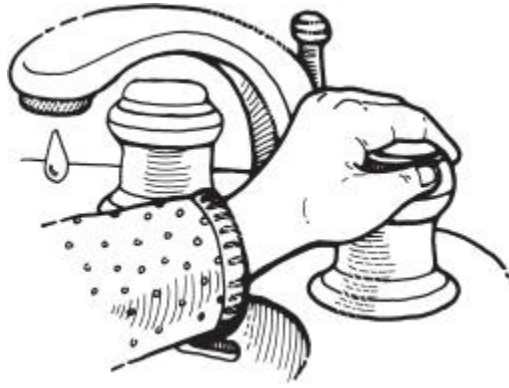


## How to Save Water



Have you ever been around when the water bill arrives at your house? Perhaps you've heard someone say, "Stop wasting water! The water bill is sky high!" Water costs a lot of money. Reducing the amount of water you use not only helps lower your family's water bill, but also helps the environment.

You might be wondering why water is so expensive. After all, water hardly seems scarce. It covers the majority of Earth, right? While that is true, most of Earth's water is in salty oceans. Because we cannot drink salt water, only a small amount of Earth's water is drinkable.

All living things need water to survive, so water is one of our most important natural resources. With a little effort, you can conserve water and also help keep down the water bill. You will be surprised at how easy it is to save water. Read the tips below to learn how.

### Inside

From the time you wake up until you go to bed, pay attention to how much water you use. How can you save water?

Do you wash your hands before you eat breakfast? If you do, turn off the water while you lather the soap. Then, when you finish washing your hands, make sure you turn the faucet all the way off. Also remember to turn off the faucet when you put toothpaste on your toothbrush and while brushing your teeth. If your faucet drips when it is off, see if it can be fixed. If you have some trash to dispose of, do not put it in the toilet. Use a trashcan instead.

Maybe you take a shower in the morning. Try to keep your time in the shower to less than ten minutes. Installing a low-flow showerhead, which reduces the amount of water you use, will help, too. Here is an interesting fact: If everyone in the United States shortened their showers by just a couple of minutes, it would conserve more than 80 billion gallons of water each year! If you let the water in the shower heat up before you get in, don't let it go down the drain. You can catch the water in buckets and use it to water houseplants or your lawn.

Usually you use much less water in a shower than in a bath. A shower is more refreshing, too. However, if you decide to take a bath, be sure to close the drain before you turn on the water. There's no need to let the water warm up first. Remember to adjust the water temperature so that it is not too hot.

### Outside

Be an inspector and check all outdoor faucets for leaks. If you find a leaky faucet, fix it with a wrench. For the lawn, use grasses and other plants that need a minimal amount of water. When you water your lawn, make sure to do it either early in the morning or late in the evening. Watering during the hottest hours of the day increases evaporation. For example, if you water your lawn at 2:00 P.M., more than half of the water can evaporate. Watch where you are watering, too, and adjust any sprinklers that are watering your driveway or a sidewalk.

There are so many ways to save water. For fun, try to do at least one thing every day to conserve water. Do your community a favor and tell your friends some tips for conserving water, too. They will probably thank you. Every drop of water counts!