

Ways to Go Green

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If you haven't heard about the future of our planet yet, you might be living under a rock. Jokes aside, this is a huge issue that needs your attention. You may be thinking to yourself, "What could I possibly do to help save our planet?" It sounds scary, but there are so many easy, everyday things you can do to help reverse the clock.

1. Conserve/reduce time and energy

Shower length:

Whether it be in the morning or night, most people find taking a shower to be an extremely relaxing experience. Because of this, we can often find ourselves standing in the shower for hours on end. While this is an extremely easy thing to fall into, it's incredibly harmful to the planet. Water treatment is one of the big factors, as stated by DoNation, "the UK water industry produces 5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions each year."

Turning off the lights:

Sometimes we are in a morning rush and during that rush, we forget one of the most important things we were always taught to do: turn the lights out. Turning off the lights has major benefits such as saving money and most importantly saving energy. When you save this energy you also help reduce carbon emission and other non-renewable resources. Of course, this all depends on the type of light bulbs you have. If you have incandescent light bulbs, it is essential to turn them off whenever you leave the room; however, if you have fluorescent light bulbs, you can wait up to 15 minutes to turn them off when you leave the room.

Driving:

Driving is an essential part of everyone's lives, whether it's driving to school every day or midnight cruises because you're bored. We need cars, right? Well, maybe not. Carpooling is a great option to get to school, especially if you don't have your license yet. There's plenty of public transportation available as well, from Uber to the bus. According to Cheap Auto Insurance, one way to reduce pollution that your car emits is reducing idle time and changing air filters. By doing these small things, you can make a change to improve our environment.



2. Reuse and Recycle

Reuse (paper, bags, bottles):

Reusing is one of the best ways to help the environment. As commonly seen today, more people are beginning to use reusable water bottles such as the infamous brand “Hydro Flask”. Besides being stylish and trendy, they have very useful benefits to improve the Earth. One benefit of using reusable water bottles is that it lowers the amount of plastic waste in landfills. According to Daily Infographic, about 50 billion plastic water bottles are made each year in the US while $\frac{1}{5}$ of those are being recycled properly. Another benefit to using reusable water bottles is it can save up to 1.1 million ocean lives yearly. Yes, the #savetheturtles is true. Another item we can reuse bags for is the grocery or shopping. When a sample of students at Oak Hills High School was surveyed, it was estimated that 87% use plastic bags when they go shopping. That is a lot of plastic that is going to waste and affecting the environment. Bags we can use to help the environment are commonly known as tote bags. Tote bags are reused, harmful material thus the amount of plastic is lessened in landfills and the oceans. Finally, another simple way we can reuse and help the Earth is by reusing the paper we use. This means using the front and back of your paper and utilize the space that you have.

Recycle!!!:

Recycling is one of the most well-known ways to help the planet. Unfortunately, not everyone is aware of what you can and cannot recycle. Paper, cardboard, plastic, aluminum/metal, and glass are some of the categories that can typically be recycled. Some of the items that cannot be recycled, however, are plastic bags, batteries, Christmas lights, etc. A more extensive list can be found [here](#).



3. Be Aware:

One of the biggest ways to help the Earth we live on is by being aware. You can “be aware” in a variety of ways. One way is by looking at the products you buy closely. A lot of the products that we love are not animal cruelty-free nor can they be recycled. By not checking for those things, brands continue to get more money and with more money comes more of the damaging products thus leading to the environment worsening. In conclusion, become a better, smarter, more aware consumer. If you would like to know all of the products that use animal testing visit [here](#).

Whether it's investing in a reusable water bottle or biking every day to school, there are ways to help conserve the beautiful planet that we call home. Sure, planting hundreds of millions of trees would do some good, but not everything has to be that extreme. To see real change, your contribution (no matter how small) is needed. If you would like more information on ways you can improve our world visit [here](#) or [here](#).