

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 reduce your water bill if you are on a meter
- help protect the environment
- help protect a precious resource
- reduce the amount of energy and money wasted in extra hot water use.

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

We have met all our leakage targets set by the water industry regulator Ofwat and we have an industry-leading record in reducing 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

To order our water products online, go to
southwestwater.co.uk/freekit

To order a water butt online, go to
southwestwater.co.uk/waterbutts

Ask us a question:

Email: waterconservation@southwestwater.co.uk

Saving water in the home

If you are already using the tip, tick 'Do now'. Tick 'Will do' for things 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 can use 50% less water than some older machines. Check before you buy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Only use your washing machine and dishwasher when they are fully loaded. Choose the eco-cycle if your machine has this option.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combination boiler? Run your hot water tap SLOWLY and choose times when the heating is turned on to minimise the cold water that runs to waste before the hot water comes through.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Total score

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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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. Could you turn off your shower while shampooing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you have a mixer shower, fit an aerated shower head and reduce the flow rate to seven 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 re-usable microfibre cloth for all surface cleaning in the bathroom and around the house. If you do use cleaning wipes, please don't flush them down the loo!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Total score

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Saving water in the home (continued)

In the toilet	Do now	Will do
Older toilet (pre-2001)? Ask us for a free Hippo bag to save up to 2.5 litres per flush.	<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 toilets are 'leaky loos'! Try putting a piece of dry toilet paper on the back of the pan (wait for half an hour after flushing) to help spot a leak.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total score		

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"/>
Total score		

Saving water in the home (continued)

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 a few pence and is quick to fit.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make sure the levels in your storage tanks are checked each year. They should be set to about 2cm below the overflow pipe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total score		

In the home - how did you do?	Do now	Will do
Enter your total scores here		

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 and avoid open south-facing areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Try to plant in spring or autumn when the ground is damp. Water thoroughly when planting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a rule of thumb choose thick, grey, spiky, hairy and/or silvery-leaved plants which usually need less water. Broad, soft-leaved plants generally need more.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide ground cover with a good mulch. This reduces weeds and shades roots from the drying sun and wind. The best time to mulch is late winter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total score		

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 in a base of water-retaining gravel or sand or use a saucer under the container.	<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 score		

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 in pond, tank or pool; you could be breaking the Water Regulations as most taps do not have non-return valves.	<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 score		

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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use your rainwater for watering the garden, washing the car, cleaning paths and windows and topping up ponds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fit a water butt directly to sheds and greenhouses; right where you need the water. Remember, rainwater is 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 score		

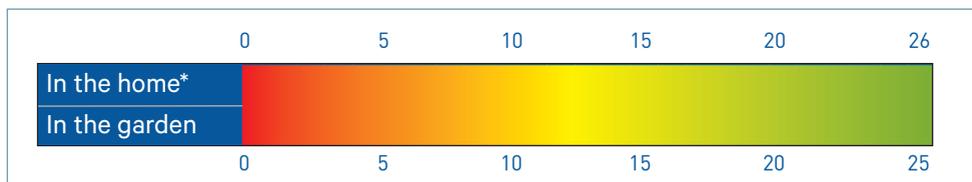
Saving water in the garden (continued)

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 flower beds weed free, but avoid hoeing during very dry weather.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water plants around the base and roots early in the morning or in the cooler evening. Most mature plants will survive a dry spell.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Add more mulch around your borders; this will trap moisture, keep your soil cooler and deter weeds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kids love playing with water, but avoid deep or large paddling pools. Re-use play water for plants in the evening.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total score		

In the garden - how did you do?	Do now	Will do
Enter your total scores here		

Compare your **'Do now'** scores with your **'Will do'** 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



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