



Green Living GUIDE

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Going Green at Home

Going greener at home doesn't have to be hard on your or your bank account. Here are some simple tips for living well, both for you and for the environment.

Be energy efficient. Make sure your doors and windows get a good seal to keep the outside — and inclement weather — out. Install new weatherstripping if yours is old

or worn. Look for light coming in around the doors and windows or use your hand to feel drafts of air coming in. Some local utility companies may perform this service for you; call to find out if your electrical provider does.

Go high tech. The market is flush with gadgets that can help you save energy and live more sustainably. Learning thermostats, smart lights and home assistants can get overwhelming, especially if tech isn't your cup of tea. Start with local electronics or home stores and ask lots of questions to find the right gadgets to

help you go green.

Clean green. Choose household cleaners that go easy on the environment. Pick plant-based cleaners and check the lists of ingredients for chemicals that can trigger allergies or asthma. Choose fragrance-free cleaners, if possible.

Recycle. This is the granddaddy of them all. Sort your garbage out by paper, plastic or glass and look for the recycling symbol to determine if its reusable. If your municipality doesn't offer home recycling pick-up, consider taking it to a recycling business.

Some of them even pay for your trash.

Compost. While we're talking trash, look into creating a compost pile, especially if you garden. Visit your local garden center to find lots of models of composters, from simple piles to turning bins. You're sure to find something that fits your space.

Substitute cloth for paper. Use pretty cloth napkins that can be washed and reused instead of paper napkins. You can also repurpose old clothes into rags for cleaning instead of using paper towels.

Use less water. Replace your

shower heads with low-flow models, take shorter showers, and turn the faucets off while brushing your teeth and doing other chores. Do laundry only if you have a full load. If you're replacing appliances, look for energy efficient models that save water and electricity.

Switch off (or the whole bulb). It may seem like a no brainer, but turn off the lights when you're not using them in a specific room. If you can, take advantage of as much natural light as possible. Also, switch out your older light bulbs for more energy efficient models.

Make Laundry Better with ENERGY STAR

With ENERGY STAR, laundry is just better; better for your clothes, better for you and your family, better for the environment.

GET STARTED

1 2 3 4

ENERGY STAR LAUNDRY MADE BETTER Better for You & the Planet

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

FOR YOUR HOME FOR YOUR BUSINESS

LOG IN TO ENERGY STAR

To get started, select the ENERGY STAR application you're trying to access. The appropriate login fields will then appear.

Energy Star Basics

You've seen the blue logo as you wandered the aisles of the home improvement store. But what does the Energy Star label really mean? It's a program of the federal government's Environmental Protection Agency.

It was established to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants by making it easy for consumers to identify and purchase energy-efficient products.

Since 1992, the Energy Star program has saved consumers more than \$450 billion and more than 3.5 trillion kilowatt-hours of electricity, according to the EPA.

HOW DOES A PRODUCT GET THE LABEL?

The EPA establishes a set of Energy Star specifications for each category of products. These specifications are based on a set of principles.

- Categories must contribute significant energy savings across the United States.
- Certified products must deliver features and performance consumers want.
- If a certified product costs more than its less-efficient counterpart, consumers must be able to recover their investment through saved energy costs in a reasonable amount of time.
- Efficiency can be achieved by readily available, non-proprietary means.
- Energy consumption and performance can be measured and verified.
- The Energy Star label would differentiate products and be visible for consumers.

Depending on market factors and advancing technology, Energy Star specifications may be revised from time to time. This means that a newer model of your Energy Star-certified dishwasher may not carry the label.

WHAT ELSE DOES ENERGY STAR DO?

It's not just a label on a refrigerator. The Energy Star program also certifies homes. The EPA says that nearly 90 percent of the nation's largest homebuilders build Energy Star-certified homes. These homes, the program says, are at least 10 percent more efficient than homes built to code.

Energy Star helps in commercial spaces, too. Business can turn to the program's guides to managing energy expenses and commercial buildings. If a business saves on the electricity bill, that's savings it could pass on to the consumer.

Green at Work

Going green at work is a smart move both for the planet and for your career. Adding a few dollars to the bottom line could help your company and your chances for promotion. Here are some ideas for being more environmentally friendly at your job.

REUSE IT

Bring reusable water bottles and coffee cups from home and choose those over styrofoam and plastic. If it's not your department, suggest your company have some cups and mugs made with their logo on it for guests to use.

Also watch your paper use. Go paperless when possible and, when it's not, print on both sides of the paper. Use the reverse of printed materials for scratch paper and make sure you sort out recyclable trash in your workplace.

TRANSPORTATION

Find other workers that live near you and come in around the same time and set up a carpool. Make sure to lay good ground rules about times, routes, costs and expectations. If you live close enough to your office, look into cycling or walking to work instead of driving.

CHECK YOUR TECH

Make sure to turn off lights and computers in your office when you go home for the night. Also, check the temperatures on the climate control. You might consider raising or lowering them to save energy when no one's in the building.

REPLACE THE SMART WAY

When it's time for a new printer or laptop, make sure to choose energy efficient models. Consider switching out desktop computers for laptops, which tend to be more energy efficient. Ask the staff at your local office goods or electronics store to point you toward the most energy efficient models in your budget.



Home Energy Efficiency

Up to half of your home's energy bills can go to heating and cooling, the EPA says. Make sure you're saving energy and money by keeping your HVAC system properly maintained. Here's how to keep your system in tip-top shape.

CHANGE YOUR AIR FILTER

This is a simple task that can save you big bucks. It's made even more easy if your thermostat has a reminder for you. If not, set a reminder on your phone or calendar to change out the filter every three months. Dirty filters slow air flow, making the system work harder to keep you comfortable. It can also help dirt and dust clog your ducts, damaging your system.

GET A TUNE UP

Have an HVAC professional come check out your system annually. A typical check-up includes tightening electrical connections, inspecting the condensation drain, lubricating moving parts, cleaning evaporator and condenser coils, checking coolant levels, checking gas connections, and adjusting blower components.

SEAL UP YOUR DUCTS

As much as 30 percent of the cool or warm air moved around your home is lost by a leaky duct. Fix this problem by venturing into your attic or crawl spaces and tape up leaky ducts with foil tape (not duct tape, surprisingly). Ask your local home improvement center for the right product.

Start by looking for obvious holes and tears. Once those



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are dealt with, move on to the connections at the vents and registers, making sure each spot is sealed tightly. If you have flexible ductwork, check

to make sure it moves in gentle curves and hasn't been squashed.

You can also insulate your ducts while you're there for

more savings.

ASK THE PROS

If all this seems a little much, contact your local utili-

ty company. It may perform an energy audit for you or have a list of contractors who can do this for a reasonable price.

More than 51 million pieces of litter line America's roadways each year, litter organization Keep America Beautiful says. Of this, tobacco products make up most of it, followed by paper and plastic.

Litter fouls the environment and lowers property values. The clean up costs the U.S. more than \$11 billion per year. Here's how you can help.

KEEP IT IN THE CAR

This part's easy: Don't litter. Keep a trash can in your car or, if it's an emergency, pull over and dispose of any waste in a trash can at a gas station or convenience store. Remember, even biodegradable items like apple cores and banana peels count as litter. Put them in the garbage can.

LEND A HAND

Look for volunteer clean-up groups in your area and offer to help pick up litter on the side of the road or along waterways. If you're in a civic organization, look into having your group adopt a highway or intersection to clean up. Even if you're not part of a group, bring a bag on a walk around your neighborhood and pick up trash as you see it.

HIT THE WATER

If your area has a lot of waterways, you could also get



out a canoe, kayak or just walk the bank and pick up trash. Waterborne litter harms wild-

life such as birds, fish and turtles. It can also clog drainage ways and cause flash flooding.

If you live along the coast, Ocean Conservancy sponsors an International Coastal

Cleanup every year. Look for events near you, or, if you can't find one, organize it.

Green in the Garden

The garden may seem like a good (and easy) place to go green, but there are ways you can really help out Mother Earth. Keep reading for more tips.

PLANT SELECTION

When choosing plants, select ones that are non-invasive for your area and that are suitable for your climate. The USDA has a map of growing zones. Find your home and read the labels of the plants you're considering to help you choose. By picking suitable plants, you can save on water and fertilizer. Ask your nursery or garden center for help picking the right blossoms for your garden.

CATCH THE RAIN

Instead of using water from your hose, set up rain barrels to catch rainwater and use that to water your gardens. No longer is this a plain, black barrel. Home and garden centers are full of decorative options.

COMPOST

Set up a compost bin, pile or tumbler and put your organic kitchen waste to work in the yard. Choose a sunny spot for faster compost development, then pick the method that's right for you. Smaller



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yards may want to consider a bin or tumbler to contain the waste. Collect organic scraps from your kitchen and yard (aim for a 1:1 ratio of green to brown) and get composting.

Keep your compost moist and keep the pile aerated by

turning it. Never compost fats, animal waste like bones, or dairy. If you keep your compost right, there should only be an earthy smell. A stench means something's gone wrong. In most cases, the pros at your local garden

center can help you diagnose and correct a sick compost pile.

GO BROWN

In some areas of the country, water usage restrictions can put a crimp on a green

thumb. But that doesn't mean you can't still garden. With the help of your local garden center, pick plants that sip rather than gulp, and also look into intricate rock gardens and other landscapes to conserve water.

Green on the Road

You don't have to drive a Tesla to have a positive impact on the environment. Transportation causes more than 20 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States.

Here are some tips from the EPA for ways to save fuel and the planet.

Drive efficiently and politely. Aggressive driving techniques like rapid acceleration and slamming on the breaks can lower your miles per gallon by up to 40 percent. Instead, accelerate and brake slowly and obey the speed limit. Set your cruise control whenever you can.

Tune it up. Have your vehicle serviced regularly and make sure you follow the manufacturer's schedule. Use the proper motor oil and other fluids, and the proper grade of gas, for the best efficiency.

Inflate tires, deflate cost. Check your tires regularly to make sure they're properly inflated. Find the correct tire pressure for your vehicle in the owner's manual or on the driver's side door pillar. Tires at the right pressure save your miles per gallon and wear.

Park it. Look at your drive



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times and figure out if you can carpool, bike, walk or take public transportation.

Don't be idle. Avoid leaving your car running. Idling sucks the miles per gallon right out of your car. You're going nowhere,

fast.

Cut the weight. Clean out your car regularly and remove any unneeded items. A lighter car gets better gas mileage.

Buy green. If you're in the market for a new ride, you have

more options for going green than ever. In addition to conventional gasoline cars tuned for higher gas mileage, you can also pick from alternative fuel vehicles than burn a blend of fuel or ones that run off diesel,

electricity or compressed natural gas. Visit local dealerships and compare models to get the features that are right for you. Depending on where you live, there may even be a tax incentive for certain models.