

Daily Changes to Make a Difference



Garbage

Not all garbage has to be thrown away. Glass bottles, aluminum cans, plastic containers and newspapers can often be recycled. You can start by implementing recycling at home and at your school. Ask your parents if you have curbside pick-up of recyclable materials in your neighborhood and check with a teacher or school administrator about recycling on campus. To determine what can and cannot be recycled visit this site <http://www.wm.com/thinkgreen/what-can-i-recycle.jsp>. Or, see if any of the items you're about to throw away can be reused in your home or school for containers, art projects, bird feeders and more...Use your imagination!

Food scraps can be composted. Your parents, teachers or librarians may know how to find information for you on starting a compost pile at home or at your school. As you toss food scraps onto the pile, they break down into tiny parts, making fertilizer to grow new plants and flowers. See if your school will start a compost in the cafeteria. For more information on composting, what it is and how to do it watch this [video](#).

When you are buying items in the store, pick ones with less packaging, so there's not as much to throw away when you get home. About 1/3 of all garbage we throw away is packaging. Remember to bring your reusable grocery bags to reduce the use of plastic bags!

Energy

Turn off lights and appliances when you leave a room. Remember, whenever electricity is being used at home, fuel is being burned in power plants, polluting the air.

Try to cut down on the number of car trips you take by running as many errands as you can in one trip. If you're only going a short distance, think about walking or riding a bicycle instead of getting a ride in a car.

Carpool with friends or family to school/work or use public transportation if it is available to you.

Water

In some parts of the country there are water shortages. You can conserve the amount of water you use by not letting the water run while you're brushing your teeth. That would save 5 gallons of water each time. In a year, you would save enough water to fill up a swimming pool.

Fix a leaky faucet. Steady drops of water can add up to as much as 9 gallons during a day, enough to fill a big fish tank!

Wildlife

Be respectful of wildlife habitat when you're in a park, on the beach or any other natural area. Never leave litter behind. If you know of species that might be endangered in your area, write letters or emails to your local paper or local leaders, urging them to protect that species' habitat. Or start your own advocacy campaign.

Do not buy products made from any animals which are considered endangered or threatened (ex., crocodile or snakeskin boots or ivory jewelry).

Make sure that products you are using are not tested on animals.

Food

1 in 9 people don't get enough food to eat. Farmland is often used to graze cows for beef, but could be used to produce other crops which could feed many more people than the beef from the cows could. One acre of land can grow 20,000 potatoes, or, if used to grow cattle feed, can produce less than 165 pounds of beef. Consider reducing the amount of meat you consume by participating in meatless Mondays and don't eat meat on Mondays of each week. Also think about eating more meals that are vegetarian or becoming a vegetarian/vegan.

Food waste is a large contributor of methane gas emissions. According to the U.N. Environment Program, roughly 30-40 percent of food grown globally is lost to waste. Be mindful of how much food you purchase and try to compost food that you do not plan to consume.