

100 Ways

You Can Save the Earth

1. Buy plain white toilet paper, tissues and paper towels. Dyed paper pollutes.
2. Instead of ammonia-based cleaners, use vinegar and water or baking soda and water.
3. Walk or ride a bike instead of using the car for short trips.
4. Reuse your grocery bags, or buy a string bag you can carry your groceries in.
5. Buy eggs and milk in cardboard cartons instead of plastic. Or recycle your plastic milk jugs.
6. Take showers instead of baths to save water and energy.
7. Keep your car tires inflated to the proper pressure to improve fuel economy and extend the life of the tires.
8. Don't use electric tools and appliances when hand-operated ones will do the job.
9. Choose a light-colored car with tinted glass to lessen the need for air conditioning.
10. Use mulch and natural ground covers in gardens to contain moisture and conserve water use.
11. Instead of ironing, hang clothes in the bathroom while you shower.
12. Turn off lights in rooms you aren't using.
13. Replace incandescent bulbs with more efficient screw-in compact fluorescent bulbs or fluorescent fixtures.
14. Use high-quality multigrade oil in your car to increase fuel efficiency.
15. Air-dry laundry when possible.
16. Avoid keeping refrigerator or freezer too cold. Government recommended temperature for fresh food is 38 degrees F. For freezers it's 5 degrees F.
17. Reuse aluminum foil and plastic wrap, or avoid them completely by using plastic containers.
18. Plant trees. Strategically located, trees can reduce heating and cooling bills, help prevent soil erosion and reduce air pollution.
19. Water lawns at night to limit evaporation.
20. Compost your leaves and yard waste. You'll improve your garden's soil.
21. Minimize the use of garden chemicals by weeding.
22. Be sure to return your recyclable cans and bottles for your deposit.
23. Don't pour oil and gasoline into the sewer system or on the ground. Take to your local collection site.
24. Buy rechargeable batteries.
25. Use cold water rather than hot water whenever possible for kitchen tasks and laundry.
26. Share rides to work or use public transportation.
27. Buy a fuel-efficient car. Aim for 35 miles per gallon.
28. Read labels and research the products you buy.
29. Don't use excessive amounts of detergent. Presoak dirty laundry.
30. Insulate your basement to save 1/3 on your heat bill.
31. Buy products packaged in recycled paper or cardboard.
32. Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows.
33. Ask your utility company for an energy audit to assess energy waste in your home.
34. Install water-conserving showerheads and sink-faucet aerators.
35. Insulate your water heater. Turn it down to 121 degrees F.
36. Limit or eliminate your use of "disposable" items.
37. Close off unused areas of your home. Shut off or block heat vents.
38. Compare Energy Guide labels when buying appliances.
39. Keep the fireplace damper closed to prevent heat escape. Keep glass fireplace doors closed when a fire is burning.
40. Use an automatic setback thermostat to turn down heat when you're not home and at night.
41. Capture free solar heat in the winter by opening curtains on south windows during sunny days.
42. Clean lamps and lighting fixtures regularly.
43. Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator to reduce cooking times and to ensure food safety.
44. Tune up your car regularly for, maximum gas mileage.
45. Remove unnecessary items from your car. Each 100 pounds of weight decreases fuel efficiency by 1%.
46. Don't speed; accelerate and slow down gradually.
47. Use latex and other water-based paints instead of toxic enamel or oil-based paints.
48. Repair leaks and drips as soon as they occur. A moderate drip wastes two gallons of water or more per hour.
49. Rent or borrow items you don't often use. Efficient use of products conserves resources.
50. Use small electric pans and ovens to reduce energy use.
51. Run your dishwasher only when full, and use the energy saver cycle.

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52. Avoid products made from tropical rainforest woods.
53. Request a Household Hazardous Waste Wheel, showing alternatives to hazardous products, from the Department of Natural Resources, 1-5 15-281-4367.
54. Tick/fly spray: Combine 2 C white vinegar, 1 C water, 1 C Avon "Skin-So-Soft" bath oil and 1 T eucalyptus oil.
55. For a toilet bowl cleaner, use baking soda and a brush.
56. As a household disinfectant, use 2 C hot water with 2 tsp. borax.
57. Instead of chemical air fresheners, set a cotton ball soaked in vanilla extract on a saucer. (Keep away from children and pets.)
58. Instead of toxic mothballs, use cedar chips.
59. Roach killer: mix baking soda and powdered sugar. (Keep away from children and pets.)
60. Ant killer: Use chili powder to hinder entry.
61. Do not toss toxic chemicals into your garbage. Call 1-515-281-4367 to learn how to dispose, or keep them for a Toxic Cleanup Day.
62. Use pump sprays instead of aerosols.
63. Use a holding tank on your boat and don't empty toilet tanks into the water.
64. Don't litter. Pick up any you see, especially plastic rings that can trap birds and fish.
65. Take your own coffee cup to work instead of using disposable.
66. Pour a kettle of boiling water down the drain weekly to melt fat that may be building up.
67. Take old tires to a landfill or processing center for proper disposal.
68. Buy recycled paper, stationery and greeting cards.
69. Shop at your local farmers market. Products are fresh, packaging is minimal and foods are less likely to be made with preservatives.
70. Start an organic garden.
71. Buy in bulk to avoid over-packaging.
72. Avoid optional equipment on cars that decreases fuel economy.
73. Reduce unwanted advertising mail. Contact 515-281-4367 for a free list of tips.
74. Keep lint screen in dryer clean
75. Use a trash bag in your car instead of throwing trash out the window.
76. Consider using cloth diapers instead of disposal ones. Check for a local diaper service.
77. Urge your local community to start a curbside recycling program.
78. Start a recycling program where you work. Contact the Department of Natural Resources about the Waste Reduction Assistance Program (WRAP) at 5 15-281-4367.
79. Insulate your waterbed by adding an inch of polyethylene foam around the edges and the bottom.
80. To remove rust, rub rust spots briskly with a piece of crumpled aluminum foil, shiny side up.
81. Give leftover paint to theater groups, schools or church groups.
82. Call your local humane society to see if they can use your old newspapers for animal bedding.
83. Check your smoke detector. Put a new battery in if it needs one. Some detectors contain small amounts of low-level radioactive waste. Return used or broken detectors to the manufacturer.
84. Use equal parts white vinegar and warm water to wash windows or glass. Dry with a soft cloth.
85. Install storm windows.
86. When using hazardous products, use only what is needed. Twice as much does not mean twice the results.
87. Arrange for a waste management presentation for your club or business.
88. Read publications that educate about long-term sustainability.
89. Educate your children about the environment.
90. Write a letter to the editor about your environmental concerns.
91. Get involved in a local tree-planting effort.
92. Learn about global climate change.
93. Join an environmental organization.
94. Research environmental legislation and write to your representatives in the state legislature and in Congress.
95. Think about the kind of Earth you would like to see for your grandchildren's grandchildren.
96. Plan an environmental activity for your club or troop, such as a recycling program.
97. Investigate the environmental record of companies you invest in. Write a letter as a shareholder to the company president or sell your stock.
98. Talk to friends, relatives and co-workers about the environment.
99. Copy this list and send it to your friends.
100. Contact the Department of Natural Resources, Wallace Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0034; 1-515-281-4367 for more information.