

PUTTING YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER: HOW TO LIVE AN ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY LIFESTYLE

Reduce Home Energy Consumption

1. **Lights, appliances, TV, stereo, computers, printers, game consoles:** Turn them to lower settings, shut off or unplug when not in use. Use timers, sensors to turn them off. Use a power strip to turn off machines and ancillary devices.
2. **Lights:** Convert to LED's. Use motion detector for security lighting.
3. **Dial down in winter and up in summer.** Save ~3% for each degree you lower the thermostat in winter. Wear thermals, sweaters, slippers, etc. Use a programmable thermostat to conserve energy when asleep or not home.
4. **Get a free energy audit; do the recommended work. masssave.com.** These audits are important and imperfect—they don't find all air leaks. Schedule follow-up audits in future years. The website also has home energy tips.
5. **Seal air leaks** (doors, windows, rim joists, recessed lights, pipe penetrations, attic hatches, floor perimeter, etc.) with weather-stripping, caulk, spray foam, door sweeps, outlet insulators and attic hatch covers.
6. **Close kitchen, bathroom, dryer vents** when unused. Seal/insulate fireplace damper! Seal your flue with an inflatable chimney balloon. Don't heat/cool unused rooms.
7. **Remove air conditioning window units** at end of summer, or order an insulated wrap (accovers.com).
8. **Insulate** attic floor, attic hatch, walls, floor over crawl space, rim joists, etc. Maximize insulation on attic floor.
9. **Heating ducts and pipes:** Seal and insulate ducts that pass through unheated space. Insulate hot water pipes.
10. **Furnace:** Keep tuned (oil: every year; gas: every 2 years). Turn furnace fan from "On" to "Auto." Change filters monthly. Replace inefficient furnace and water heater with Energy Star units. Consider heat pumps for heating, cooling. They're more efficient *and* you can buy renewable energy for heating—big carbon reduction.
11. **Radiators:** Put heat reflectors behind them to reflect heat away from the wall and into the room.
12. **Water Heater:** Set at 120°, unless that water is used to heat home in winter. New systems: buy most efficient Energy Star units. Consider tank-less, solar or heat pump water heaters. Turn down water heater when not needed. Check w/ technician: can you safely turn your system off? Wi-Fi systems enable users to control water heating remotely.
13. **Cooling:** Don't cool below 78°, if at all. Don't cool unused rooms. Use a timer. Tune central a/c 1/year; change filters often. Energy Star central a/c units after 1998 save 30%. Use alternatives to a/c: ceiling fans, other fans, cross ventilation. Wear a wet bandana. Use trees and shades to block sun.
14. **Windows:** Seal off air leaks! Seal air pockets. Use insulated shades that seal at bottom, storm windows, double or triple panes or a plastic cover. Consider professional window restoration to improve weather-stripping and operability.
15. **Appliances, General:** Buy Energy Star. Find the most efficient models at toptenusa.org.
16. **Refrigerator:** Use only one. Replace models built before 2003 and especially 1992 with an Energy Star one. Get smallest size that you need. Don't get ice makers or water dispensers. Assure seal is tight; clean condenser coils; 38° fridge/5° freezer. Cool warm items before refrigerating; thaw food in refrigerator.
17. **Cooking:** New ovens: get convection, self-cleaning (better insulated) or steam. Microwaves use less energy than ovens and toaster ovens. Stoves: induction is the most efficient. Boil only the amount of water you need for pasta, tea, etc. Use lids on pots, pressure cookers. Match pots to your burners.
18. **Dishwasher:** Use only when full; use low Quick Wash setting; don't power dry. Better: hand wash dishes in cold water.
19. **Electronics:** TV: buy smaller, Energy Star sets. Assure TV's, DVD's are fully shut off when not watched--disable "quick start" function. Choose "home" or "standard" screen settings. Use Energy Star cable box. Stream movies w/ Roku, Apple TV, or Chromecast—not Playstation or Xbox. Use Energy Star routers, modems.
20. **Computers:** Buy Energy Star and EPEAT. Set "power saver" to turn off screen when unused for 3 minute; hibernate after 10 minutes. No screen saver. Tablets, smartphones use tiny fraction of energy used by PC's, laptops and gaming consoles.
21. **Laundry:** Buy front-loading Energy Star washer. Wear clothes until dirty, spot clean by hand. Wear no-iron clothes. Wash full loads. Use cold water and cold water detergents. Only oily stains need hot water. ½ C of vinegar sanitizes wash. Pick right water level setting. Use HE detergents for HE machines. Dryer: Energy Star w/ moisture sensor. Dry towels and other heavy items separately. Clean lint from filters and outside vent. Use clotheslines, drying racks instead of a dryer.
22. **Home Size:** Move to a home that's no bigger than you need. Or, add a housemate.
23. **Green power:** Buy green electricity. Install solar panels for electricity (PV) or hot water. Install a solar greenhouse.
24. **Carbon offsets:** Buy them to compensate for your fossil fuel use. Or, conduct your own project, like giving away LED's.
25. **Measure / Set Goals:** Track your energy use and set reduction targets.
26. **Other Ideas:** www.energy.gov/energysaver/energy-saver

Reduce Water Use

1. **Don't let water run** when washing, showering, brushing, cooking.
2. **Leaks:** Identify and repair. Put food coloring in toilet tank; check back in 15 min. If it appears in bowl, you have a leak.
3. **Kitchen and bathroom fixtures:** Use EPA WaterSense and Energy Star low-flow showerheads and faucets aerators.
4. **Showers:** Fewer and shorter. Eliminate baths.
5. **Toilets:** Replace w/ low-flush or dual-flush. Convert to dual flush w/ kit. Install dams in old toilets. No garbage in toilets.
6. **Washing Clothes:** See # 21 above: Laundry.
7. **Don't use bottled water.** Filter your water instead.
8. **Grass:** Keep high. Water only 1 inch/week, if at all. Water early in morning. No or minimal fertilization. Replace w/

- ground cover, drought-tolerant plants or ornamental grasses.
9. **Mulch or compost** to retain moisture in garden.
 10. **Native plants** need less water.
 11. **Use a rain barrel** to collect water for outdoor uses—but not for growing food.

Transportation Efficiency

1. **Reduce single occupancy vehicle miles:** Carpool, car-share, public transportation, walk, bike.
2. **Car purchases:** Buy most fuel-efficient car that meets your needs. Fewer options. Think twice before buying another car.
3. **Maintain car well:** Check tire pressure every fill-up—and fill 1-4 lbs. over recommended level. Do oil changes, air filter changes and tune-ups on schedule.
4. **Drive smart:** No rapid acceleration, coast to stops, remove weighty objects from car, <60 MPH, minimize a/c, close windows > 40 MPH. Don't idle. Go faster downhill than uphill. More tips: ecomodder.com/forum/EM-hypermiling-driving-tips-ecodriving.php.
5. **Plan driving routes** to minimize mileage. Do errands in one trip, so engine stays warm. Grocery shop only once per week.
6. **Airline flights:** Fly less. Fly direct. Purchase carbon offsets.
7. **Vacation** close to home. Use mass transit.
8. **Telecommute** or work close to home.
9. **Move.** Choose a place to live that reduces your need to drive.
10. **Avoid high impact activities**, like powerboats and recreational off-road driving.

Reduce Garbage

1. **Recycle** most things. But don't contaminate. No plastic bags in single-stream recycling bins.
2. **Compost** food waste, leaves, paper products, etc. Reduce food waste: plan your shopping trips well. Freeze leftovers.
3. **Reduce Single-Use Plastics and Micro-plastics.** No plastic shopping bags, straws, utensils, exfoliators, glitter, etc.
4. **Replace paper products** with reusable cloth napkins, dish towels, handkerchiefs and sponges.
5. **Use less paper:** Print less often. Use two sides of every sheet. Use smaller fonts and margins.
6. **Repair or donate** instead of disposing.
7. **Keep reusable containers**, cup, flatware at work, home, car, for travel.
8. **Reduce junk mail:** catalogchoice.org/.

Be an Ecologically-Wise Consumer

1. **Eat fewer animal products, particularly red meat and cheese.**
2. **Eat organic food** and shade-grown coffee. (It's arguably greener to eat non-organic grains, which use less land.)
3. **Eat local food**, especially quickly-perishable food that's likely to be transported by plane. Buy locally-grown flowers.
4. **Avoid endangered seafood species.** Get *Seafood Watch* app. It's a sustainable seafood guide that's kept current.
5. **Pets:** Fewer, smaller dogs and cats. Buy pet food with the least red meat.
6. **Buy less stuff.** Buy used goods. Borrow, lend, lease instead of buying new.
7. **Shopping:** Favor products that are energy efficient, long-lasting, recycled-content, recyclable, biodegradable, locally-made and non-toxic. Minimize packaging. Bring your own bag. No microbeads or glitter.
8. **Avoid Toxins in the Home:** Use EWG guides (ewg.org/consumer-guides) to identify less-toxic food, personal care products, cleaning products and sunscreen. Filter your drinking water. Avoid anti-bacterial soap, non-stick pans, canned food, air fresheners and fragrances. Don't heat food in plastic food containers.
9. **Cleaning:** Eliminate toxic products. Clean your home with vinegar, unscented dish soap and baking soda or borax. Use a HEPA vacuum, microfiber mops and cloths. Use non-phosphate, biodegradable laundry soap and bleach substitutes. No dryer sheets or fabric softeners. See lesstoxicguide.ca/.
10. **Mold Reduction:** Ventilation fans—run for 15 minutes after shower. Use timer or get system with a humidity sensor.
11. **Landscaping:** Avoid pesticides, minimize fertilizer. Push-mower or electric mower. No leaf-blowers.
12. **Furniture:** Restore and reupholster or buy used, instead of buying new. Buy products w/ certified sustainable wood, reclaimed materials, bamboo, no flame retardants, local and with untreated fabrics.
13. **Building materials:** Favor natural, reused or recycled. Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood. Avoid vinyl.
14. **Paint:** Use latex paint. Favor low or no odor (VOC) paint, especially indoors.
15. **Garden:** Grow your own food.
16. **Plant trees.** Strategically placed deciduous trees can keep sun out in summer and let it in in winter.

Build a Greener World

1. **Have smaller families.**
2. **Green your workplace**, school, house of worship and community.
3. **Support to environmental causes.** Volunteer, donate, protest.
4. **Vote** for candidates with strong environmental records and platforms.

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