

## **43 wallet-friendly tips for reducing your water use.**



### **IN THE KITCHEN**

- 1) Post reminder notes over all your sinks, beginning with the kitchen.
- 2) Don't rinse scraps of food down the sink after dinner. Scrape them into your garbage pail.
- 3) Do dishes in lukewarm water.
- 4) While waiting for the dishwasher to warm up, use the cooler stream to fill up your pet's water bowl, or...
- 5) ... fill the ice cube trays, or
- 6) ... fill reusable water bottles or a water pitcher that you keep in the fridge.
- 7) If you absolutely need hot water, consider heating up a teakettle at dish time and supplementing it with the cooler water right out of the faucet. (Rubber gloves are recommended.)
- 8) Got ice cubes left over in water glasses after dinner? Toss them onto the lawn, or into potted plants.
- 9) Fix that leaky kitchen faucet and any other leaks around the house. That drip, drip, drip may not seem like a lot but could waste hundreds of gallons a year.
- 10) Not ready to spend big on a water-conserving dishwasher, washing machine or toilet? How about efficient new faucet aerators and shower heads?
- 11) Only use your dishwasher when you've got a full load.
- 12) If you do dishes by hand, don't rinse them under running water. Fill the sink half-way up, and rinse.
- 13) No dishwasher? Consider paper plates and cups if you're hosting a huge bash. (Before you buy, find out which ones can go in your compost bin or your city's recycling bin.)

### **IN THE LAUNDRY ROOM**

- 14) Wait until you have a full load before washing clothes.
- 15) ... but if that is not an option, readjust the load-size control.
- 16) Stop and think about the age of your washing machine (and dishwasher). If they're 10 years or older, they're not as water efficient as they could be. (There are rebates for energy and water efficient washing machines!)
- 17) If your washing machine is old enough to drive, consider using a

coin laundry. It just might save you money.

18) Use the Internet to check out available appliance rebates at [www.ocwatersmart.com](http://www.ocwatersmart.com)

### **IN THE BATHROOM**

19) Place a cup and refillable water bottle in the bathroom for tooth brushing.

20) Don't walk away while the shower is "warming up." Be brave. ;)

21) Position a sturdy plastic bucket or pitcher in your shower to collect the cooler water and then use it in your garden or to fill a watering can for your potted plants.

22) Aim for a three-minute shower. (Pretend you're in the military.) Here's the drill: Get wet. Shampoo. Condition. Scrub down. Rinse off. Bonus points if you turn the water off during your shampoo and scrub down.

23) Use a kitchen timer in the bathroom to track your shower time. The timer function on your smartphone works too.

24) If your bathroom sink takes forever to warm up, use a splash of heated teakettle water combined with tap water in a bowl to wash your face before bed.

25) Don't let the water run while you're shaving.

26) Use this simple test to make sure your toilet tank is not leaking into the bowl: Put a few drops of food-safe dye in the tank. If the color becomes visible in the bowl, you've got a leak.

27) Don't flush the toilet bowl just to throw away stuff, like a tissue. That's what the trashcan is for.

### **BEYOND THE FRONT DOOR**

28) Do you shower at the gym? Still keep it short.

29) Don't wash your car in the driveway. Why? It can use up to 100 gallons of water and the water runoff will send debris and toxins into the storm drains and into the ocean. If you do want to wash your car, only use an automatic shut-off nozzle, and wash your car on the lawn! The lawn will be happy with the extra water.

30) Take "The Dirty Car Pledge" at [LAWaterkeeper.org](http://LAWaterkeeper.org) and vow not to wash your car for 60 days. You'll get a blue sticker to put on your dirty car and can then share the image on social media using #DirtyCarPledge.

31) Stop food servers before they serve you glasses of H<sub>2</sub>O at your table,

unless you intend to drink them.

32) Wash your dog at a self-serve pet wash or take Buster to a groomer.

### **IN THE YARD**

33) Aerating your lawn — punching little holes through the compacted soil below — can often help reducing watering needs as the water more easily reaches the root systems.

34) Make sure your sprinkler heads are water thrifty. (Rebates on water-efficient sprinkler heads: [www.ocwatersmart.com](http://www.ocwatersmart.com))

35) Adjust sprinklers to hit only the lawn, not the sidewalk, the front porch and your neighbor's front porch.

36) Only water twice a week, Tuesdays and Fridays.

37) Scale back your sprinklers' run time by two to three minutes.

38) Sweep sidewalks instead of using a hose to do the dirty work.

39) Shop around for rain barrels now, so you're ready when the rain finally hits. Rebates available at [www.ocwatersmart.com](http://www.ocwatersmart.com)

40) Make sure your hoses have water-efficient automatic shut-off spray nozzles, and get rubber washers to fix any leaks. You can waste eight gallons or more of water by the time you have walked back to the spigot to turn it off.

41) If you know you want to tear up the lawn but just don't have a design yet, consider letting it go brown until you make up your mind. The best time to plant California natives is in the fall.

42) Price pool covers. The average pool can lose a jaw-dropping 20,000 gallons a year to evaporation.

43) Use mulch or composting on bare soil and around plants. Three (3) inches of mulch is ideal. The plants will need less water because the mulch reduces evaporation, which keeps the moisture in and the soil cooler.