

[Going Green Bit by Bit](#)

Living a greener lifestyle feels complicated. But you can start with the easy steps and make a real difference, even if it's a small one at first.

Let's start with your light fixtures. As your light bulbs die, replace them with compact fluorescent light bulbs. These cost more at the store but use less energy and last up to 10 times longer, so they can be well worth the money. These are much better than the old fluorescent bulbs which had an awkward greenish cast and slight flicker at times.

Do you drink a lot of bottled water? Stop buying the little bottles and buy a reusable one. A good water bottle is easily washable and you can use tap water, filtered water or buy larger bottles if you just have to have the bottled water taste. But I find just having tap water ice cold helps the flavor tremendously.

If you just can't stand the taste of tap water try a filtration system. A good system can really change the taste and get rid of some of the flavors you don't want in your water.

Master your curbside recycling list. Many communities now offer curbside recycling. If you understand everything that can go into the recycling bin you can recycle quite a bit that might have otherwise gone into the landfill. You can also consider what can be recycled as you shop. Make recycling at home easier by having a separate bin for recycling by your main indoor trash can and elsewhere if convenient.

Use rechargeable batteries when you can and know how to properly dispose of old batteries. Some states now require that you recycle your batteries, but it can be difficult to know where to take them. Take advantage of <http://www.rbrc.org/> and find out how to recycle batteries in your area.

Other things can be recycled too, in ways you may not have thought of. Some Goodwill locations will take old computers and parts. Check <http://www.goodwill.org/page/guest/about/howweoperate/recycling> to learn more about their programs. You can also get rid of old things you don't want through <http://www.freecycle.org>.

Consider water efficient showerheads. A good quality one will keep the noticeable difference to a minimum as you shower yet save quite a bit of water. Also try shortening your shower, which can cut both water and energy use.

Make your home more energy efficient. Even without replacing windows or blinds you can take steps that will make a difference. On sunny fall and winter days opening blinds on the side of the house that the sun shines directly upon the windows can help to heat your home naturally. Keep those blinds closed the rest of time for insulation, of course.

Also try putting on a sweater in winter rather than turning on the heater. Dropping that thermostat by a couple of degrees really can cut your energy usage.

Unplug chargers when they aren't needed. Does your electric toothbrush really need charging 24/7/365? Most can cope well with being charged once a week or even less. Cell phones and other such items also do not need their chargers plugged in all the time.

Other items such as picking local produce and bringing reusable shopping bags rather than getting bags every time at the grocery store may not be as easy but can be quite effective. These require more effort but are not all that difficult.

Living a greener lifestyle is not so impossible as it might feel. A few simple steps can make a difference even on those days you don't feel like trying. Best of all, many of these tips can save you money.

About the Author

Stephanie Foster runs <http://www.greensahm.com/> as a part of her efforts to live a more environmentally friendly lifestyle. Visit her site to learn more about being [environmentally friendly](#).

Source: <http://www.onlineearnings.net>