

Easily green your daily routine



This year's theme for World Environment Day (WED) is "Your planet needs you! UNite to combat climate change". But too often we are presented with environmental problems without being given the tools to act. WED is about taking action to be a part of the solution. And the **daily do something tips** are a great start.

We can all do our part to protect the planet by **using less** and **acting more**. Going green is not as difficult as you might think. Here we walk you through 30 easy ways to green your daily routine, from the moment you hit snooze on your solar-powered alarm clock to the point when you crawl into your eco-washed, organic cotton sheets.

Make your WED commitment today. But don't stop at today and don't stop here. Try to incorporate all of these into your life as a matter of routine. Get others to do so the same. And get involved!

In general:

- Plant a tree! Help achieve UNEP's billion tree campaign target of planting seven billion trees – one for every person on the planet – by the end of **this** year! Three billion are planted. Five billion are pledged. On every continent in the world trees can be planted in June, so start your efforts on WED.
- Find needy homes or charitable organizations for things that you no longer need or want rather than throwing it away.

Daily routine:

At home

- It would seem to go without saying, but many of us forget that we can save water in simple ways like not letting the tap run while shaving, washing your face, or brushing your teeth.
- Insulating your water heater will help save valuable energy, and you can go the extra mile by installing showerheads with a low flow in your bathrooms for bathing purposes to help save water. You can also put a timer on your heaters to save power.

- Using an electric razor or hand razor with replaceable blades instead of disposable razors goes a long way to cutting back on waste. And plant a tree.
- Use towels for drying your face and hands instead of tissues that are used and thrown away. Also, hang your towels to dry so that they can be reused several times. You are after all clean when you use them!
- Juice or yoghurt lovers can do their bit by buying juice in concentrates and yoghurt in reusable containers instead of single serving packages.
- Many of us like to leaf through the paper as we munch on breakfast, but consider reading the dailies in communal spaces like the office or coffee shops. However, if you prefer to have your own copy, make sure you recycle!
- When packing your lunch, opt for reusable containers for food storage instead of wrapping the food with aluminum foil or plastic wrap.
- As you leave the house, don't forget to switch off all the lights and appliances at the wall unit (if you have this feature) and unplug chargers as they continue to consume even if they are not charging; saving energy helps reduce air pollution.

Getting to work:

- Don't go anywhere without your cloth bag so you can just say no to plastic whenever you shop.
- Radical as it may seem, in today's "the easier the better" society, the easiest way to reduce your carbon footprint is by avoiding driving altogether. Power down and instead tries biking, walking, carpooling, public transport or an occasional telecommute.
- If you have no other choice than to drive to work, look for the most fuel-efficient car model for your next purchase and keep your tyres inflated to the correct pressure.
- If you're one of the lucky few blessed with clear stretches of road on your way to work, use cruise control, as it saves fuel and also helps you maintain a constant speed.

- If you're among the majority of drivers who spend their mornings stuck in traffic, consider turning your engine off if you will be idling for long periods of time. And plant a tree.
- For those who suffer from road rage, remember that aggressive driving lowers your mileage, so if you want to save on fuel and save the planet while you're at it, accelerate gradually something to keep that in mind the next time that bad driver cuts you off! Just count to 10 and say the planet needs me!

At work:

- Do you have a morning hot drink routine? Using a washable mug is an environmentally-friendly alternative to non-biodegradable styrofoam or plastic cups.
- Leave a cup and reusable bottle for water at work to eliminate buying drinks, which get served in plastic cups, or bottled water. 80% of plastic bottles are recyclable but only 20% are actually recycled.
- When you need a pad for lists and messages, turn over an old document and write on the back of that instead.
- If there isn't an office recycling system, start one yourself! Recycling our trash actually contributes to reducing global warming emissions. And it is estimated that 75% of what is thrown in the trash could actually be recycled, though currently only 25% is.
- When you must have a paper copy, make sure you default your printer option to use both sides. This is an easy tree-saver!
- Most computer accessories like ink cartridges and CDs and DVDs are made of materials that could be reused. Computer cords and speakers are fairly standardized, meaning they can be used for a variety of computer models and makes.
- Lower your office's carbon footprint by seeing computers, monitors, printers, copiers, speakers and other business equipment to their energy saving feature and turning them off at the end of the day. And plant a tree!
- Turning off all unnecessary lights, especially in unused offices and conference rooms is an easy way to save energy.
- If you're in search of something to personalize your workspace, look no further than the humble houseplant. Houseplants are good for the environment because they remove quantities of pollutants present in the air.

After a long day:

- In the summer/warmer months, consider using an interior fan in conjunction with your window air-conditioner to spread the cooled air more effectively through your home. While you're at it, in winter, lower your thermostat and put on a jumper. In summer, increase it and wear lighter clothes, you will also save money!
- Don't place lamps or TV sets near your air-conditioning thermostat as it senses heat from these appliances, which can cause the air-conditioner to run longer than necessary.
- When cooking dinner, match the size of the pan to the size of the heating element to lower energy wastage.
- When you are feeling at your laziest, don't throw clean clothes in the hamper to avoid hanging them up! Wear jeans more than once...
- When you wash, use only eco-friendly products in your home. It's best for you and the environment! And did we mention plant a tree!



*There's enough in the world
for everyone's need*

*But not enough in the world
for everyone's greed.*