

How to Live a Green Life to Reduce Your Carbon Footprint



There are plenty of ways we can all positively impact the environment. If we want to stop climate change, we all need to take steps to make our lives environmentally-friendly.

The following practices are an easy introduction to green living. Simple acts, such as saving water or planting a garden, give children and pre-teens an opportunity to impact their world today for a better tomorrow. Each tip offers a chance to open up the conversation as to why *everyone* has to do their part for the betterment of the earth.

Saving Water

One of the easiest ways to make sure you're not using too much water is to fix any [leaking](#) sinks, showers and toilets. A leaking toilet alone can waste up to 200 gallons of water in a single day. Try to catch the water you use that might otherwise be wasted. When you rinse your produce in the sink, put a bucket beneath your colander to catch the water. You can use this in your garden, or even refill your toilet with it. You can get [water-efficient appliances](#), such as smaller-sized dishwashers. There are even double-leveled versions that allow you to run small loads while saving water. Installing low-flow sinks, showers and toilets is another way to keep water usage down. You can get faucet [aerators](#) as well, which reduce water consumption.

Manage Electricity

According to the [Department of Energy](#), ten percent of your energy bill boils down to lighting. Replacing your light bulbs with LED or compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) can not only cut back on your consumption, but these bulbs last much longer than others. Move any electronics or fixtures that create heat, such as lights, televisions, and computers, away from your thermostat, as this can cause your AC to run longer than it needs to. Smart thermostats can save energy, too.

You can also do [simple](#) things, such as turning off and unplugging electronics when you're not using them. Keep your thermostat at more neutral temperatures. New, energy-efficient appliances can provide significant savings. Look for ones with a good Energy Star rating to save the most.

Go Solar

Investing in clean and renewable energy is a great way to help the planet. [Solar](#) energy can be a solution. You'll save money on your bill as well as contribute to helping the environment. You may even get a tax break and reclaim up to thirty percent of the installation cost. In [California](#), where energy is pricey and AC is necessary, you can cut your monthly bill from about \$180 all the way down to \$22. Over a thirty-year period, that's about \$50,000 in savings. Not only do you get the benefit of avoiding using fossil fuels, but using solar power helps you emit less carbon. Solar panels are an investment, but one that pays for itself and helps keep our planet healthy.

Offset Your Carbon Footprint

There are plenty of other ways you can cut back on carbon emissions in addition to replacing appliances and turning them off between uses. If you live in a relatively dry area, you can try air [drying](#) your clothes. You could take shorter showers. Even cutting back by one minute can save you ten dollars annually. Get your neighborhood together to make a community [garden](#). Not only do plants help us reduce CO2 levels, but by growing food, you further cut back by relying less on goods that have to be transported across great distances, like fresh produce. Planting trees is another option to give your community a beautiful look, and purify soil and air at the same time. See what you and your neighbors can accomplish with only a few weekends of work.

You don't need to do all of these things at once. Replacing appliances and fixtures can be an expense, so start with one or two, and add more when you can. Being responsible is important not just for us, but for future generations to come.

Image Courtesy of [Pixabay.com](#)