

10 Tips for Conserving Water at Home

Excerpt: Repairing leaks, choosing high-efficiency appliances, and being careful not to run the tap are a few ways to conserve water at home.

Save Water, Save Money

There are many ways to conserve water at home. With just a few changes to your daily habits, you can save a significant amount of water and lower your monthly water bill.

Try a few or all of the following practices to save water and save money at home:

1. Check for Leaks

Dripping faucets, running toilets, and leaky pipes can waste a great deal of water over time. For example, a faucet dripping three times per minute wastes about 100 gallons of water per year. Routinely check for leaks and make repairs.

2. Monitor Your Water Bill

Monitor your water bill for any irregular waste usage. A higher-than-average water bill can be a sign that you have a leak somewhere inside your home or at an outdoor faucet.

3. Water-Efficient Appliances

High efficiency washing machines and dishwashers save water, energy, and detergent. For example, an Energy Star-certified clothes washer uses 6 to 25 gallons less water per load. Front-load high-efficiency (HE) washers save the most water per load.

Similarly, upgrading to a newer toilet can save gallons of water per flush. Water-efficient toilets use 1.28 gallons or less per flush while old, inefficient toilets can use as much as 6 gallons per flush. According to the EPA, “toilets are by far the main source of water use in the home, accounting for 30% of an average home’s indoor water consumption.” Therefore, replacing an old toilet might be the simplest way to save water.

4. Low-Flow Showerheads and Faucet Aerators

Low-flow or high-efficiency showerheads use 20% less water. Aerators, an attachment to faucets, save about 1 gallon of water per minute.

5. Shorter Showers

Low-flow showerhead or not, cutting a minute off your shower time will save hundreds of gallons of water per year.

6. Turn Off Water During Tasks

Turning water off as you brush your teeth, shave, or soap up dishes is an easy way to conserve water. Turn the water on when you are ready to rinse.

7. Use Your Dishwasher

Dishwashers use less water than you might think! A standard dishwasher made after 2013 uses 5 gallons or less water per load. An Energy Star-certified dishwasher uses 3.5 gallons or less per cycle. If you are a small household, you can consider a compact dishwasher that uses even less water.

Surprisingly, handwashing dishes use considerably more water than a dishwasher. A low-flow sink faucet uses 1 to 2 gallons of water per minute. Running the tap for 5 minutes to wash dishes will use a minimum of 5 gallons of water, already on par with a standard dishwasher cycle. With bigger families and many dishes, the water use will add up fast. So, using the dishwasher is a water-efficient option.

8. Only Run Dishwasher and Washing Machine When Full

Still, be sure to wait until your dishwasher is full to start a wash cycle. Same goes for clothes washers.

9. Smart Handwashing

If you handwash dishes, there is a method that uses less water. Fill one half of a double sink with hot soapy water. Fill the other half of the sink with clean, cool water. If you have a single sink, use a dishpan or plastic tub for clean water. Put the dirty dishes into soapy water, letting difficult dishes soak longer. Scrub the dishes clean and then dip them into clean water to remove the soap suds. Start with the cleanest dishes first and then move on to the dirtier plates, pots, and pans.

10. Scrape Your Plate Instead of Rinsing It

Instead of rinsing food scraps off plates, scrape off any food scraps into the trash. This goes for plates you'll place in the dishwasher and plates you plan to handwash.

[Change Habits One at a Time](#)

These water conservation practices will change some of your daily habits, which may be a hard adjustment at first. Make changes slowly until they become routine. As you implement more of these practices, you'll be sure to save a significant amount of water and see a drop in your water bill.