

Small-Mart Revolution Checklist

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ TWENTY-SEVEN ITEMS FOR CONSUMERS

BEST PLACES TO LOCALIZE SPENDING

(and often save money)

* All the items can be at least cost neutral with careful shopping, but items with an asterisk actually can yield significant household savings.

1 Localize Your Home*

Rent from a local landlord, take a mortgage from a local bank, or own your home.

2 Live in Local Style

Use local building materials for your house, with local architectural designs. Furnish with locally fabricated tables, chairs, beds, and couches.

3 Minimize Automobiles*

Ride your vehicle less by walking, biking, carpooling, living in “walkable communities,” and using mass transit.

4 Fuel Up Locally

Make your next car very fuel efficient. Use local biodiesel and ethanol as they become available.

5 Local Car Services

Find a good local mechanic whom you trust and who charges reasonably. Use the local car wash, local auto-parts store, and local insurer.

6 Eat Out Locally

Avoid chain restaurants, especially fast-food joints that addict children to high-fat, high-salt food.

7 Buy Fresh

Link up with local farmers and hydroponics operators for fruits, vegetables, and meats through farmers markets, co-ops, direct delivery services, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs. Rediscover local bakers, butchers, cheese makers, chefs, and caterers.

8 Support Local Retailers

Dump Safeway, Albertson, Wal-Mart, and even Wild Oats for local grocers. Be loyal to competitive local pharmacies, bookstores, hardware stores, coffee roasters, photocopy centers, and so forth.

9 Play Local

Minimize your passion for high-end electronics and television. Spend more time at local sports events, health clubs, playgrounds, pools, parks, games, films, plays, puppet shows, dancing, music, and debate leagues. If you must gamble, favor local lotteries, casinos, and horse tracks.

10 Heal Local

Use local doctors, dentists, therapists, acupuncturists, and nursing homes.

11 Live Healthy*

Emphasize local nutrition, exercise, emotional balance, and spiritual nurturing, all of which minimize the need for nonlocal pharmaceuticals.

12 Sign A Living Will*

Have the hard conversation with your family about end-of-life decisions to save them from expensive, nonlocal life-support systems.

13 Minimize Household Energy Use*

Add insulation, double pane the windows, buy compact florescent lights, replace the inefficient furnace and appliances, and do the 101 well-known items that cut purchases of nonlocal electricity, oil, and natural gas. Better still, put photovoltaics or a wind-electric generator on your roof and sell your electricity back to the utility.

14 Give Local

Target charitable giving at local causes & nonprofits.

15 Axe Bad Habits*

Minimize consumption of booze (except local micro-brews and wines), cigarettes, and naughty Internet sites, all of which are hard to localize.

16 Educate Locally

Support local public schools. If they are beyond repair, send your kids to local private schools.

17 Read Locally

Buy books from local authors or local publishers, sold at local bookstores. Advertise in the local papers. Become a regular at the local library.

18 Honor Junk*

Pare down your piles of “stuff” by repairing, reusing, and refurbishing. Substitute hand-me-down clothing, especially for young kids who never heard of Nordstroms. Give more gifts from the heart and fewer gift certificates to Best Buy.

19 Rent More*

Rent or lease more big ticket items, like Zip cars. Create neighborhood tool sheds for shared lawnmowers or snow blowers.

20 Recycle More

Send your paper, glass, and plastic to the local recycler not only because it’s good for the environment but also because it gives local industries affordable local inputs.

TOOLS TO ASSIST LOCAL PURCHASING**1 Directories of Local Business**

Create lists for your neighbors in print, online, in newspaper ads, and on coffee cups.

2 Directories of Local Products

Highlight, again in print or online, the many locally made goods or locally provided services that are available.

3 Local Labels

Develop a insignia of local ownership, so that you know if a store is locally owned or if a product is locally made.

4 Buy Local Days

Or weeks, months, or seasons, all of which can provide the basis for a buy-local campaign.

5 Local Currency

Mobilize your community to print its own “money” that can only be used by local businesses and consumers.

6 LETS

Create computerized trading systems, which are especially popular in Europe, that encourage locals to trade with one another without touching mainstream money.

7 Time Dollars

Set up a computerized system for tracking volunteer hours as a way of legitimizing and expanding such contributions for the community.