

# Splash!

Water resources education

## Water-Saving Tips

### 15 Simple and Fun Ways to Save Water



1. **When you brush your teeth or wash your face, use only the water you need — don't waste!** By turning the water off when doing these things, you can save 10 gallons a day.
2. **Short showers keep you fresh for hours!** A 10-minute shower easily can be cut in half — and you'll get just as clean. Cutting your shower time in half can save gallons per shower.
3. **Splish-splash, but don't fill up the bath!** Full-tub baths use between 40 and 60 gallons of water. Use the minimum amount of water needed for a bath by closing the drain first and filling the tub only one-third full. Remember, plug up the tub before turning on the water. The initial burst of cold water can be warmed by adding hot water later.
4. **Why rush to flush?** Some toilets use as many as 6 gallons per flush. Tissues, insects and the like belong in the trash, not the toilet.
5. **Go with the low flow!** You can save even more water in the shower by replacing a standard showerhead with a low-flow version. Your family can purchase one for roughly \$6, and they are easy to install. A new showerhead can save your family almost 30 gallons a day.

Also, most toilets use more water than they need. If your family installs a low-flow toilet, you can save about 4 gallons a flush. A low-flow toilet can save you and your family a significant quantity of water a year.

6. **Another tip: fix a drip.** If you notice a leaky faucet or toilet, tell your folks about

it. A dripping faucet can waste far more water in a single day than one person needs for drinking in an entire week.

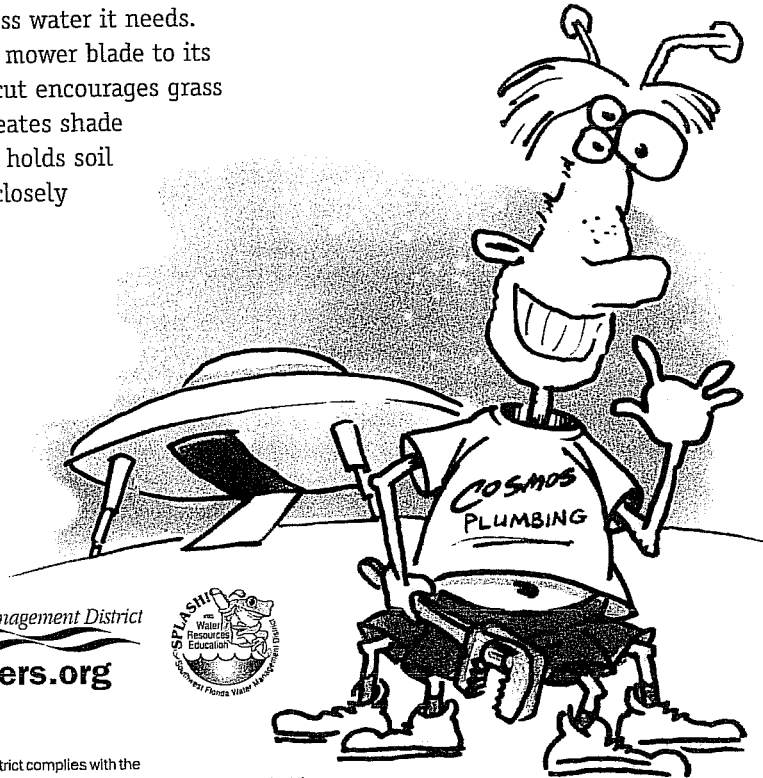
A survey has shown that 1-in-5 toilets leak. An easy way to tell is to drop some food coloring into the toilet tank. Check 15 minutes later for the color to appear in the toilet bowl. If color does appear without additional flushing, then you have a leak. (Flush as soon as the test is done since food coloring may stain the tank.)

Most toilet leaks are caused from a faulty rubber flapper or flush valve at the bottom of the tank. These are inexpensive, easy to replace and can be found in hardware and home improvement stores. Repairing leaks is an easy, inexpensive way to save your family thousands of gallons of water every year.

7. **Saving water doing dishes leaves some water for the fishes!** When washing dishes by hand, don't keep the water running. A basin of wash water and one of rinse water will do the job just as well.
8. **To save the most, choose compost!** Kitchen sink disposals require lots of water to operate properly. Start a compost pile as an alternate method of disposing food waste instead of using a garbage disposal.

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9. **Take a load off your mind!** Run only full loads in the washing machine or dishwasher. Washing machines use an average of 55 gallons a load and dishwashers about 15 gallons a load. The fewer loads you run, the more water you save. Running the machines when they're full will save you time, energy — and water.
10. **Rather than play with a water toy, find something else you enjoy!** Avoid playing with outdoor water toys that require a constant stream of water to work. These toys can use between 150 and 300 gallons every half hour. Find other fun outdoor activities that don't require you to leave the water running.
11. **When it's hotter, you'll lose more water.** Water the lawn only early in the morning or after the sun sets when water will not be wasted through evaporation in the hot sun. When watering, avoid using a fine spray because much of the water will be lost in the wind or to evaporation. Know and follow the water restrictions in your area.
12. **If the grass isn't tall, why mow at all?** The taller the grass is, the less water it needs. When mowing, raise the mower blade to its highest level. A higher cut encourages grass roots to grow deeper, creates shade that cools the roots and holds soil moisture better than a closely trimmed lawn.
13. **Watering rarely is watering fairly!** In the absence of rainfall, lawns need watering once every 3 to 5 days during summer and every 7 to 14 days during winter. Good soakings are better for your lawn than frequent short sprinklings. A hearty rainfall will keep your lawn moist for several days.
14. **Wash the car with elbow grease, and wasting water will decrease!** When washing the car, use a bucket, rag and a hose with a shut-off nozzle. Washing your car by spraying it clean can use as much as 100 gallons. You can get your car just as clean and cut water use to 15 gallons if you use the hose only to wet down and rinse it off, doing the rest of the washing by hand.
15. **Wash the car in the shade, and water lost will now be saved!** Washing your car in the shade will keep the water you use from evaporating as quickly. Use biodegradable soap (soap that doesn't harm the environment), and wash the car so that the extra water flows onto a lawn or plant bed. Grass, plants and trees could use the extra water much more than your driveway or sidewalk.



Southwest Florida *Water Management District*

[www.WaterMatters.org](http://www.WaterMatters.org)



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