Go Green with Jared

The Complete, Practical Guide to Switching Your Home to Organic & Toxic-Free Products

By Jared Edward Harden. *Companion book to GoGreenWithJared.com* · Shop my Essanté Organics storefront · More books on Amazon

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Disclosures, up front and in plain English. I am an independent distributor for Essanté Organics. When you buy through my storefront, I earn a commission. That's how this small business works, and you deserve to know it before you read a single recommendation.

This book is not medical advice. Nothing in it is intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Dietary supplements are not evaluated by the FDA for those purposes. If you have a health condition, are pregnant or nursing, or take any medication, talk to your doctor before changing supplements — and never change or stop a medication except with your doctor. Product ingredients and certifications can change; the label in your hand always outranks this book.

Introduction: What "Going Green" Means Here — and What It Doesn't

Somewhere along the way, "go green" became a phrase that could mean anything, which is another way of saying it means nothing. On my site and in this book it means one specific, doable thing:

Gradually replacing the household and personal-care products you already buy with organic, toxic-free versions — at roughly the same total spending — until your home runs on products whose full ingredient lists you understand and accept.

That's it. Not a lifestyle overhaul. Not a purity contest. Not fear. You will not find claims in this book that any product heals anything, and if you ever see claims like that anywhere in this industry, I want you to get suspicious — Chapter 2 explains why.

What you will find is a system: how to read labels like someone who can't be fooled, a room-by-room switching plan, honest math on cost per use, and exactly how to order if you

decide my shop is where you want to buy. Every chapter works even if you never spend a dollar with me. That's on purpose. A guide you can only trust while he's holding the receipt isn't a guide.

How to use this book. Skim Part I so you can defend your choices at a dinner table. Then pick ONE chapter in Part II — whichever room bothers you most — and do only that switch for two weeks. Part III turns the habit into a 90-day plan. The reader who swaps one laundry product and sticks with it beats the reader who orders everything and burns out by March.

PART I — UNDERSTAND BEFORE YOU SPEND

Chapter 1: How to Read a Label Like You Can't Be Fooled

The front of the package is marketing. The back is the product.

"Natural," "pure," "green," "plant-based," "clean" — none of these words has a binding legal definition on most household products. Any manufacturer can print them. So the first skill of going green is ignoring the front of the bottle entirely and reading two things: the **ingredient list** and the **certifications**.

Certifications that are actually earned

A certification is only as good as the independent standard behind it. The ones worth trusting on sight:

- **USDA Organic** — a federal standard with inspection and certification behind it. On food and on personal-care products that qualify, it means the agricultural ingredients were grown and handled to that standard.
- **ToxicFree® (certified)** — a third-party certification used on products formulated without a defined list of synthetic ingredients. Look for the certification mark, not just the phrase.
- **Certified cruelty-free** (e.g., Leaping Bunny) — independent verification of no animal testing.
- **BPA-free packaging** — a narrow claim, but a verifiable one.

And the imposters: leaves and green color schemes (decor, not data), "derived from natural sources" (so is petroleum), "free of [scary chemical nobody uses anymore]," and unbranded seals a company awarded itself. When you see a seal you don't recognize, search the seal's name plus "standard." If there's no published standard and no independent certifier, it's a sticker.

The ingredient list, decoded in five minutes

Ingredients are listed in descending order by quantity. The first five ingredients ARE the product. A "botanical" cleanser whose first five ingredients are water, sulfate surfactant, synthetic fragrance, dye, and preservative is a conventional cleanser with a plant on the label.

Commonly avoided ingredient families — and I'm going to phrase this carefully, because honesty matters more than drama: these are ingredients that many label-conscious shoppers choose to avoid, whether for skin-sensitivity reasons, environmental reasons, or precaution while research continues. Choosing to avoid them is a preference you're entitled to; it is not a claim that any given product on a shelf will harm you.

- **Synthetic fragrance ("fragrance"/"parfum")** — a single word that can legally contain many undisclosed components; the most common reason sensitive-skin households switch first.
- **Sulfate surfactants (SLS/SLES)** — effective cleaners some people find drying or irritating.
- **Parabens and certain other preservatives** — widely used, widely debated; avoiding them is a common precautionary choice.
- **Phthalates** — often present via "fragrance"; a frequent target of avoidance.
- **Dyes** — cosmetic only; they clean nothing.

The going-green move isn't memorizing chemistry. It's this: **prefer products willing to disclose every ingredient, made of ingredients you can look up, carrying certifications someone independent verified.** Full disclosure is itself the feature.

The greenwashing test (use it on my products too)

Ask three questions of any product, including the ones I sell: (1) Is every ingredient disclosed? (2) Is at least one claim on the package independently certified? (3) Does the seller tell you who it's NOT for? A "no" on all three means walk away. I've built this book to pass its own test — you'll find "skip it if" notes in every product chapter.

Chapter 2: The Honest Case for Switching

You deserve the real reasons — strong enough to act on, stated without the exaggeration this industry is famous for.

Reason 1: Simplicity and disclosure. The average household runs on dozens of formulated products, many containing undisclosed fragrance blends. Switching to fully disclosed, certified

products means that for the first time you actually know what's in the bottle under your sink. That's not fear; that's the same instinct that makes you read a food label.

Reason 2: Sensitivity in the house. If anyone in your home has reactive skin or is bothered by strong scents, simplified and fragrance-free formulations are the standard first move — the reason "free & clear" versions of everything exist. (If someone has a diagnosed condition, their doctor or dermatologist leads; products follow.)

Reason 3: Precaution while the science evolves. Research on many synthetic ingredients is ongoing and genuinely unsettled. Regulators allow them; some researchers raise questions; studies continue. You do not need to wait for a scientific consensus to prefer ingredients with longer track records — that's the precautionary principle, and it's a legitimate personal standard as long as we're honest that it's precaution, not proof.

Reason 4: What goes down the drain. Everything you wash ends up in water systems. Biodegradable, plant-derived formulations are a footprint choice as much as a household one.

Reason 5: Voting with spending. "Transfer your spending" — the idea at the center of my site — isn't about buying MORE. It's about redirecting dollars you already spend on soap, laundry, toothpaste, and lotion toward the version of those products you'd rather see more of in the world.

And the honest concessions: certified-organic products usually cost more per bottle (Chapter 7 shows how cost per use narrows the gap, and where it doesn't). Performance is sometimes different — less foam, subtler scent — and the FAQ chapter covers the adjustment. And no product purchase substitutes for the boring fundamentals: sleep, food, movement, and a doctor you actually see. Anyone who tells you otherwise is selling too hard.

PART II — THE SWITCH, ROOM BY ROOM

Each chapter ends with a First Switch (the single highest-impact swap), a Full Convert list, and a Skip-It-If note. Do the First Switch, live with it two weeks, then decide.

Chapter 3: The Laundry Room & Cleaning Cupboard

Laundry is the smartest first switch in the whole house, for one reason: laundry products stay in your clothes and bedding, against your skin, around the clock. It's also the switch with the fastest verdict — two weeks of wash tells you everything.

How to run the switch: finish or set aside your current detergent (don't dramatic-purge; waste isn't green). Run the new liquid at the recommended dose — concentrated formulas mean the old "glug" habit over-doses and over-spends. Judge on clean, scent, and how skin feels after a week of washed sheets and shirts.

Cleaning cupboard math: most homes clean almost everything with three products — an all-purpose cleaner, a dish soap, and a scrub. A cupboard of twelve specialized sprays is marketing's victory, not cleanliness's. Converting three products is cheaper than it sounds when it replaces twelve.

- **First Switch:** laundry liquid. Find it in the Home & Yard category at my storefront.
- **Full Convert:** laundry liquid → dish soap → all-purpose cleaner → hand soap for the laundry/utility sink.
- **Skip it if:** you're bound to a specific detergent for work uniforms or specialty fabrics — convert bedding and casual loads first instead.

Chapter 4: The Bathroom Shelf — Personal Care

This is the room where "fragrance" hides most, and where product-by-product conversion works best because everything runs out on its own schedule. The rule of the bathroom: **replace at end-of-bottle.** As each item runs out, its replacement is the certified version. Zero waste, zero big checkout, full conversion in about ninety days by attrition.

Order of impact, based on skin contact time and coverage: body wash/shower gel → shampoo & conditioner → deodorant → toothpaste → hand soap at every sink → lotion/body butter.

Two honest notes from experience. Natural deodorant is the adjustment-period product — give it two honest weeks and expect a different experience than an antiperspirant, because it is one (deodorant addresses odor; antiperspirant blocks sweat — different products, different jobs). And toothpaste without high-foam surfactants foams less; foam was never the clean.

- **First Switch:** body wash — maximum skin coverage, daily use, instant verdict.
- **Full Convert:** the attrition plan above.
- **Skip it if:** your dermatologist has you on prescribed or recommended products for a specific condition — those stay, and everything else converts around them.

Chapter 5: Skincare & Cosmetics

Skincare runs on hope more than any aisle in the store, so this chapter holds the line hardest: pick products by disclosed ingredients and certification, patch-test anything new (inner forearm, 24 hours — organic doesn't mean allergy-proof; plant ingredients are still active ingredients), introduce ONE product at a time for two weeks so you actually know what's doing what, and distrust any skincare marketing — anyone's — that promises transformation on a timeline.

A simplified routine of cleanser, moisturizer, and sun protection, fully converted, beats a ten-step routine of half-understood products. Cosmetics convert last and by attrition, exactly like the bathroom shelf.

- **First Switch:** facial cleanser.
- **Skip it if:** you're mid-course on dermatologist-directed treatment — finish under their guidance first.

Chapter 6: The Kitchen — Nutrition Basics, Carefully Stated

This is the chapter where I'm most careful, because supplements attract the most overselling. Here is the compliant, honest frame:

Whole-food nutritional products — a pH-balanced protein shake, greens powders, reds (fruit) powders, daily supplements — are **concentrated food convenience**, a practical way to add fruit, vegetable, and protein nutrition to days when the ideal plate doesn't happen. They support general wellness the way food supports general wellness.* They are not medicine, they don't treat conditions, and they never replace either a varied diet or your doctor.

**These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.*

How to actually use them: pick ONE — most people start with either the shake (as a genuine meal replacement on rushed mornings, judged against what it replaces: if it beats the drive-through it's a win; it doesn't have to beat a home-cooked breakfast) or a greens powder (mixed into water or a smoothie on low-vegetable days). Run it thirty days consistently before judging or adding anything. Read the supplement facts panel exactly as you'd read any label from Chapter 1. And loop in your doctor first if you're managing any condition or taking any medication — supplements can interact, and your doctor knows your chart; I don't.

- **First Switch:** one item, chosen by your actual gap — protein/meals or produce.
- **Skip it if:** your doctor says skip it. That's the whole rule.

PART III — MAKING IT STICK

Chapter 7: The 90-Day Transfer-Your-Spending Plan

The whole system on one page:

Days 1–7 — The audit. Walk the house with your phone. Photograph every formulated product you own: laundry, cleaning, bathroom, skincare, kitchen supplements. List them in three columns: product, what you pay, how long it lasts. This is your current spending — the budget for everything that follows. Going green here means *redirecting* this money, not adding to it.

Days 8–21 — First Switch. One product, from whichever chapter matched your motivation. Two full weeks. Judge honestly.

Days 22–60 — Attrition conversion. As anything on your audit list runs out, replace it with the certified version. Rank upcoming replacements by skin-contact time and daily use. Keep the three-column list updated with new prices and lifespans.

Days 61–90 — The math and the decision. Compute **cost per use, not per bottle**: price ÷ number of uses (concentrates and powders routinely last far longer than their conventional counterparts, which is where the sticker-price gap narrows). Compare your converted monthly spend to your Day-1 audit. Keep what earned its place. Drop what didn't — including anything you bought from me. A shelf of products you resent isn't green; it's clutter with a certification.

The budget guardrail: if converted spending runs materially above the audit baseline and cost-per-use math doesn't close the gap, convert fewer categories. The 60% converted household that sustains it beats the 100% converted household that quits.

Chapter 8: How to Shop the Storefront (If You Choose To)

Everything above works with any certified products from any seller. If you'd like to buy through my shop, here's exactly how it works, including the parts sellers usually mumble.

Ordering. My storefront is essanteorganics.com/jharden79 — the "/jharden79" is what routes your order to my shop rather than to no one. Browse by category, check the full ingredient list on every product page against Chapter 1, and check out as a retail customer. Questions before you order — "which one for sensitive skin?", "what does this replace?" — come to me through GoGreenWithJared.com or my Work With Me page; answering them is most of what a shopkeeper is for, and "that one's not for you" is an answer I give regularly.

Customer options, stated straight. There is typically a simple retail purchase, and there may be discounted or wholesale-style customer options, sometimes involving a recurring monthly order ("autoship"). My standing rule for you: **never join a recurring program for products you haven't already bought, used up, and reordered by hand at least once.** A subscription should formalize a habit you already have, not create an obligation you have to grow into. If a discount program requires monthly purchases beyond what your house actually uses, the "discount" is a fee.

Money-back guarantee & returns. The company advertises a satisfaction guarantee window on products. Terms and windows change, so check the current policy on the official site at purchase — and if something disappoints you, tell me first; making it right is my job before it's a policy's job.

What I will never do from that shop: pressure a reorder, sign you up for anything you didn't explicitly choose, or pitch you the business opportunity because you bought soap. If you ever *want* to ask about the business side, ask me directly — and I'll start by showing you the company's official income disclosure statement, because that conversation deserves the same honesty this one got. The Go Green Get Paid training is there if you ask, and my business-side book is *The Organic Storefront*.

Chapter 9: FAQ & Troubleshooting

"It doesn't foam / smell as strong. Is it working?" Foam and heavy scent are added experiences, not cleaning power. Judge results: clean dishes, fresh laundry, comfortable skin.

"My skin didn't like something." Stop using it, patch-test in future, and remember organic ≠ hypoallergenic. Persistent reactions are a doctor question, not a product-swap question.

"This costs more than my old brand." Sometimes true even per-use. Then the honest options are: convert that category anyway as a values choice, convert fewer categories, or keep the conventional product without guilt. Green-on-a-budget is Chapters 3 and 7, not shame.

"Can these products help my [condition]?" No product I sell treats any condition, and I won't suggest otherwise — that's a conversation for your doctor. What I can do is help you find fully disclosed, certified products that fit preferences your doctor signs off on.

"Someone online said these products got them off medication." Please treat every claim like that — about any brand, from anyone, including enthusiastic customers of mine — as a red flag, not a testimonial. Medication decisions belong to you and your doctor, full stop.

"Is this one of those pyramid things?" Fair question; here's the fair answer. I run a retail shop: my money comes from customers buying products. Direct-sales structures CAN be run as recruitment schemes, and the way you spot one is that it leads with income instead of products and makes its money from sign-ups instead of customers. Judge my shop by that standard forever.

Conclusion: A Home You Can Read

The finish line of this book isn't a brand-loyal customer. It's a person who can pick up any bottle in any store, read the back, and know — independently, permanently — what they're holding. If I've done my job, you're now harder to sell to, including by me. That's the kind of customer I want, because that's the kind that stays for years and sends their friends.

Start with the laundry. Take the ninety days. And when you have a question a label can't answer, you know where I am: **GoGreenWithJared.com**.

— Jared

Appendices

Appendix A: Label-Reading Cheat Sheet (print me)

1. Ignore the front of the package.
2. First five ingredients = the product.
3. "Fragrance/parfum" = undisclosed blend.
4. Trust earned certifications (USDA Organic, ToxicFree®, Leaping Bunny); search unfamiliar seals + "standard."
5. Full disclosure is the feature.
6. No product treats disease — anyone claiming otherwise just told you everything.

Appendix B: Starter Paths by Budget

Minimal: laundry liquid only. Live with it a month. **Standard:** laundry liquid + body wash + hand soap — the three highest-contact products in the house. **Full First Order:** the Standard three + dish soap + one bathroom attrition replacement that's about to run out anyway. (Deliberately no nutrition products in any starter path — those enter one at a time, after Chapter 6, ideally after a word with your doctor.) All of these are at my storefront.

Appendix C: Questions Worth Sending Me

Which product replaces [specific conventional product] · unscented options for a sensitive-skin household · cost-per-use math on [product] before you buy · what a certification on any label actually certifies · current guarantee/return terms before an order. If I don't know, I'll say so and find out — that's the shop. Send them through GoGreenWithJared.com.

Appendix D: More from Jared

- **Shop and join:** Essanté Organics storefront · Go Green With Jared · Free team training
- **Companion books:** *The Organic Storefront* (running the shop) · *Wheels, Strings, and Sales* (mobile vending)
- **Kindle books:** All my books · *Gravely Disabled: A Memoir* · *Music Is As Easy As Writing* · *Denying Is Not Lying* · Reader's guide
- **Blogs:** Musicallessness · Daily journal · Art and photography archive
- **Music and video:** SoundCloud · YouTube

— End —