

# 20 tips to tip the scales



# for a cleaner river & a greener world

*Nothing's too small to make a difference. Small steps lead to big changes, so why not start today by incorporating one or more of the following changes into your lifestyle?*

- 1. Slow the pace of your life.** Our hurry-up, multi-tasking lifestyles take a toll on our emotions & actions, causing unnecessary stress, thoughtless consumption, speeding cars, & erratic, poorly considered choices. Leave a cushion of time to arrive early at appointments.
- 2. Walk, bike or take public transportation** whenever, wherever you can.
- 3.** If you must drive, **increase fuel efficiency by driving more slowly**, maintaining air pressure on your tires, carpooling whenever possible & bundling your errands. Drive the most fuel-efficient vehicle you can. If you're in the new car market, think hybrid.
- 4. Become a thoughtful consumer** by posing the following questions for every purchase: Do I need it? Can I afford it? Can I borrow one? How was it made? How will I dispose of it? Reduce impulse buys by delaying purchases whenever possible.
- 5.** When buying new appliances, **select energy-efficient & water-conserving models**, especially ones bearing the EPA's Energy Star label. Wait till you have a full load before running a washing machine or dishwasher. Use large appliances – dishwashers/washers/driers – in the early morning or evening to reduce demands on the energy grid.
- 6. Buy used.** If you determine that you need an item, consider buying used. This will save money, packaging, & the materials & energy needed to produce the item new. It will also help keep used items in use & out of the landfill.
- 7. Eliminate unnecessary disposables.** Use cloth rags, cloth napkins, cloth towels, ceramic dishes & glass glasses etc. Think reusables – not disposables.
- 8. Reuse paper**, such as paper towels, & paper napkins. Keep the back side of office paper handy for printing out e-mails & as scratch paper.
- 9. Use green cleaning agents in your home & office** that are environmentally friendly & non-toxic. Consider old standbys like baking soda, vinegar & lemon juice. Avoid putting pesticides on your lawn & garden, to reduce contaminated runoff.
- 10. Reconnect with nature** – our precious environment – by spending as much time outdoors as possible. Hike, walk or prepare a picnic!



11. **Buy locally** whenever possible, especially food. Organic food – if available – is your best choice, as there is no after-trail of fertilizers or pesticides. It tastes better too, & less fossil fuels are needed for its transportation & delivery.
12. Organize a campaign to **clean up litter** off a roadside. Be sure to separate out recyclables like aluminum, glass, cardboard, etc.
13. **Consider living in a smaller space:** the “not-so-big” home. Your heating & cooling costs will decline &, with less space to fill, you’re less likely to buy unnecessary things.
14. **Conserve water** by employing water-saving techniques such as taking shorter showers; installing water-conserving showerhead(s); & using a low-flush toilet. Try not to keep the water running continuously while brushing your teeth, washing dishes, etc.
15. **Conserve energy** by disconnecting appliances that are not in use, such as microwaves, coffeemakers, televisions, etc. Turn off your computer at the end of your work day. Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescents. Add or subtract clothing rather than adjusting the thermostat.
16. **Reduce your personal waste stream** (the average American throws out 4.5 pounds of waste per day) by composting your organic waste.
17. **Look for paper products with recycled or post-consumer waste content.** Ask your local paper supplier to sell chlorine-free paper products. They are available, but suppliers need to know there is a demand for them.
18. **Get involved with local government** planning issues to ensure that your community uses its land & natural resources in a sustainable way.
19. **Work with teachers & school officials** to make sure that your child’s curriculum includes environmental education.
20. **Share your ideas with others.** Start a simplicity circle, a group of people meeting regularly to share ideas & take steps to simplify their life. For information see *The Circle of Simplicity* by Cecile Andrews, and visit [www.seedsofsimplicity.org](http://www.seedsofsimplicity.org).

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