

NYYM Earthcare Working Group

Eco-spirit Mindful Living Suggestions

Save Water

1. When washing dishes by hand, don't let the water run. Fill one basin with wash water and the other with rinse water.
2. Dishwashers typically use less water than washing dishes by hand.
3. If your dishwasher is new, cut back on rinsing. Newer models clean more thoroughly than older ones.
4. Designate one glass for your drinking water each day, or refill a water bottle. This will cut down on the number of glasses to wash.
5. Soak pots and pans instead of letting the water run while you scrape them clean.
6. Use the garbage disposal sparingly. Instead, compost vegetable food waste and save gallons every time. Wash your fruits and vegetables in a pan of water instead of running water from the tap.
7. Don't use running water to thaw food. For water efficiency and food safety, defrost food in the refrigerator.
8. Install an instant water heater near your kitchen sink so you don't have to run the water while it heats up. This also reduces energy costs.
9. Keep a pitcher of drinking water in the refrigerator instead of running the tap. This way, every drop goes down you and not the drain.
10. Reuse leftover water from cooked or steamed foods to start a nutritious soup, it's one more way to get eight glasses of water a day.
11. Cook food in as little water as possible. This also helps it retain more nutrients.
12. Select the proper pan size for cooking. Large pans may require more cooking water than necessary.
13. If you accidentally drop ice cubes, don't throw them in the sink. Drop them in a house plant instead.
14. Collect the water you use while rinsing fruit and vegetables. Use it to water house plants.
15. When doing laundry, match the water level to the size of the load.
16. Washing dark clothes in cold water saves water and energy, and helps your clothes retain their color.
17. When shopping for a new washing machine, compare resource savings among models. Some can save up to 20 gallons of water per load.
18. Have a plumber re-route your greywater to trees and plants rather than the sewer line. Check with your city and county for codes.
19. If your shower fills a one-gallon bucket in less than 20 seconds, replace the showerhead with a more efficient model.
20. Shorten your shower by a minute or two and you'll save up to 150 gallons per month.

21. Time your shower to keep it under 5 minutes. You'll save up to 1,000 gallons per month.
22. Toilet leaks can be silent! Be sure to test your toilet for leaks at least once a year.
23. Put food coloring in your toilet tank. If it seeps into the bowl without flushing, there's a leak. Fix it and start saving gallons.
24. When running a bath, plug the bathtub before turning on the water. Adjust the temperature as the tub fills.
25. Upgrade older toilets with water saving models.
26. Turn off the water while you brush your teeth and save up to 4 gallons a minute. That's up to 200 gallons a week for a family of four.
27. Consider buying a dual-flush toilet. It has two flush options: a half-flush for liquid waste and a full-flush for solid waste.
28. Plug the sink instead of running the water to rinse your razor and save up to 300 gallons a month.
29. Turn off the water while washing your hair and save up to 150 gallons a month.
30. When washing your hands, turn the water off while you lather.
31. Take 5-minute showers instead of baths. A full bathtub requires up to 70 gallons of water.
32. Install water-saving aerators on all of your faucets.
33. Drop tissues in the trash instead of flushing them and save water every time.
34. Look for and purchase waters-saving toilets, sink faucets, urinals and showerheads. If your toilet was installed before 1992, purchasing a watersaving toilet can reduce the amount of water used for each flush.
35. One drip every second adds up to five gallons per day! Check your faucets and showerheads for leaks.
36. While you wait for hot water, collect the running water and use it to water plants.
37. Teach children to turn off faucets tightly after each use.
38. When the kids want to cool off, use the sprinkler in an area where your lawn needs it most.
39. Encourage your school system and local government to develop and promote water conservation among children and adults.
40. Monitor your water bill for unusually high use. Your bill and water meter are tools that can help you discover leaks.
41. Learn how to use your water meter to check for leaks.
42. Reward kids for the water-saving tips they follow.
43. Avoid recreational water toys that require a constant flow of water.
44. Grab a wrench and fix that leaky faucet. It's simple, inexpensive, and you can save 140 gallons a week.
45. Hire a Green Plumber to help reduce your water, energy, and chemical use.
46. We're more likely to notice leaky faucets indoors, but don't forget to check outdoor faucets, pipes, and hoses.
47. See a leak you can't fix? Tell a parent, teacher, employer, or property manager, or call a handyman.

48. At home or while staying in a hotel, reuse your towels.
49. Make suggestions to your employer or school about ways to save water and money.
50. Run your washer and dishwasher only when they are full. You can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.

Save Energy

51. **Get rid of incandescent light bulbs.** Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) have that cool curly shape and save more than 2/3rds of the energy of a regular incandescent. Each bulb can save \$40 or more over its lifetime. Read the box or instructions for safe disposal.
52. **Open windows rather than use air-conditioning**
53. **Seal air leaks.**
54. **Turn off electrical devices when not in use.**
55. **Only use the lights you need.** If you're using your computer you may not need your office lights on too. Shut off lights in unused rooms. Get your building to install occupancy sensors.
56. **Open windows rather than use air-conditioning-** If you have windows you can open, use them to intelligently save energy.
57. **Use energy-efficient windows, doors and skylights-** Even though the windows in an average house only cover about 5-10% of the outer surface, it is not uncommon that they are responsible for over 40% of the heat loss. A building's heating costs can therefore be drastically lowered if old windows are with poor energy ratings are replaced with energy-efficient alternatives. The same goes for doors and skylights as well.
58. **Lower the room temperature-** If you can handle it, lowering room temperature by only a degree or two, can result in big energy savings. If you set your thermostat lower at night and at times when you are not home, you can still end up saving a lot of money. Get a programmable thermostat that allows you to do these things. Programmable thermostats cost about \$50 or less and will save you that much or more in the first year.
59. **Get an energy audit** to note where your house is *leaking* energy. An expert performs a comprehensive home energy checkup: A series of tests to find out where your money is best spent to make your house more energy efficient.
60. **Reduce Junk Mail:** The energy used to produce, deliver and dispose of junk mail produces more greenhouse gas emissions than 2.8 million cars. Contact direct mail companies to remove your name from lists, including catalogs you specify.
61. **Monitor minimize energy usage** from computers and office networks, thus reducing carbon emissions.
62. **Weatherstripping, caulking and insulation** work together to save you energy, reduce drafts, improve the comfort of your home, make it quieter and help you save money.
63. **Determine if** you really need that extra refrigerator in the basement.

64. **Do you need to print documents?**-Consider saving a file on your computer, in a flash drive or emailing it.
65. **Double-side print documents** - Saves paper too.
66. **Bring your lunch to work** - Or walk to the local eatery instead of driving.

Reduce the Carbon Footprint of Your Travel

Automobile

67. **Drive better** - Studies have shown up to 30% of the difference in miles per gallon (MPG) is due to driving habits alone. You could save more than a ton of CO₂ per year by:
- Accelerating slowly and smoothly
 - Driving the speed limit
 - Maintaining a steady speed
 - Anticipating your stops and starts
68. **Maintenance** - Keep your car tuned up and running efficiently.
69. **More Maintenance** - Replace your air, oil and fuel filters according to schedule.
70. **Tires** - Keep your tires properly inflated (just this can save 400-700 pounds of CO₂ per year).
71. **Make your next vehicle a fuel-efficient one** - Check out EPA's Green Vehicle Guide or info on miles per gallon, meeting rigorous air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions standards when purchasing your next car.
72. **Household fuel efficiency** - If your household has two cars and one is used mostly for commuting, make the commuting car a real gas sipper if you can't for both.
73. **Think through how you could reduce the miles you drive:**
- **Combine your trip with another.**
 - **Carpool** - Just once a week saves 20%.
 - **Check out your transit options** - It may not work for you every time, but use it when it does.
 - **What about your bike?** - Get in shape, too!
 - **Only a mile?** - Walk.
 - **Think it through** - Do you need to take this trip at all?
 - **Get it on the Internet instead of your car.**
 - **Optimize** - Save this trip for later and combine with another.
 - **Telecommute** - Work from home occasionally.

Air / Train Travel

74. **Think about the trip** - Can you combine it with another or get more done on one trip?
75. **Train** - For some trips the train may be a good choice for you.
76. **Fly nonstop** - Nonstop flights are better than connecting flights (for many reasons).

77. **When you get there** - Do some research ahead of time to find better ground travel options (shuttles, transit, trains, etc.) at your destination.
78. **Lodging** - Ask your hotel about their environmental commitment and steps they're taking to save energy. Let the management know that you like to support businesses that adopt environmentally responsible practices (including reducing waste).
79. **While you're away** - Turn your stuff off. Turn down your thermostat and your water heater; turn off your electronics (even smarter: unplug them to protect from electrical storms). What's the point of things being on with no one there?

Consumption Habits

Only 40% of the average American's carbon footprint is due to their direct energy use. The other 60% is indirect; it comes from everything we buy and use—goods and services. Pay attention to your consumption and waste habits, and you'll find lots of opportunities to conserve.

80. **Reduce. Reuse. Recycle** – Aim for zero waste. Manufacturing products produces an average 4-8 pounds of CO₂ for every pound of manufactured product.
81. **Recycle your old electronic devices.** Recycle or sell your old phones and smartphones
82. **Buy locally if possible.** Shipping burns fuel. A 5-pound package shipped by air across the country creates 12 pounds of CO₂ (3 ½ pounds if shipped by truck).
83. **Eat less meat.** If you're already a vegetarian, you save at least 3,000 pounds of CO₂ per year compared to meat eaters. If you're not a vegetarian, just increase the number of vegetarian meals you eat each week by one or two. Also, poultry is less greenhouse gas intensive than beef.
84. **Eat the "Low Carbon Diet."** (See Low Carbon Diet Attachment)
85. **Don't waste food** - About one-quarter of all the food prepared annually in the U.S., for example, gets tossed, producing methane in landfills as well as carbon emissions from transporting wasted food.
86. **Simplify:** Simplify your life as much as possible. Only keep belongings that you use/enjoy on a regular basis. By making the effort to reduce what you own, you will naturally purchase less/create less waste in the future
87. **Determine Your Impact:** The Eco Footprint, Greendex and Water Footprint calculators give you a great way to determine how you are impacting the environment.
88. **Reduce Purchases:** In general, think before you buy any product - do you really need it? How did the production of this product impact the environment and what further impacts will there be with the disposal of the product (and associated packaging materials)? When you are thinking about buying something, try the 30-Day Rule -- wait 30 days after the first time you decide you want a product to really make your decision. This will eliminate impulse buying.
89. **Observe a weekly Eco-Day:** For one day, afternoon or hour a week, don't buy anything, don't use machines, don't switch on anything electric, don't cook, don't answer your phone and, in general, don't use any resources.

90. **Replace Disposables:** Wherever possible, replace disposable products with reusable ones (i.e., razor, food storage, batteries, ink cartridges (buy refill ink), coffee filters, furnace or air conditioner filters, etc.).
91. **Buy Used:** Buy used products whenever possible.
92. **Borrow From Friends:** If you only need something temporarily, ask if a friend or neighbor would loan it to you.
93. **Share With Friends:** Share things like books, magazines, movies, games, and newspapers between friends and neighbors.

Tree-Free Home

94. Replace paper napkins with cloth napkins.
95. Replace paper towels with a special set of cloth towels/napkins (or cut up old t-shirts for great towels) - store the used ones in a small container in your kitchen and just wash and reuse.
96. Purchase bleach-free, toilet paper that is made from the highest post-consumer waste content you can find (80% minimum).
97. If you print documents, print on once-used paper and/or bleach-free, recycled paper with the highest post-consumer waste content available.
98. Switch to a digital organizer for tracking your to do's and grocery lists.
99. Reuse envelopes, wrapping paper, the front of gift cards (as postcards) and other paper materials you receive wherever possible.
100. Read books, magazines, and newspapers from your local library or online (many have email newsletters)
101. Create and use note pads from once-used paper.
102. Leave messages for family members/roommates on a reusable message board.
103. Make your own cards/letters from once-used products or handmade paper or buy at thrift stores.
104. If you will be doing construction on your house, search out alternatives to using newly cut wood.
105. **Bulk Purchases:** Avoid products that are packaged for single use (i.e., drinks, school lunches, candy, cat and dog food, salad mixings, etc.). Instead, buy in bulk and transfer the products to your own reusable containers. Many health food stores have bulk bins where they sell everything from grains to cereal to cleaning products.
106. **Buy Only What You Need:** Buy only as much as you know you'll use for items such as food, cleaning supplies, and paint.
107. **Avoid Creating Trash:** Avoid creating trash wherever possible: when ordering food, avoid receiving any unnecessary plastic utensils, straws, etc. (ask in advance), buy ice cream in a cone instead of a cup, don't accept "free" promotional products, buy products with the least amount of packaging, etc.
108. **Shopping Bags:** While shopping, if you only buy a few products skip the shopping bag. For larger purchases, bring your own.

109. **Waste-Free Lunches:** Pack a Waste-Free Lunch whenever possible.
110. **Mug-to-Go:** Carry a mug with you wherever you go for take-out beverages.
111. **Cultivate Early Consumption Habits:** Educate your children about habits that promotes mindful consumption.