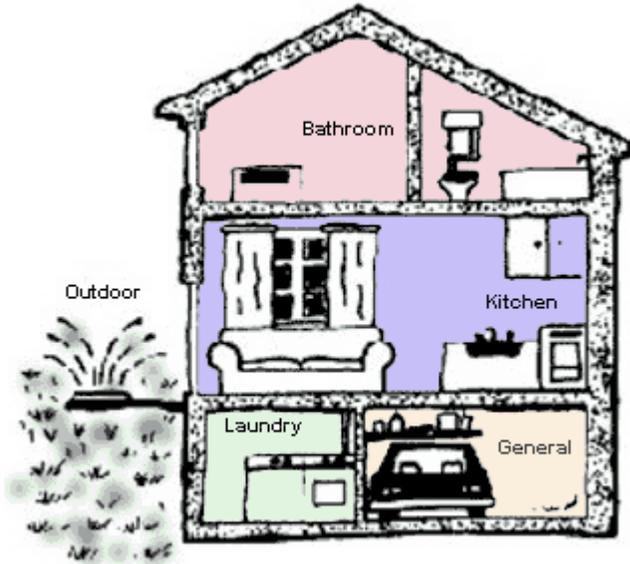


Household Conservation Tips



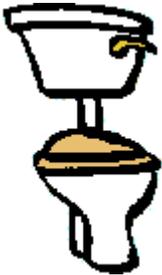
We drink very little of the millions of gallons of water that are treated every day for drinking. Generally speaking, less than 1% of the water produced by water treatment facilities is actually used for drinking. Though indoor water use statistics vary from family to family and around the country, they average out pretty reliably. Did you know that 26% of water used inside the home gets flushed down toilets; 20% is used in showers and baths; kitchen and bathroom faucets use 15%; cleaning and washing dishes consumes an additional 3%; the laundry room uses 23%; and leaks claim 13% of the water used in the home? Studies show that indoor water use can be reduced by almost 30% with water-efficient fixtures, dishwashers, and clothes washers. The Water-Efficient household uses 52 gallons of water per person, per day.

How to Save Water in the Bathroom

General:

1. Don't let the water run while brushing your teeth, shaving, or washing your face. You'll save between three and five gallons of water each minute your faucet is turned off.
2. If someone in your family likes to shave with water running in the basin, they probably use at least one gallon per minute, most of it wasted. A stopped basin needs one-half gallon or so of water for adequate razor rinsing.
3. Little leaks add up in a hurry! A faucet drip or invisible toilet leak that totals only two tablespoons a minute comes to 15 gallons a day. That's 105 gallons a week or 5,460 wasted gallons of water a year.
4. Obtain showerheads, faucet aerators and toilet flappers to help you use water efficiently

Toilets:



1. Stop using the toilet as an ashtray or wastebasket. Some people flush away tissues and other bits of trash in the toilet. Using a wastebasket will save all those gallons of water that otherwise go wastefully down the drain.
2. Most toilets installed before 1980 use 5-7 gallons of water per flush. Toilets installed between 1980 and 1993 use 3.5 gallons per flush. Toilets installed since 1994 use 1.6 gallons. In order to conserve water in your pre-1994 toilet you can install an early closing toilet flapper, which are available at participating local hardware stores.
3. Recycle and save water at the same time! Fill a plastic, quart-sized milk container with water and put it in your pre-1994 toilet tank, safely away from the operating mechanism.

The jug can displace 10 gallons or more of water a day. We do not recommend you use a brick to displace the water. Bricks eventually disintegrate in water and can jam plumbing lines. Also be careful not to place the bottles where they will jam the flushing mechanism, and make sure you don't displace so much water that you have to double-flush. Double flushing wastes more water than you would save.

4. Does your toilet ever make noises when it is not in use? A toilet with even a small leak can greatly increase your water bill. To check your toilet for leaks, put a few drops of food coloring in your toilet tank, wait 10 minutes. If, without flushing, the color begins to appear in the bowl, you have a leak, which should be repaired immediately.
5. How long should the parts in your toilet tank last? It depends. Replaceable parts such as flappers and washers or seals inside the refill valve may last several years. However, factors such as water treatment processes, toilet bowl cleaners, and high water pressure can cause parts to disintegrate much sooner. If you touch the flapper and get black "goo" on your hands, the flapper needs to be replaced.

Bath/Shower:

1. A typical bath takes about 40 gallons of water. Use the minimum amount of water needed for a bath by closing the drain first and filling the tub only 1/3 full. Remember to plug the tub before turning on water; that initial burst of cold water will be warmed later by adding hot water.
2. Limit the length of your shower to 5 minutes or less. Reducing showering time by 1 minute can save 1,000 gallons of water a year.
3. Check your showerhead. If your showerhead uses 3 or more gallons of water per minute, it is a prime candidate for replacement. A showerhead designed with conservation in mind will flow at a rate of 2.5 or less gallons per minute. These showerheads may be stingy with water, but they can still feel luxurious. In fact, the most advanced showerheads on the market—the ones that offer pulsating massages and precisely controlled temperatures—usually are low-flow nozzles.
4. If you can bathe your whole body with a showerhead that uses less than 2.5 gallons per minute, why use up to 7 gallons just to wash your hands in the sink? Unless you've installed inexpensive faucet aerators in your bathroom and kitchen taps, that's what you are doing. An aerator that supplies 2.5 gallons per minute should be fine in the kitchen. In the bathroom, a 1-gallon-per-minute aerator will provide plenty of water to brush your teeth, wash your hands or fill a glass for drinking.

How to Save Water in the Kitchen

1. Store drinking water in the refrigerator rather than letting the tap run, when you want a cold glass of water. Did you know that you could refill an 8-oz. glass of water approximately 15,000 times for the same cost as a six-pack of soda?
2. Little leaks add up in a hurry! A faucet drip that totals only two tablespoons a minute comes to 15 gallons a day. That's 105 gallons a week or 5,460 wasted gallons of water a year.
3. Don't let the faucet run when you scrub vegetables or prepare other foods. Put a stopper in the sink instead.
4. Do not use running water to thaw meat or other frozen foods. Defrost food overnight in the refrigerator or by using the defrost setting on your microwave.
5. Start a compost pile! Garbage disposals require lots of water to operate properly. Composting scraps will also reduce demand on our landfills and wastewater reclamation facilities.
6. Automatic dishwashers claim the most water in kitchens, about 14 gallons per load. Running dishwashers after 10:00 pm also helps reduce the demand on the water treatment facility during peak hours. For more information on water efficient dishwashers, try the Environmental Protection Agency's [Energy Star Dishwashers page](#).
7. Fill your dishwasher full because it will use the same amount of water for a normal cycle, whether it contains a full load of dishes or just a few items. Also, there's really no need to fully wash dishes before loading in the dishwasher. Just scrape the food off and let the dishwasher do the rest of the work.
8. When it's time to replace your dishwasher look for the most water efficient ones. A dishwasher with a water-saver function uses 8.5 gallons/load, which is 5.5 gallons per load less than a standard dishwasher.
9. If you wash dishes by hand, don't leave the water running for rinsing. If you have two sinks, fill one with soapy water and one with rinse water. If you have only one sink, gather washed dishes in a dish rack and rinse them with a sprayer or a pan full of hot water.



How to Save Water in the Laundry Room

1. Use full loads of laundry whenever possible. Each load of laundry uses between 27 and 54 gallons of water.
2. Most washers now offer preset levels for small, medium, and large loads, so you can select the appropriate water level for the size of your laundry.
3. For hand laundering, put a stopper in the washtub for both wash and rinse. Don't let the faucet run.
4. When it's time to replace your washing machine look for the most water efficient ones. A water efficient washing machine can save as much as 7,000 gallons per year.



General

- Don't water until plants need it. That may sound strange, but far more plants die from over-watering than under-watering. How do you know plants need water? The best way is to let your finger be the guide. Dig down several inches near the base of the plant. If the soil is bone dry, that's your cue to water. Also, when a plant begins to show signs of wilting, especially in the morning, it probably needs water.
- Deep soak each time you water. Many people water lightly and frequently, causing a shallow root system. Watering deeply and infrequently, deep soak, creates a healthy root system that is better equipped to withstand heat and drought.
- Stop watering whenever runoff occurs, especially on slopes. That may mean turning the water on and off in cycles to allow moisture to soak into the ground, but it beats watching the water flow down the street.
- Use watering cans, whenever possible, especially when watering just a few patio plants. Watering with a hose may actually put more water on the patio than in the containers as you move from plant to plant.
- Capture and recycle rainwater by placing barrels or buckets beneath your downspouts.

Weather

- Water early in the morning, when temperatures are mild and winds are calm, so less water will be lost through evaporation.
- Don't water if rain is in the forecast.

Irrigation

- Check hose connections for leaks and repair them quickly. Even a tiny leak can translate into thousands of gallons of wasted water over a short period of time.
- Adjust your sprinklers so water is aimed directly at plants rather than sidewalks, paths, driveways or fences. Use sprinklers that emit large droplets rather than a fine mist, again to reduce losses due to evaporation.
- On automatic sprinkler systems, install a moisture sensor. This is a probe placed in the ground that determines when the soil needs water and then turns on the sprinkler. This is probably one of the smartest water-saving devices ever invented. It can save you tons of water and money.
- Install drip irrigation systems and soaker hoses in flower and vegetable gardens, around trees and shrubs, even in containers.

Plants

- All newly planted plants need more water than they will later in their lives. Even plants billed as drought tolerant aren't macho during infancy and need special treatment their first summer.
- Soil exposed to full sun dries out much faster than soil that is shaded or mulched. A few inches of mulch greatly slows evaporation from soil.
- Focus on growing drought-tolerant plants. A number of beautiful plants, both native and non-native, can survive with less than an inch of water a week once established.
- Place water-loving plants in areas that receive shade in the afternoon. Even sun-loving plants will do fine provided they receive morning to midday light. In fact, the harsh afternoon sun isn't that great for most plants.
- Create windbreaks, especially around vegetable gardens, to shelter plants and prevent drying.
- Add hyrogels to plants that dry out quickly, whether in the garden or in containers. These water absorbing polymer crystals swell to several times their original size and slowly release water into the surrounding soil. Hyrogels can be found at your local garden center.
- Mulch like crazy to slow the evaporation of moisture from the soil and to keep the soil cool. Try to stick with organic mulches that slowly break down and add organic matter to the soil.
- Keep weeds out of flower and vegetable gardens. Weeds are notorious for stealing water away from other plants, so if you'll keep their populations in check, you won't have to water as often.