

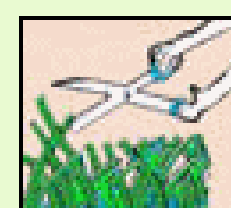
BASIC

India receives the second highest annual rainfall in the world. Yet, there is chronic shortage of water. Water conservation has become the urgent need of the day. We have to solve this problem which has, today, assumed alarming proportions.

Water conservation starts with the individual. There are many simple, cost-effective measures we can adopt in our daily activities, measures which do not call for a drastic change in our lifestyles. Here are a few tips to help you along....

SAVE WATER !!

- Close taps tightly.
- Fix leaking taps, faucets, pipes, etc. immediately and check them regularly for leaks.
- Put a couple of bricks in the lavatory cistern to reduce its capacity. Or, install one of the new flush toilets that use less water.
- Check for leaks in your toilet tank by putting a little food colouring in the cistern. If the colour begins to appear in the bowl without flushing, you have a leak that should be fixed at once.
- When brushing your teeth, shaving or washing your hands, never leave your tap running. Fill a glass or bowl with water for rinsing the mouth, shaving or brushing.
- Don't use the shower. A bucket of water will suffice for a bath.
- Wash vegetables, fruit and meat in a bowl of water, washing the cleanest ones first. Use this water for your plants.
- Use water from cooked vegetables for cooking dhal or rice. Not only will you save water, you will benefit as well, as it is full of nutritious vitamins and minerals.
- Wash your vehicles with a bucket and sponge instead of a hose which uses about 400 litres of water. By using a bucket, upto 300 litres can be saved.
- Do not let your overhead tank overflow. Regulate the time.
- In times of acute water shortage, use a bucket to water your garden rather than a hose.
- If you have to use a hose, fix leaks immediately.
- Install a drip system with a timer for efficient watering of the garden.
- Water the garden early in the morning for watering during the heat of the day results in evaporation.
- Resort to water saving techniques like mulching. Grass clippings from the lawn can be used to cover garden beds and thus retain moisture.
- Waste water from the kitchen can be used to water the garden.
- During drought, don't water the lawn. It may turn brown, but it will revive when it rains.
- Collect rain water in large tubs or cans and use it to water your plants. This is called rain water harvesting.
- Lawns need only 2 to 3 cms. of water and need to be watered only 3 to 5 days a week, and less if it rains. When you water, give it a thorough soaking. This will produce a deep root system and stronger grass. Daily watering results in shallow roots and weaker grass.
- Never use a hose to clean your driveway. Use a broom instead. If you feel the driveway really needs a rinse, start by washing the car there.
- Do not cut your grass too short. Taller grass holds water better and actually looks richer.
- In drought prone areas, using drought resistant plants in your garden like cacti, etc, is a good option. Your local nursery can advise you.
- Avoid using pesticides, fungicides and herbicides in your garden, for they enter the ground and pollute groundwater. Instead, resort to organic gardening. Repel insects and worms by planting friendly flowers such as marigolds; pull up weeds by hand and introduce carnivorous insects to kill off pests. A good book on organic gardening can help.



DO NOT POLLUTE !!

- Pollution is the result of human activity, and defiles the natural environment. The pollutants enter the environment where they cause harm to people and animals. It is therefore essential to avoid pollution of water sources.
- More than 90% of the world's supply of drinkable water is groundwater. This is being increasingly threatened by industrialization, use of pesticides and fertilizers and even by the dumping of chemicals by households.
- Use rechargeable batteries instead of disposable ones. It is not only economical but it also keeps cadmium, mercury, lead and other toxic metals out of groundwater.
- Dry cleaning solvents contain toxins like carbon tetrachloride and perchoethylene which ultimately pollute our water sources. Buy clothes made of natural fibres that can be washed at home.
- Use laundry soap instead of detergents, because they contain phosphates which, when let into rivers and lakes, encourages growth of algae which use up huge amounts of oxygen, in the process killing plants and marine life.
- If you have to use a detergent, measure it instead of just guessing how much to use. This means less pollution of our groundwater, rivers and lakes.
- Use of shampoos adds to the detergent pollution. Use grandma's recipes using natural products like shikkakai.
- Wash with unscented, uncoloured body and hand soaps. Dyes and perfumes contribute to the fouling of our waters.
- Never flush garbage down the toilet. It will ultimately appear in our rivers, lakes and other water sources.



Save water today !
Only then we will have water tomorrow !