



WATER SAVING TIPS

for Your Home



SAVING WATER SAVES MONEY

We use a lot of water. In fact, every American uses an average of 100 gallons a day, enough to fill two bathtubs! Since you pay for the water you use at home, it makes sense to take a few steps, such as fixing leaks and taking shorter showers, to reduce your water use. But that's only half the story.

That's because you actually pay twice for water. Once for the cost of the water itself and once for the cost of heating that water. Together those bills add up, so reducing the amount of water you use inside and outside the house could mean big savings.

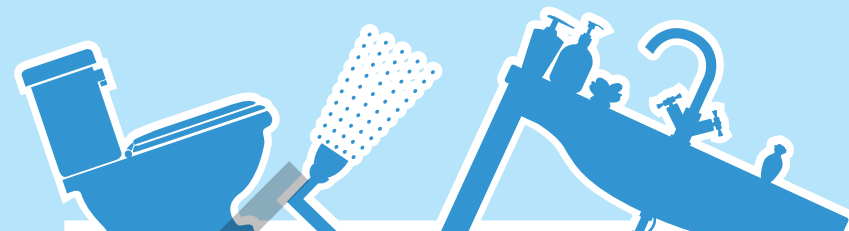
Another way to reduce your water use is to shop for products with the WaterSense label. Bathroom fixtures, toilets, and showerheads with the WaterSense label are more efficient and make saving water easy.





BATHROOM

Together, the shower, the toilet, and the faucet in your bathroom use a lot of water. In fact, toilets alone account for 30% of indoor water use in an average home. Taking shorter showers is a good start, but there are lots of other ways to save water in the bathroom.



Bathroom Tips

Fix leaky toilets

A leaky toilet can waste 200 gallons of water per day.

Take showers instead of baths

A bath uses about 70 gallons of water, but a 5-minute shower only uses 10 to 25 gallons.

Install low-flow showerheads


They use a third less water than regular showerheads.

Fix leaks

One drop per second wastes more than 3,000 gallons of water per year!

Install low-flow aerators on faucets

The aerator is the screw-on tip of the faucet. Look for a flow rate of no more than 1 gallon per minute.



Do I have
low-flow
showerheads?

If the fixtures in your home were installed before 1992, there's a good chance you could save water by replacing them.

Here's an easy test to find out.

1. Place a gallon bucket (or one marked in gallon increments) under your showerhead.
2. Turn on the shower at full pressure.
3. Time how long it takes to fill the bucket. If it takes less than 20 seconds, you could save water by installing a low-flow showerhead.



Is my toilet leaking?

You may not see or hear a leaky toilet, but it can waste more than 200 gallons of water per day!

Here's an easy way to find out if your toilet is leaking.

1. Remove the lid from the back of the toilet.
2. Place a drop of food coloring in the tank.
3. Wait 15 minutes without flushing.
4. If the color shows up in the toilet bowl, you have a leak.



KITCHEN

You use a lot of water in the kitchen: washing dishes, mopping the floor, and drinking from the tap. A few simple steps, such as installing a low-flow aerator on your faucet and fixing leaks, could save thousands of gallons of water per year!



Kitchen Tips

Run the dishwasher instead of washing by hand

It uses less hot water and could save you \$40 a year.

Fully load the dishwasher

It costs exactly the same amount to wash one dish as it does to wash a full load.

Don't let the water run

To clean fruits or vegetables, put them in the sink or in a pan, and fill it up with water. You could save 50 to 100 gallons of water per month.

Scrape, don't rinse

There's no need to pre-rinse plates before putting them in the dishwasher. Just scrape off any excess food.

Keep a container of drinking water in the fridge

You won't have to run the tap every time you want a drink of cold water.



LAUNDRY

Washing machines use two resources: electricity to run the motor and water to wash the clothes. One of the easiest ways to save on your utility bill is to switch to a high-efficiency washing machine. Look for the Energy Star label and you could reduce your utility bill by an average of \$50 per year.



Laundry Tips

Wash full loads

The washer fills up with water whether it has one item or a full load.

Use cold water

You'll save money because you're not paying to heat the water. Only use hot water for very dirty loads.

Use the high-speed spin cycle

It removes more water, so your laundry won't need to dry as long.

Choose an Energy Star washing machine

It uses less than half the water and energy of a standard machine.



WATER HEATERS

Your water heater accounts for 11% of your energy bill. It's the second largest energy user in the house after your space heating system. And you're paying twice for your water heater—once for the water and once for heating the water.

Water Heater Tips

Turn down the thermostat to 120°F

You'll save money and prevent scalding accidents.

Buy a water heater that fits your needs

If it's too big, you'll be paying to heat water you don't need.

Insulate your water heater tank

Adding insulation can reduce heat loss and save you money.

Insulate hot water pipes

Insulation allows for even lower water temperature settings. Try to insulate all accessible pipes, but especially those within 3 feet of the tank.

Look for an Energy Star-qualified water heater

If you have to replace your water heater, an energy-efficient model could save you money in the long run.





LAWN & GARDEN

In the summer months, watering your yard can account for 50% of your total water use. Using less water outside makes a lot of sense. You can save tens of thousands of gallons of water just by using a better watering system and mowing the grass less often.



Lawn & Garden Tips

Let your grass grow

Longer grass absorbs more sunlight, making your lawn stronger and thicker.

Only water your lawn when needed

If you leave footprints when you walk on the grass, it's time to water.

Check the weather

There's no reason to water if it's going to rain.

Choose drought-resistant plants

They require less watering and are usually native to your area.

Check your aim

The sprinkler should water your lawn, not the sidewalk or the house.

Use a drip hose instead

Drip hoses deliver water directly to a plant's roots.

Check your garden hose for leaks

If it leaks at the connection to the spigot, replace the hose washer and wrap the threads with pipe tape.



SWIMMING POOLS

A swimming pool may seem like a huge waste of water and energy, but a few simple steps, such as using a solar heater and a pool cover, can have a big impact.



Swimming Pool Tips

Install a pool cover

It reduces evaporation, saving you up to 1,000 gallons of water each month.

Turn down the thermostat

Hotter water evaporates more quickly.

Keep filters clean

You'll prevent backwash and reduce stress on the filter.

Plant a windbreak


Small trees and shrubs around the perimeter of your pool can help block wind and reduce evaporation.

Quit horsing around

Excessive splashing wastes water.



Is my pool
leaking?



A leaking pool can waste more than 100,000 gallons of water per year. If you think you have a leak, look at the filter, pump, heater, and valves, and check the ground for moisture. Turn the pump on and off and look for spraying water when the pump is turned off.

If you're still not sure, a simple test can show if your pool is leaking.

1. Place a bucket of water next to the pool, and mark its level as well as the pool level.
2. Wait 24 hours.
3. Check both levels. If the pool loses more water than the bucket, you have a leak.



OTHER AREAS

Besides your lawn and garden, there are other outside areas, such as the driveway, car, and garage where you might be able to save water.



Outside Tips

Use a bucket to wash your car

You'll save 150 gallons of water every time you don't use the hose.

Don't hose down the driveway, garage, or sidewalk

Use a broom instead.

Install porous walkways and patios

They keep water in your yard and prevent wasteful runoff.

Wash your car on the grass

You'll be watering the lawn at the same time.

RESOURCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking

Energy Savers, U.S. Department of Energy

www.energysavers.gov

Energy Star

www.energystar.gov

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

<http://water.weather.gov>

National Park Service

www.nature.nps.gov/water/infodata.cfm

United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service

www.nrcs.usda.gov

U.S. Geological Survey

<http://water.usgs.gov>

WaterSense, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

www.epa.gov/watersense

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