

Where to donate, recycle, and sell your castoffs so they do some good

1. **STUFFED ANIMALS:** send them to SAFE (www.stuffedanimalsforemergencies.org) which donates gently used stuffed animals to homeless shelters, hospitals, and emergency aid workers. Paramedics often give the soft toys to kids they meet on their calls.
2. **WOOD PLANKS, CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:** Reclaimed wood is in demand for use in eco-friendly construction projects. Log on to www.planetreuse.com to offer up detritus produced by your home renovation, including lighting fixtures and garden furniture, to other builders or homeowners.
3. **WEDDING DRESS:** Is your daughter really going to wear it? Rather than wait 30 years to find out, donate your gown to Brides Against Breast Cancer, a program that sells new and used dresses to help fund the wishes of metastatic breast cancer patients hoping to share memorable experiences with loved ones (www.bridesagainstbreastcancer.org).
4. **TOILETRIES:** Have you collected hotel shampoos and soaps? Clean the World will deliver them to areas beset with widespread and life-threatening communicable diseases, most of which can easily be contained through frequent hand-washing (www.cleantheworld.org).
5. **LITTLE MERMAID:** If your children have outgrown some of the DVDs they grew up with, consider sending them to Kid Flicks, an organization run by four sisters whose goal is a library of family-friendly movies for each children's hospital and pediatric department in the country (www.kidflicks.org).
6. **GARDEN PRODUCE:** If your green thumb produces greater bounty than you can consume, donate the excess through www.ampleharvest.org, which connects backyard gardeners to food pantries in their area. This organization even has an iPhone app.
7. **ART MATERIALS:** Creative Reuse Centers collected unexpected art supplies like old VHS tapes, cardboard tubing, wire hangers, paper scraps—and distribute them to artists. The centers are popping up across the country: the East Bay Depot for Creative Reuse in Oakland, California; the Scrap Exchange in Durham, North Carolina; and Trash to Treasure in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, are just a few examples. Creative Reuse Centers in Texas include the Austin Creative Reuse Center in Austin and the Texas Art Asylum in Houston. And if you are overrun with Crayolas too stubby to color with, ship them off to www.crazycrayons.com, which recycles unusable crayons into brand-new ones.
8. **MOBILE PHONE:** Millions of working cell phones tossed each year in favor of newer models end up polluting our landfills with toxic materials or idling in drawers. Flipswap will give you cash for your phone and keep it out of the trash by reselling or safely recycling it. They will also plant a tree for every phone recycled. Since 2008 they have planted more than 400,000 trees. Print out a free shipping label at www.greenphone.com.
9. **CAR:** Habitat for Humanity's Car for Homes program accepts your unwanted vehicle (or practically anything else with a motor), sends you the receipt necessary to deduct it from your taxes, and even tows away your donation. Then they resell it to help build affordable housing in your area. Website: www.habitat.org/carsforhomes; or call 877-277-4344.
10. **OFFICE SUPPLIES:** Go to www.iloveschools.com, type in your zip code, and find dozens of nearby classrooms in need of pencils, paper, markers, notebooks, as well as furniture, books, backpacks, videos

cameras, fans, space heaters, and much more. Take a bite out of the average \$500 teachers are forced to spend out-of-pocket each year for these items.

11. **GOODNIGHT MOON, OR TWILIGHT:** The Children's Book Project has helped thousands of disadvantaged children learn to read by giving more than 1.5 million books to schools, homeless shelters, and community centers. Any gently used children's book can be donated, whether a board book for infants or a novel for teens. Website: www.childrensbookproject.org.
12. **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:** Music in Schools Today has been helping to provide music education to K-12 students in the San Francisco Bay area since 1983 and places some 200 donated instruments with needy schools each year through its Adopt an Instrument program. Website: www.mustcreate.org.
13. **YOUR GRANDMOTHER'S VINTAGE DRESSES. an OLD STAMP COLLECTION:** To maximize the good you can do with clothes or household items of potentially high resale value, log on to www.missionfish.org, which allows you to donate profits (or portions of profits) from eBay sales directly to a favorite charity—for instance, the Humane Society of the United States, which works to improve conditions for farm animals.
14. **MAGAZINES:** Once you have finished with your magazines, consider giving it to your local hospital; many stock their waiting rooms with magazines donated by members of the community.
15. **SHOES:** Soles4Souls has given away nearly 12 million pairs of shoes to people in need. Donations can be left in the organization's drop boxes nationwide or shipped to any of its three warehouses. Website: www.soles4souls.org.
16. **TECHNOTRASH:** If you have amassed a collection of mysterious PC cables, CD-ROMs and grubby old mice, check out GreenDisk, which safely recycles all of this high-tech junk—plus CDs, DVDs, VHS tapes, cassettes, and much more. Website: www.greendisk.com.
17. **SOCCER SHOES:** www.Peacepassers.org collects gently used soccer equipment—balls, shoes, team sets of last year's jerseys—and distributes it to communities in need around the world. Contact peacepassersinfo@gmail.com for information on a shipment location near you.
18. **ILL-FITTING JEANS:** Cotton from Blue to Green is a national recycling campaign that organizes denim drives with universities and stores like Guess and Gap. Donated jeans are reduced to their natural state—i.e., cotton—treated with fire retardants, and reborn as cutting-edge eco-friendly insulation for communities in need, like the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina. Check out www.cottonfrombluetogreen.org for a place to donate near you.
19. **JUST ABOUT ANYTHING:** Freecycle, an 8 million-strong “worldwide gifting movement,” reduces waste by connecting trash-bound household items—bikes, coffee tables, moving boxes, appliances, birthday party décor, and more—with local people who want them. If you would rather get a free bike than give one, you can to that too. Website: www.freecycle.org.