

75% of the Planet is covered with water, but only 0.09% of that water is good enough for human consumption AND Accessible

15 EASY WAYS TO SAVE 15% – 35% IN YOUR WATER BILL

AND HELP THE PLANET AT THE SAME TIME.

Things you can change in your house and daily routine to conserve more water.



15 EASY WAYS TO SAVE 15% – 40% IN YOUR WATER BILL AND HELP THE PLANET AT THE SAME TIME.

*Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
and not a drop to drink.*
—Samuel Taylor Coleridge

For most people in Western countries, water is not a critical thing. It is so accessible on demand that we almost don't give it a second thought... until the faucet refuses to give it to us for some unknown reason. It is actually amazing that upon the turn of a knob, you get all the water you want; and it is not only the water itself, but the fact that it is potable (you can actually drink it and use it to take a shower or wash food); it can even be delivered already hot!

I recently read that in other countries things are not as peachy when it comes to obtaining water. In India for example, there are places where people have to walk 2 miles carrying containers to fill them up with water of dubious cleanness and carry it back the 2 miles to their homes. Now, a gallon of water weights a little over 8 Pounds. That means that a 5 gallon container full of water will weigh more than 40 Pounds. Next time you are at the store, pick up a 40 Lbs. dog food bag and carry it around a bit. If you thought that was bad, think that the ones doing this once and sometimes twice a day are young girls. Also consider that there are no roads or sidewalks,



just the irregular dusty (or muddy) ground. A person needs a minimum of 20 Gls. per day to live. So, if the little girl brings 5 Gls. of water twice a day, she is not even bringing enough water for herself for that day. In contrast, Americans use on average about 150 Gls. of water each and every day.

Because of shifting weather patterns, it is not raining as much where it used to, and is raining more where it didn't. A lot of cities word wide are about to become ghost cities because they are running out of water. The aquifers or rivers supplying these cities are not being recharged as they used to.

You can live about seven days without food, but only three without water.

So, the first thing you need to do is think how you would use the water you use if you had to carry it 2 miles. It completely changes your perspective, doesn't it?

Here are several easy ways in which you can use less water and still do the same things you do with it:

BATHROOM:

1. **GOOD:** If you don't have a low-flush toilette (WC), grab a one gallon ziplock bag and fill it with sand or small rocks (no more than 2 inches –5 cm– each), add water until the bag is full, zip it and place it

in the water tank of the toilette opposite to the flushing valve. Make sure that it stays put and doesn't float



away even after several flushes. Alternatively, you can put a 1 liter or a 2 liter plastic bottle also filled with sand or rocks. What this does is keep the volume of the bag (or bottle) from being flushed. Basically you are saving that volume every time you flush.

- 2. **BETTER:** If you are handy and a do-it-yourselfer, you can purchase a dual flush devise and install it yourself. This devise is designed in such a way that now you have two buttons: one for lighter discharges (less water in the flush), and one for the normal discharges.

- 3. **BEST:** Install a low volume toilette.

- 4. **GOOD:** Change your shower head with a low volume one (2.5 gallons per minute –10 Liters per minute–).



- 5. **BETTER:** Also turn the water off when you are lathering. Some of these heads come with a shoot off valve in the head itself.

- 6. **BEST:** Place a 1 or 2 gallon –4 to 8 Liters– bucket in the shower and let it fill when you are showering. Use this water to fill the toilette water tank or to flush it directly.

- 7. **BETTER:** Turn the water off when you are washing your teeth or washing your hands.

- 8. **BEST:** Fill a glass of water (about 8 ounces –240 ml–) and use only that amount when brushing your teeth.

LAWN:

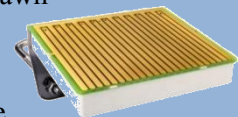
- 9. **GOOD:** If you live in a place where it rains more than 30 inches –75 cm– a year, install a rain barrel so you can catch the rain runoff from the roof of your house. You can use that water to water plant or lawn, to wash the car or to fill a toilette tank. **Note: Do not drink it or wash food with this water.**



- 10. **GOOD:** If you have a sprinkler system to water your lawn, set it to water it one hour before sunrise or one hour after sunset. This prevents loss of water through evaporation.

- 11. **BETTER:** Your lawn will most probably need 1 inch –2.5 cm– of water 2 or 3 times a week. Get several plant pot dishes or cans, mark the 1 inch level on the inside and place them throughout your lawn. Turn the sprinkler system on and see how long it takes to fill the dishes to the 1 inch mark. Set the sprinklers to water for that amount of time.

- 12. **BEST:** Also install a rain sensor so you don't water your lawn during or immediately after it rained. And, whenever possible, take water from a lake, a river or a well to water your lawn. More than 50% of the water used in a house is used to water the lawn.



- 13. **EVEN BETTER:** Landscape your house with local and drought resisting plants and



try to put as little grass as possible. Instead use colored mulch or river rocks or other decorating options. A Zen garden is very nice and relaxing.

14. When you fertilize your lawn, use 25% to 35% less fertilizer than recommended on the bag. A lawn that is over fertilized requires more water to keep (plus it costs more in fertilizer). Look for organic and/or natural fertilizers with slow release. You can also start composting and use that to fertilize your plants.
15. Wash your car(s) over your lawn with eco-friendly detergent late in the afternoon.



16. **BONUS idea:** Use the dishwasher as much as possible, but wait until it is fully loaded. They can use as little as 1 or 2 Gallons to wash a load. Some even have an Eco setting.

There you have it. Remember that using less water is a state of mind. Before you implement any of these techniques, go and look for your water bills and see how much per month your household use on average (try going back 10

—12 months). Then implement as many techniques and keep tabs on how much you are saving each month. Depending on how much you do, you should see a savings of 15% to 30% or even more.

Your water bill probably measures water volume in cubic feet. One cubic foot equals 7.5 Gallons —30 Liters—. You will also notice that they charge you for the amount of water that comes into the house and for the water that comes out (oh yes, that too!). See how much is each. Take a look at the bill to familiarize yourself with it. If you don't understand something, call the Water Department or look it up in the Internet. Try to use no more than 55 Gls. —220 Liters— per person per day. This will come to to about 650 – 700 cubic feet of water per month for a family of three.

—Gaia will thank you.

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