></td>
<td>U: <strong>“U”</strong> shouldn’t always be the one with the camera! Pass it off to a friend, spouse, or child for a few shots from a different perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J: <strong>Juxtaposition</strong></td>
<td>V: <strong>Values</strong> Show your family’s faith, hope, charity – whatever values you hold most dear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K: <strong>K-9’s and Kittens</strong></td>
<td>W: <strong>Weather</strong> The weather and your family’s reactions to it – shoveling snow, splashing in the rain, braving a heat wave – add great interest to your photos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L: <strong>Little Details</strong></td>
<td>X: <strong>“X-treme” Close ups</strong> Get close enough to see those freckles and smudges on children’s faces.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### Organizing Kids’ Rooms

**Q – “How can I get my kids’ rooms organized? I have three kids and there seems to be more stuff than we know what to do with, which makes it hard to get them to clean their rooms.”**

**A – You can create a night table and storage container for out-of-season clothes or linens all in one:** Buy a metal or plastic 40-gallon garbage pail. Have a round plywood top made for it, and cover it with a circular cloth that hangs all the way to the floor. If kids are very little, you may even want to place a piece of vinyl over the top of the cloth to keep it clean and protect against spills.
Storage boxes sold as office supplies made an inexpensive alternative. They’re uniform in size, and for a decorator look, you can just cover the front with contact paper or wallpaper.

One way to get rid of old art projects – which get creased and yellowed and take up a lot of storage room – is to make a big display at the end of the school year and videotape the “art show” to look back on.

There are also many plastic storage units on the market. Take a look and see if you can find some that will work to keep the kids’ toys and clothes organized.

---

**Clutter Control**

Because clutter attracts dust, every room should be as clutter-free as possible. Controlling clutter may help reduce asthma attacks. To achieve this, work one room at a time. **Start by taking everything out of the closet, dresser, shelves, and under the bed or sofa.** Separate things into distinct piles, such as clothes, shoes, toys, books, etc. Get rid of anything that is no longer used.

Next, **reorganize storage areas so that similar items are together.** For example, keep school supplies near the desk or table where children do their homework, videos by the VCR and toys in the play area. Be sure children’s things are in places that are easy for them to reach.

Wherever possible, store items inside drawers, closets, covered boxes, or plastic containers so dust won’t collect on them. Label the containers so everyone knows where things belong. Review the clutter plan with all family members, especially children. Work with them to develop the habit of putting things back before getting something else out.

---

**Wanting to Redecorate But Can’t Afford It?**

The cheapest and most successful change in a room can be made simply by changing the color of the walls. Painting will give the walls a new, bright look, and if you change the color, the walls will make all your furnishings look new and different. If you paint with a color similar to the paint already on the walls, there will be no need for a second coat.

There are three basic types of paint: oil base, alkyd, and latex. Both oil base and alkyd are solvent soluble, so a volatile solvent must be used to thin the paint and to cleanup. Latex paint is water soluble, so it can be thinned and cleaned up with water. It is easy to use, dries fast, and there’s no paint smell.

---

Enamel is tough, highly washable finish, especially useful where there’s lots of grease or dirt. Enamels can be found in both solvent soluble, and water-soluble formulas.

Flat latex is best used in dining rooms, living rooms, and bedrooms. Oil base or latex enamel is necessary in kitchens and bathrooms where there’s more grease and moisture in the air. Doors and trim need a durable, washable finish, so oil base enamel is the best choice.

Use a natural bristle brush with oil base paints only. A synthetic filament brush can be used with either oil or water base paint. One gallon of paint should cover 400 square feet.

Use masking tape to cover woodwork. Use a brush to paint in small spaces and near edges. Use a roller for the walls.

**HAPPY PAINTING!**

---

**Glaucoma**

By L. Mitchell Clary, O.D.

Glaucoma can be described as “The Thief of Sight” because, many times, there is significant damage to the eye before the problem is identified. Glaucoma damage is irreversible and, if left untreated, may eventually lead to blindness.

Glaucoma is a chronic, progressive condition of the optic nerve. The optic nerve carries visual information from the eye to the brain, allowing a person to see the world around them.

Glaucoma is a process that erodes the fibers that comprise the optic nerve, resulting in loss of peripheral vision, or blindness.

Approximately 3 million people in America have glaucoma, but only half of those know they have it. Certain risk factors increase one chances of developing the condition.

- **Age.** Older people are at a higher risk for glaucoma, but approximately 1 out of every 10,000 babies born in the U.S. is born with glaucoma.
- **Race.** African-Americans are 4.7 times more likely to have glaucoma than Caucasians.
- **Family History.** Diabetes, high blood pressure, etc.

When diagnosing glaucoma, we must take into account the risk factors as well as the appearance of the optic nerve, which is part of a dilated eye exam. Functional testing of the optic nerve can be performed through a visual field test. This test determines the extent and sensitivity of the peripheral vision, thus evaluating the health of the optic nerve. Technology can
now measure the thickness, in microns, of the individual fibers of the nerve. This is done in the form of scanning laser ophthalmoscopy, used to detect and monitor progression of glaucomatous damage.

Therapy is available that is intended to prevent progression of the condition. Most cases of glaucoma are managed successfully through the application of eye drops. Topical eye drops are designed to lower or control the intraocular pressure in the eye. Surgical procedures do exist but are usually reserved for cases that are unresponsive or uncontrolled by medications. Relatively non-invasive laser procedures are used as excellent adjunct therapy to the medications. One such procedure is Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty (SLT), a safe, simple in-office laser procedure that can help fluids drain out of the eye, reducing the pressure in the eye that can cause damage to the optic nerve and loss of vision.

**Test Your Summertime Safety Knowledge with this True or False Quiz**

Springtime’s here, and warm weather has finally arrived. Time to stash your heavy clothes and break out your shorts and T-shirts; picnics and barbecues are just around the corner. Might be time to do a little yard work around the house, too…

But before you can crank up the power tools or head for the beach, take this short True or False test from the Leviton Institute to bring you up to speed on summertime safety.

1. **True**. While wood normally doesn’t conduct electricity, damp wood can, with shocking (and possibly fatal) results. Always keep ladders, whether wood, fiberglass, or aluminum, a minimum of 10 feet away from power lines.

2. **False**. Circuit breakers trip to prevent a current overload from starting a fire in your electrical circuits. While current leaking from an outdoor power tool through you may be nowhere near enough to trip a breaker, it can still give you a potentially lethal shock. A GFCI will prevent that from happening, which is why they’re required on all outdoor outlets.

3. **True**. Hard to believe, but lightning can travel sideways as much as 10 miles, leaving you in real danger even though the sky above you is clear blue. Remember the “30/30 rule”: if less than 30 seconds passes between lightning and thunder, head for shelter, preferably in a sizable structure like a large building, and don’t go out until 30 minutes after the last lightning or thunder is seen or heard. By the way, don’t forget your pets; they’re just as vulnerable to lightning as we are.

4. **True**. It’s important to use the appropriate length and thickness of extension cord to provide enough current for your leaf blower, lawn mower, or hedge trimmer (the amperage is usually displayed somewhere on the tool itself). Too little current can damage the motor, and create a fire hazard. And always check that the cord is rated for outdoor use.

5. **False**. Avoid this practice, called “backfeeding,” at all times. It bypasses your house’s protection circuits, endangering you, your neighbors, and any utility workers in the area. Plug appliances, lights, extension cords, etc. directly into the generator. But don’t use generators indoors. They produce Carbon Monoxide (CO), which can quickly build up to poisonous levels in enclosed areas.

---

**The OSU Extension office will be closed on Monday, May 31st for Memorial Day**
The Power of Fresh Herbs

Fresh herbs have a captivating aroma and flavor that dried herbs just cannot match. Try any of the following popular varieties and we guarantee you will taste the difference.

To make using fresh herbs easier, there are also some suggestions for fantastic food ideas that really showcase their strengths. Plus, the tips and suggestions for preparation and storage will help you easily preserve that first-day freshness well into the future.

Selection & Storage

- Select brightly colored herbs with fresh, fragrant leaves and firm stems.
- To keep herbs fresh, wash and refrigerate in a resealable plastic bag between two paper towels for up to a week. You can also stand a bouquet of herbs in a glass of water and cover loosely with plastic wrap. Refrigerate up to a week, changing the water once or twice.
- Freeze fresh herbs to enjoy them all year long. Wash, dry and strip leaves from stems. Fill ice cube trays halfway with leaves. Add enough water to cover; freeze. Pop out frozen cubes and store in freezer bags. Freeze up to 6 months.

Preparation

- Wash herbs just before using and blot dry with paper towels.
- To remove tough rosemary stems, hold the top of the stem in one hand and strip off leaves with the fingertips of the other hand.
- To thinly slice fresh basil or mint, stack several leaves. Roll lengthwise into a cylinder and cut crosswise to form thin strips.
- Add fresh herbs near the end of cooking or sprinkle over food just before serving to preserve flavor. Remember one Tablespoon fresh herbs, equals one teaspoon dried.

How to Use

Each herb has a distinctive flavor that makes it an ideal partner for certain foods. Here are some serving suggestions:

**Mint** ~ is a blast of refreshing “minty” flavor which complements both sweet and savory dishes.
- Garnish fruit salad or lemonade drink mix with a fresh mint sprig.
- Stir chopped mint into prepared rice.

**Oregano** ~ dainty leaves add a rich, spicy kick to tomato sauces and Greek dishes.
- Stir oregano into tomato sauce or sprinkle on pizza.
- Toss hot vegetables with Italian dressing then stir in oregano.

**Rosemary** ~ the woodsy flavor and aroma of these silver-green leaves goes well with meat and potatoes.
- Stir into soups, sauces and marinades.
- Add to ground meat along with shredded cheddar cheese before shaping into burgers or meatloaf.
- Add 1 TBSP to potatoes coated with dressing for flavorful roasting.

**Basil** ~ these shiny green leaves add a sweet, peppery flavor to Italian dishes from pasta to pesto.
- Add to creamy dips, eggs and cheese dishes or sprinkle on salads for fresh flavor.
- Stir chopped basil and parmesan cheese into melted butter and toss with popped popcorn.

**Parsley** ~ this versatile herb adds a fresh taste to any dish and provides a colorful garnish.
- Blend ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley with ½ cup softened butter and refrigerate several hours. Melt over cooked vegetables or spread over warm breads and rolls.
- Decorate meat platters and dips with a sprig of parsley for a festive look or sprinkle chopped parsley around the rim of a dinner plate.
**Revitalized Homemade Ice Cream**

**Safety First:** This is a typical cooked custard ice cream because the egg mixture is cooked before freezing. The cooking step will destroy any salmonella bacteria that might be present in raw eggs. If your favorite homemade ice cream recipe uses raw eggs and you don’t want to convert it to a cooked custard ice cream, substitute whole liquid pasteurized eggs available from some supermarkets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Lower Fat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 cups sugar</td>
<td>2 cups sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¼ cup cornstarch</td>
<td>¼ cup cornstarch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¼ teaspoon salt</td>
<td>¼ teaspoon salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 cups whole milk</td>
<td>4 cups 2% milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 eggs, beaten</td>
<td>4 eggs, beaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 tablespoons vanilla</td>
<td>2 tablespoons vanilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 cups whipping cream</td>
<td>4 cups half and half</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mix sugar, cornstarch and salt in the top of a double boiler. Gradually blend in 4 cups milk. Cook over hot water, stirring occasionally until thickened, 12 to 15 minutes. Stir in a small amount of the hot cornstarch mixture into the beaten eggs, then stir the eggs into the remaining cornstarch mixture. Continue cooking, stirring constantly 4 to 5 minutes longer, or until mixture is about the consistency of pudding. Chill thoroughly. This step is essential for a smooth ice cream. Stir in vanilla and remaining milk or cream. Pour into a 1 gallon ice cream freezer and freeze according to manufacturer’s directions. Remove dasher, add mixture of ice and salt to freezer, if needed, cover with heavy blanket and allow ice cream to harden about 2 hours.

Yield: About 1 gallon in a standard ice cream freezer, 32 ½-cup servings. Approximate nutritional values per servings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Recipe:</th>
<th>Revitalized Recipe:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>182 calories</td>
<td>115 calories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 grams fat</td>
<td>5 grams fat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61% calories from fat</td>
<td>36% calories from fat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72 mg cholesterol</td>
<td>41 mg cholesterol</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kay County Cooperative Extension Service
PO Box 430, Courthouse Basement
Newkirk, OK 74647-0430