



# Why do we need to save water?

97.5% of the world's water is locked in seas and oceans, too salty for human use. And most of the remaining 2.5% is in the ice caps. So we humans depend on the tiny bit available as fresh water – an essential natural resource for life.

But we don't just use water for drinking. We wash in it, clean with it, and use it to produce everything from clothing to food. Crop production – including feed for livestock and biofuels – is putting a great strain on fresh water supplies.

## Facts about using water:

- 150 is the average number of litres each of us uses every day to wash, cook and clean.
- 70% of all freshwater is used to produce the food we eat.
- 58 bathtubs of water are used per person, per day to make the food we eat and the things we buy.
- 36% How much a vegetarian diet could shrink your food-related water footprint.
- 22,454 pints of water were used to make your smartphone.

## Things you can do to conserve water:

- **Turn off the taps.** Don't let your water consumption run out of control. Save six litres of water a minute by turning off your tap while you brush your teeth. Fix leaky taps too – and stop what could be 60 litres of water going straight down the drain every week.
- **Boil what you need** - Save water, money and energy by only boiling as many cups of water as you need.

# Save Water - Save Energy



- **Shower with less** - Every minute you spend in a power shower uses up to 17 litres of water. Set a timer on your phone to keep your showers short, sweet and water-saving. Switching to an efficient shower head will allow you to lather up in less water, which means you'll save water and cut your bills.
- **Save up your dirty clothes** - Washing a full machine load of clothes uses less water and energy than two half-loads. This means lower bills as well.
- **Get a low-flush toilet** - The average UK household flushes the loo 5,000 times per year. Modern dual-flush systems save huge amounts of water. They use just six litres – or four with a reduced flush – much less than the 13 litres for each old-style single flush. If you can't invest in a new loo, get a water-saving bag for your old-style toilet.
- **Eat less meat** - Rearing animals for meat and dairy is incredibly water-intensive. By cutting down on the amount of meat you eat, you can reduce your water footprint drastically.
- **Steam your veggies** - Steam your food to cut water usage and retain more of the natural nutrients. If you do boil, try using the leftover water as a tasty stock for soups or let it cool and use it to water plants.
- **Reduce food waste**  
It takes a lot of water to produce our cereal, fruit and other food. More than half of the seven million tonnes of food and drink UK households bin every year could be eaten. Wasting less food could save you £480 a year. Get some handy advice from Love Food Hate Waste.

- **Time your gardening** - Water outdoor plants in the early morning or at the end of the day to stop water immediately evaporating in sunlight and heat. Water the soil so that the liquid goes straight to the roots, where it's needed.
- **In a heatwave, animals need water too** - Instead of watering your lawn, leave out a water-filled container, like a casserole dish, for birds to drink from and wash. Thirsty bees and other insects will need a saucer or bowl with water and stones in it.
- **Catch rainwater** - Installing water butts saves up to 5,000 litres of water a year and your plants will thank you for rainwater rather than treated tap water. You can also cut water use by 33% by watering plants manually instead of using automatic sprinklers.
- **No more washing up** - Incredibly, if you fill up the dishwasher completely each time you run it, you'll use less water than you would doing the washing up. Yes, even if you're using a washing-up bowl. What better excuse to go and have a nice sit down? Find out more about the most water and energy efficient ways to run your appliances from the Energy Saving Trust.
- **Be plumbing prepared** - Regularly check your kitchen pipes and the dishwasher hose for slow leaks and find out where your household stop valve is and make sure that you can turn it on and off. Find a contact number for your water supplier, so that if you find a leak you can let them know and stop water being wasted.
- **Don't fund the water-grabbers** - Some companies and investors that buy up land around the world contribute to water scarcity and pollution. They sometimes deny local people access to water, pollute watercourses or exhaust supplies. This can affect the ability of local communities to farm and access safe drinking water. This is known as 'watergrabbing'.

- Make sure you know where your savings or pension are invested and check how the companies that make the products you use treat local water sources. That way you'll know you're not supporting water wastage and contamination.

## **SLOW THE FLOW**

**The government can take action too.  
Around the world, governments can  
help to save fresh water and  
prevent water pollution by:**

- ◆ encouraging lower water diets – including reduced meat consumption.
- ◆ supporting industry to make water-intensive products last longer.
- ◆ providing consumers with the tools to understand the water impacts of the things they buy.
- ◆ making laws to increase water recycling.
- ◆ preventing people and companies from polluting waterways by making laws against using toxic chemicals which could pollute our soils.
- ◆ measuring water use and setting targets to reduce it.
- ◆ obliging large companies to measure and manage the amount of resources they use.

# **Saving Water is Simple**