

Top Tips for saving water in the home and in the garden



Everyone can save water, whether they are on a water meter or an unmeasured supply. But if you have a water meter you can also make savings.

By saving water you will

- help the environment
- help reduce your water bill if you are on a meter
- help protect a valuable resource.

At South West Water we are also committed to saving water. We take great pride in the good safe drinking water we produce, and we don't like to see it wasted.

We have met all our leakage targets since they were first set by the water industry regulator Ofwat, and we have an industry-leading record in terms of litres lost per kilometre of pipe.

In this leaflet there are lots of tips and suggestions about how everyone can save water in the home and the garden.

Contact us

Order water conservation products online:
southwestwater.co.uk/freekit

Ask us a question:

Email: waterconservation@southwestwater.co.uk

Telephone: 0800 378937

Business customer?

Source for Business provides water efficiency, water management, sewerage, laboratory and environmental services that deliver real efficiencies and peace of mind for our customers. To find out how we can help your business, call 0800 2300 756 or go to sourceforbusiness.co.uk

Where you are already using the tip, tick 'do now'. Tick 'will do' for any you plan to start doing in the future.

In the kitchen	Do now	Will do
Use a bowl for washing dishes and rinsing vegetables, not a running tap.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you do need to run a tap, turn it down to a trickle – it will work just as well and use up to 50% less water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Save washing-up until you have a full load to do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New washing machines and dishwashers can use 50% less water than some older machines. Check before you buy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Only use your machine when it is fully loaded. Choose the eco-cycle if your machine has this option.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combination boiler? Run your hot tap SLOWLY and choose times when the heating is turned on to minimise the cold water that runs to waste before the hot comes through.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When you are running your tap to hot, catch any water running to waste in an old milk bottle and use it for watering plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In the bathroom	Do now	Will do
Take a shower rather than a bath. But beware – a power shower uses twice as much water as a bath, so make this type a quick one.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wait until you are ready before turning on your shower. Cut your time and save 10 litres or more per minute.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you have a mixer shower, fit an aerated shower head and reduce the flow rate to six litres per minute.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use a plug in the basin for washing and a glass of water for cleaning your teeth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Try a low water use micro-fibre cloth for all surface cleaning in the bathroom and around the house.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total =		

Saving water in the home (continued)

In the toilet	Do now	Will do
Older toilet? Ask for a free Hippo or Save-a-flush device to save up to 2½ litres per flush (see further information on back page).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fit a dual-flush cistern or convert your existing cistern. Make sure all the family know how to use it correctly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check the water level in all cisterns at least once a year. Adjust the float lower to reduce the level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check none of the overflows are running outside – look out for wet patches on paths.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Many modern toilets have overflows that run into the toilet pan. Check regularly! Try a coloured toilet freshener in the cistern to help spot a leaking overflow.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total =		

Avoiding leaks	Do now	Will do
Read your meter each month as a minimum. Work out and compare how much water you use per day and per week.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use our online water calculator at southwestwater.co.uk/calculator to work out how much you could save by switching to a meter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you are not on a meter, keep a look out for wet patches that never dry out above your service pipe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you are on a meter, check that it stops turning when there is no water being used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask about a simple leak alarm that is easy to fit without any tools (see further information on back page).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total =		

Know your plumbing	Do now	Will do
Do you know where your main stop tap is and that it works correctly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you are leaving your property for a period turn off your water at the main stop tap	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you know how to turn off your hot water and make it safe?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where pipes are fitted in unheated areas, insulate them against frost or heat damage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fix that drip! A dripping tap can cost £50 per year in water and sewerage charges. A new tap washer costs pence and is quick to fit.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make sure the levels in all your toilet cisterns and storage tanks are checked each year. They should be set to about 2cm below the overflow pipe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Invest in a water butt. The average roof collects about 300 butts full of rain per year. And it's all completely free!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total =		

In the home – how did you do?	Do now	Will do
Enter your total scores here (out of 28).		+
Total 'Green level' =		

Saving water in the garden

Good garden design	Do now	Will do
Plan your garden for low watering requirements. Create shading and natural wind breaks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choose plants that require little water. Mulch and water thoroughly when planting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choose thick, grey and silvery-leaved plants which usually need less water. Large-leaved plants generally need more.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Avoid open south-facing areas – provide some shelter from sun and wind.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide good ground cover. This reduces weeds and shades roots from the drying sun and wind.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total =		

Patio planting	Do now	Will do
Add water-retaining gel to the lower half of compost in planters and hanging baskets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stand pots on a base of water-retaining gravel or sand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choose sheltered positions out of direct sun and wind. Group planters together to provide some shelter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fit a drip irrigation system direct to your water butt. Save time, save forgetting to water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water early in the morning or after sundown. Water direct to the roots, avoiding the foliage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total =		

Saving water in the garden (continued)

Using your hose	Do now	Will do
Avoid using your hose if you can. It will use around 16 litres every minute.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fit a trigger gun to your hose but don't forget to turn off at the tap when you're done.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Avoid using a sprinkler as it can do more harm than good by encouraging shallow root growth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do not leave your hose hanging into a pond, tank or pool – you could be breaking the Water Regulations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check your hose for leaks. A repair kit costs a couple of pounds and could save you a whole lot more.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total =		

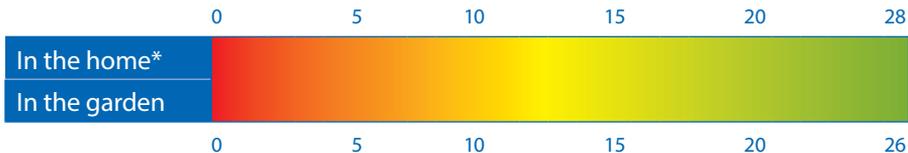
During dry spells	Do now	Will do
Adjust your lawnmower to cut your grass longer – this will shade the roots from the sun.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leave cuttings on the lawn – they will form a mulch that protects and feeds the grass.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Avoid competition – keep lawns and beds weed-free, but avoid hoeing during dry weather.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water seedlings and planters around the roots early in the morning or in the cooler evening. Most mature plants will survive a drought.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Add mulch around your borders – this will keep your soil cooler and deter weeds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kids love playing with water! Avoid deep or large paddling pools. Re-use play water for plants in the evening.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total =		

Using rainwater	Do now	Will do
Invest in a water butt. The average roof collects around 300 full water butts of rain per year. Catch it before it goes down the drain.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connect your water butt direct to the downpipe with a special rain diverter (see back page).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use your rainwater for watering the garden, washing the car, cleaning paths and windows and topping up ponds (fish prefer rainwater).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fit a water butt direct to sheds and greenhouses – right where you need them. Remember, rainwater all comes free and is delivered direct to your roof.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fit more water butts to provide for longer dry spells. You can use a joining kit to connect two or more together.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total =		

In the garden – how did you do?	Do now	Will do
Enter your total scores here (out of 26).		+
Total 'Green level' =		

Compare your 'Do now' scores with your 'Green level' scores on the chart below. The more you've decided you 'Will do' the higher your savings will be.

The higher your scores – the 'greener' you are!



* Your total from page 5