

A Room-by-Room Guide to  
**Greening your Home**  
from FamilyEducation.com



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# All Around

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- Request an energy audit for your home.
- Check insulation for degradation at least every five years.
- Buy energy-efficient appliances.
- Use natural gas to heat your water.
- Lower your water heater's temperature to about 120 degrees.
- Install a digital, programmable thermostat.
- Install Energy Star-qualified windows. Keep windows closed and sealed so warm air doesn't escape. In summer, close curtains in the morning to reduce the need for air conditioning.
- Replace traditional light bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs).
- Use natural or organic cleaning and pest control products.



# Living Room

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- Install carpeting made of natural fibers.
- Purchase bamboo furniture or furniture made from recycled materials.
- Turn off the lights whenever you leave the room – even if you'll only be gone 10 minutes.
- Water plants with leftover drinking water.
- Plug electronics into power strips and turn the strip off when not in use.



# Kitchen

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- Plug appliances into power strips and turn the strips off when the appliances aren't in use.
- Rinse a sink full of dishes with hot/warm water, and then turn the faucet off while you scrub them with soap and a sponge. Once you've got a good number done, rinse them all off and start on another batch.
- Compost your table scraps.
- Don't use disposable plates, bowls, or utensils.
- Only run the dishwasher when it's full.
- Open the oven as few times as possible when cooking.
- Decide what you want before you open the fridge.
- Snip up your six-pack holders.
- Pack lunches in lunchboxes.
- Recycle cans, jars, paper, batteries, and cardboard boxes.
- Find fun uses for empty jars, such as planters or piggy banks.



# Bedroom

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- Use linens made from organic cotton or hemp.
- Get an organic mattress that doesn't emit toxic fumes.
- Make sure all electronics and lights are turned off before going to bed.
- Turn the thermostat down while you sleep.



# Bathroom

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- Fix leaky faucets.
- Use a low-flow shower head.
- Turn off the faucet while you brush your teeth or shave – turn it back on only when you're done and it's time to rinse.
- Opt for a shower rather than a bath to save water.
- Take shorter showers – use a timer and see how you do!
- Dry your hands on cloth towels.
- Use earth-friendly soaps and shampoos.
- Make an effort to use less toilet paper, and teach your kids to do the same.
- Don't use the toilet to flush tissues, cigarettes, or anything else unusual.



# Laundry Room

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- Use cold water in the washing machine with cold water detergent.
- Don't run the washer or dryer unless they're full.
- Clean the lint filter to reduce energy usage.
- Hang clothes up to dry rather than using the dryer.
- Insulate your water pipes.
- Don't over-dry clothes. Take them out while they're still a bit damp, and you might not need to iron, either.
- Make sure that the dryer's exhaust vent is clean.





# Home Office

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- Buy recycled products for all paper and envelope needs.
- Print on both sides of paper if you can.
- Recycle fully-used paper.
- Use toxin-free inks.
- Send invitations and other correspondence by email rather than paper mail.
- Turn off your computer's monitor when you're not planning to use it immediately. Turn the computer off completely if you won't be using it for an extended period of time.



# Outdoors and Away from Home

- Grow groundcover plants that have low fertilizer, pest-control, and water needs. Lawn grass is high-cost both to the environment and your wallet.
- Shovel snow so you don't need to use salt or gas-fed snow blowers.
- Use a bucket, and not the hose, to wash the car.
- Make sure your kids don't carve things into trees – eventually it can kill them.
- Start a garden to grow your own produce.
- Form a carpool to get kids to and from school and other activities. It will help the environment and cut down on the time you spend driving to and fro. Ride a bike or walk whenever you can.
- Bring canvas bags grocery shopping.

