

## Easy Ways to Live Greener

An eco-friendly lifestyle doesn't need to be difficult or expensive. Try these tips and tricks to create a home that'll make you — and the earth — proud/healthy.

This **April 22** marks the 46th anniversary of the first **Earth Day**, which started to boost awareness about the environment. Do your part by practicing some of the habits listed here every day.



### In the Morning

- **Brew "certified" coffee.** A USDA Certified Organic label means it was grown using sustainable standards.
- **Green "to go."** Not brewing at home? Take a travel cup to your favorite java joint; they may fill it at a discount.

### At Work

- **Double up.** Configure your office printer or copy machine so it prints on both sides of the page.
- **Put it to sleep.** If you'll be away from your computer for more than 20 minutes, change it to "sleep" mode.

### Before Bed

- **Truly turn off electronics.** Plug your devices — the TV and DVD player, or the computer and printer — into a UL-certified power strip; switch the whole group off for the evening to prevent phantom electrical draw.

### Start 'Em Young

- **Game off?** Yep, get the kids to turn off video games (both the TV *and*

the console) after they're done playing, and you'll win back about \$100 per year.

- **Pitch in.** Live in one of the 11 states with bottle bills? Have your kids collect aluminum cans and plastic bottles to redeem for cash to spend on a treat.
- **Don't tap out.** Teach children to turn off the water while brushing their teeth. Leaving the tap running during the recommended two minutes of brushing can waste up to five gallons of water a day.

### Green My Ride

- **Slow down.** Driving 10 mph above 60 is like adding nearly 50 cents to the price of a gallon of gas, since higher speed equals more guzzling.
- **Get pumped.** Once a month, check the pressure of each of the tires against the guidelines listed in your car's manual; add air if needed. Doing this can improve mileage by about 3 percent.
- **Air out.** Replace filters regularly. A new oxygen sensor alone can improve mileage by as much as 15 percent.

### **21 Ways to Green Your Home**

- 1.** Switch to Energy Star-rated CFL bulbs, they use 75 percent less energy and last 10 times longer than standard bulbs. You'll knock \$30 off your electric bill for each bulb over its lifetime.
- 2.** Plant trees around the house strategically (on the south and west sides; shading the air-conditioning unit, if possible) to save up to about \$250 a year on cooling and heating.
- 3.** Install dimmer switches in the living and dining rooms and three bedrooms to dial down electricity fees about \$37 a year.
- 4.** Since 1992 legislation, all new showerheads must have a flow rate of 2.5 gallons per minute or lower. Replace your old showerhead and save up to \$45 a month for a family of four.
- 5.** Wrap an insulation blanket around your water heater and lower its running cost as much as 9 percent.
- 6.** Run a full dishwasher whenever possible — it uses half or less of the water and energy of washing the same dishes by hand. And don't waste water by rinsing before loading (today's machines are designed to power off the mess).
- 7.** Invest in a faucet-mounted water filter for a low \$30, and use refillable bottles. By giving up bottled water, a family of four can save about \$1,250 a year.

### **Double-Duty Ideas**

The goal is "reduce, reuse, recycle."

- 8. Magazines.** Roll up a couple of these and stick one into each of your calf- or knee-high boots so the footwear will keep its shape.
- 9. Empty paper-towel roll.** Flatten, and use it to sheathe a knife kept in a drawer.
- 10. Small glass food jars.** These make perfect see-through storage vessels for nails, screws, nuts, and bolts.
- 11. Old shower curtain.** Stash one in your car's trunk to line it when carting potentially messy paints or picnic and beach gear.
- 12. Used coffee grounds.** Spread them over flower beds of acid-craving plants such as azaleas or rhododendrons.
- 13. Plastic tub.** Get the largest-size container of yogurt, sour cream, or margarine. When done with the tub, rinse and reuse it as a travel dish for pets or for craft-supply storage.

## HealthSmart Tip of the Month April 2016

**14. Plastic gallon milk jug.** Cut off top with a utility knife just above the handle and use as a scoop for kitty litter, birdseed, etc.

**15. Foam packing peanuts.** Put some in the bases of potted plants to help drainage.

**16. Plastic mesh produce bag.** Turn it into a no-scratch scrubber for a gunky pot or pan. Ball up the bag, scour, then throw the whole mess away.

### Good (Enough) Ways to Go Green

#### GOOD WAY

Switch to a front-loading washer from a top loader. In a recent GHRI test of front loaders, they used less than half the water traditionally used by a top loader for a full load.

Install a programmable thermostat, which can save an estimated \$150 yearly if preset to cool your home's air or pump up the heat (such as before you get home from work).

Upgrade two toilets made before 1992 to low-flow ones, and turn down water costs nearly \$200 a year in a two-bathroom, four-person home.

Always look for the 'organic' label on veggies and fruit, which means that they were produced without the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers.

Open windows and doors or operate window or attic fans when the weather permits. Most heating and cooling systems do not bring fresh air into the house.

#### VS. GOOD ENOUGH

Pocket up to 25 cents for every laundry load you wash in cold water (versus hot). Cold-wash three loads a week, and save up to \$40 a year.

Lower your heater's temp by 2 degrees to potentially lower your bill about \$40 a year. In warm months, set the AC at 78 degrees (at 73 degrees, you'll pay 40 percent more!).

Not in the budget to replace your toilets? Try Brondell Perfect Flush (\$79), which will convert your toilet into a dual-flush — saving about half the water and \$100 per year per toilet.

If buying only organic is a strain on your finances, opt for organic versions of the items known to have the highest pesticide levels: peaches, apples, and bell peppers. Bring home superhero plants. Certain easy-care greens (English ivy, mums, and peace lilies) naturally help remove indoor air pollutants like formaldehyde and benzene.

Source: [goodhousekeeping.com](http://goodhousekeeping.com)

**And not to forget that going Green and Staying Fit/Healthy can go hand in hand: See the next page:**

## GO GREEN, GET FIT.

- An elevator uses about 100 Watt hours per round trip (20 floors) per person, about how much a desktop computer and monitor use running for 30 minutes.
- By ditching the lift in a typical office, you will save about 33 lbs. of CO<sub>2</sub> a month.
- Using the stairs burns twice as many calories as walking. It also helps build leg muscle and keep your heart healthy.
- Studies show office workers save up to 15 minutes a day by taking the stairs.



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