



Recycling

Green is the new blue! See, the DMI team has furrowed its collective brow at this Global Warming malarkey. Some think it's a load of hot air (ahem...) but if you're like us - wanting to do your bit without doing your nut - then check out these easy green things you can do:

Water, water, everywhere... There's a reason we talk endlessly about the weather here in Blighty: as soon as we clear up the flood damage, we expect a hose pipe ban! What can you do, short of putting a roof over the whole country? Well, we started by turning off our taps when we brush our teeth - turns out if everyone in the U.K. did the same, we'd save over 31,000 Olympic sized swimming pools' worth of water a year!

33% of our water literally goes down the toilet, so you can imagine the difference a 'Hippo' or 'Save-a-flush' may make. They reduce the amount used to flush older toilets without compromising effectiveness, and can be ordered free from some water authorities and at very little cost from www.hippo-the-watersaver.co.uk. Alternatively, you can achieve a similar effect by filling small water bottles and plonking them in the tank! Even an old brick in the cistern helps save water and money.

Paper's a dirty word to some, but look: we all use it and we're likely to keep using it. 'Militant greens' don't help the cause by trying to march everyone towards some bizarre Utopia where books don't exist and invoices never get sent... But here's the but: we can use emails to replace almost all memos; we can proof read and spell check on screen and set printers to do double-sided without much effort at all, and it makes sense to do electronic backups of stuff: this vastly reduces paper usage whilst taking up less room...

However, what paper waste you do get can be recycled with considerable ease these days. See, we used to make the excuse that paper recycling was inconvenient and dodgy 'cos of our confidential stuff. Fact is we just introduced two trays: one for sensitive papers that we shred and take to the tip, and one for stuff we can recycle at the local supermarket when we're down that way!

If you enjoy a nice cuppa something, then you might want to measure how much H2O is going in the old water 'otter. That's the kettle to you and me. There's a tendency to overfill the kettle, which wastes water, electricity, money and time! So if you're making, say, two cups: pour in two cups! Some people deliberately overfill to combat kettle scale, and this is better done with one of those stainless steel mesh things that collects calcium deposits. They also disrupt the water's surface area, so it boils even more quickly and this helps extend the life of the heating element. Not bad for under two quid!



It's hip to be cool(er): You've probably heard all this stuff before... But turning down your thermostat just one degree will save up to 4% of your energy costs and as much as 235kg of CO2 in a year. CO2 is the stuff that makes these footprints we keep hearing about, the ones that are said to be causing a bunch of trouble for the planet and are almost certainly a leading cause of Kevin Costner's worst film.

Those of you who use Google might check out www.blackle.com; the cool looking, energy saving version. It aims to reduce energy usage "...one search at a time" as well as remind users to do the little things that add up.

See here! On average, houses have 23 light bulbs in them, with around 20% of them bearing the brunt of 80% of the use! So swapping between just 4 and 6 of the 'busiest bulbs' for low energy ones will have a significant impact. Compact fluorescent eco bulbs last longer than standard ones and each produces 60 – 70% less CO2! That's why they're a tad more expensive...

Waste not, want not, they say. Not entirely sure what they're on about... Anyway: a million tons of textiles go into landfills every year. Picture that! It wouldn't be quite so alarming if it weren't for the fact that charity shops are crying out for used clobber. If you can't get to a local store when they're open, check out www.recyclenow.com to see where your nearest 'clothing bank' is, and for a whole bunch of other recycling ideas, too.

Finally, we Brits use enough plastic bags in one year to stretch to the moon and back five times. Now, our first instinct is to make some kind of rope ladder out of them and scurry on up! It might be better, though, to cut down on the use of plastic bags, which take 100 years to decompose, and get one of them thar bags for life. Alternatively, just take a few old carriers with you when you go to the shops, or keep spare bags in your car and stop being one of the 80% of folk that get new bags at the checkout just 'cos it's a baaaad habit.

DMI Productions flew all over the world, drove about in gas guzzling vehicles and needlessly heated its office with patio burners for six weeks to bring you this fact sheet. Every effort has been made to ensure the information on it is correct, but no, we can't accept responsibility for any errors, or for consequences resulting from action or inaction based on the advice herein. And try to bear in mind that 86% of all statistics are completely made up, while the other 24% are just plain wrong. Thanks for being greener!