



How to Reduce Water Consumption and What It Saves You

In the US, most of us take the water from our taps for granted (unless we live in Flint, Michigan) - to the point where we don't pay enough attention to our consumption. This can literally be thousands of dollars down the drain annually.

One leaky tap, large toilet tank, or hose trickling in the garden overnight can give you water bill sticker shock. Then there are the day-to-day ordinary water consumption needs you and the kids might be too relaxed about. Here are some ideas for reducing water use in and around your home so you can save big time.

The Kitchen

1. If you have a dishwasher, buy an Energy Star one that uses less water as well.
2. Don't leave the water running when washing the dishes. Put them in a basin to soak. Soap them up, then rinse them in a clean basin of water. Give an extra rinse over the basin, under the tap. Bail out the basin into the garden if you have one.
3. Don't run the water to get it cold. Use ice cubes instead, or refrigerate a bottle of water so you will always have cold water on hand.
4. Don't fill pots of boiling water to the brim. Use just enough to cook what you need to. Drain the food, such as pasta, through a colander with another pot underneath to capture the water. Let it cool, then use on your plants or garden.

5. Defrost frozen food in the refrigerator overnight, not under running water in the sink.

The Bathroom

1. If your toilet has a water tank, put a brick in it to cut down on the amount of water used.

2. Make sure the toilet isn't constantly running. The rubber gaskets that lift up to flush and then go back down again to hold water will wear out sooner or later and need to be replaced. It's an easy job you can do yourself any time.

3. Don't leave the water running when you brush your teeth. Use a cup to rinse.

4. Don't leave the water running when shaving. Fill up the basin. Or, switch to an electric razor. It will save on razors, shaving cream, and so on.

5. Take showers, not baths. In both cases, put in the plug and bail out the water onto your plants or the garden, especially if you live in a dry climate.

6. Use a high-pressure shower head to use less water, and/or a water saving one.

7. Take shorter showers. Set a timer if you have to. This will work well for family members who spend ages in the bathroom as well.

8. Turn off the taps fully to avoid drips.

The Laundry Room

1. Only run full loads of washing.
2. Items you would wash by hand, such as sweaters, can be washed in the machine to save water. Gather a few of these items and wash them on cold using the gentle cycle. When everything has been spun dry, fluff and either hang, or lay flat to dry.

The Garden

1. Bail your household water. This means you get two uses out of it. Bail from your shower, cooking pots of water, and even your bucket after mopping. Just be sure to avoid really harsh chemicals such as bleach in the water.
2. Don't overwater.
3. Water early in the morning or late in the evening.
4. If you must use a sprinkler system, check all the heads regularly to make sure none of them are broken and leaking. Place them correctly so they are not watering the sidewalk or the house.
5. If you use a garden hose, make sure it is turned off at the end of every session.
6. If you use your hose for cleaning, get a power nozzle to control the jet of water so you use less and get better cleaning.
7. If you have a pool, cover it to avoid evaporation and undesirable things getting into the pool.

These simple tips will cut down on your bills, and benefit the environment at the same time.