

# Go Green

**Ten (10) simple things you can do today to help reduce your environmental impact, save money, and live a happier, healthier life.**

## 1. Save energy to save money

- Set your [thermostat](#) a few degrees lower in the winter and a few degrees higher in the summer to save on heating and cooling costs.
- Install [compact fluorescent light bulbs](#) (CFLs) when your older incandescent bulbs burn out.
- Unplug appliances when you're not using them. Or, use a "[smart](#)" [power strip](#) that senses when appliances are off and cuts "phantom" or "vampire" energy use.
- Wash clothes in cold water whenever possible. As much as 85 percent of the energy used to machine-wash clothes goes to heating the water.
- Use a drying rack or clothesline to save the energy otherwise used during machine drying.

## 2. Save water to save money

- Take shorter showers to reduce water use. This will lower your water and heating bills too.
- Install a [low-flow showerhead](#). They don't cost much, and the water and energy savings can quickly pay back your investment.
- Make sure you have a [faucet aerator](#) on each faucet. These inexpensive appliances conserve heat and water, while keeping water pressure high.
- [Plant drought-tolerant native plants](#) in your garden. Many plants need minimal watering. Find out which occur naturally in your area.

## 3. Less gas = more money (and better health!).

- [Walk or bike](#) to work. This [saves on gas](#) and parking costs while improving your cardiovascular health and reducing your risk of obesity.
- Consider telecommuting if you live far from your work. Or move closer. Even if this means paying more rent, it could save you money in the long term.

## 4. Eat smart.

- If you eat meat, add one meatless meal a week. Meat costs a lot at the store-and it's even more expensive when you consider the related environmental and health costs.
- Buy [locally raised](#), humane, and organic meat, eggs, and dairy whenever you can. Purchasing from local farmers [keeps money in the local economy](#).
- Watch videos about why [local food](#) and [sustainable seafood](#) are so great.
- Whatever your diet, [eat low on the food chain](#) [pdf]. This is especially [true for seafood](#).

## 5. Skip the bottled water.

- Use a water filter to purify tap water instead of buying [bottled water](#). Not only is bottled water expensive, but it [generates large amounts of container waste](#).
- Bring a reusable water bottle, preferably aluminum rather than plastic, with you when traveling or at work.
- Check out this short article for the [latest on bottled water trends](#).

## 6. Think before you buy.

- Go online to find new or gently used secondhand products. Whether you've just moved or are looking to redecorate, consider a service like [craigslist](#) or [FreeSharing](#) to track down furniture, appliances, and other items cheaply or for free.
- Check out garage sales, thrift stores, and consignment shops for clothing and other everyday items.
- When making purchases, make sure you know what's "[Good Stuff](#)" and what isn't.
- Watch a video about [what happens when you buy things](#). Your purchases have a real impact, for better or worse.

## 7. Borrow instead of buying.

- [Borrow from libraries](#) instead of buying personal books and movies. This saves money, not to mention the ink and paper that goes into printing new books.
- Share power tools and other appliances. Get to know your neighbors while cutting down on the number of things cluttering your closet or garage.

## 8. Buy smart.

- Buy in bulk. Purchasing food from bulk bins can save money and packaging.
- Wear clothes that don't need to be dry-cleaned. This saves money and cuts down on toxic chemical use.
- Invest in [high-quality, long-lasting products](#). You might pay more now, but you'll be happy when you don't have to replace items as frequently (and this means less waste!).

## 9. Keep electronics out of the trash.

- Keep your cell phones, [computers](#), and other electronics as long as possible.
- Donate or recycle them responsibly when the time comes. [E-waste contains mercury](#) and other toxics and is a growing environmental problem.
- Recycle cell phones, blackberry, etc.

## 10. Make your own cleaning supplies.

- The big secret: [you can make very effective, non-toxic cleaning products](#) whenever you need them. All you need are a few simple ingredients like baking soda, vinegar, lemon, and soap.
- Making your own cleaning products saves money, time, and packaging-not to mention your indoor air quality.

