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10 Ways to Make your Bathroom Eco-Friendly

Tips on how to conserve water, purify air, and use natural products in your bathroom

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You may not think much about how your bathroom style and routine impacts the planet, but it can be pretty significant. Not only is your bathroom one of the primary sources of water consumption in your home, it is also the locale in which you slather on numerous personal care products and apply dozens of cleaning chemicals, making it a potentially toxic tomb!

The following guide to creating an eco-friendly bathroom will help you green-up your clean-up in more ways than one.

Photo credit: Flickr / dbrooker1

1. Ditch sprays and plug-ins

Air fresheners you buy at the grocery store are full of chemicals and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that pollute your indoor air and can contribute to headaches, dizziness, nausea, fatigue and more. Worse, they only mask odours, so just get rid of them! Try [making your own air freshener](#) with baking soda and dried flowers.











Photo credit: Eschelle Westwood

2. Avoid vinyl shower curtains

Perhaps the second worst VOC offender in the bathroom is a plastic shower curtain. Made of PVC (aka vinyl), these curtains can off-gas up to 108 different

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Certain types of PVC (aka vinyl), these curtains can off-gas up to 100 different VOCs into the air within the first 28 days of use! Great **alternatives to vinyl shower curtains** include hemp, PEVA (a lightweight, biodegradable plastic), or organic cotton.



Photo credit: Flickr / Nico Paix

3. Use potted plants

Living, breathing plants help to purify air indoors naturally all day, making them *beneficial* for your eco-friendly bathroom rather than detrimental!



Photo credit: Flickr / brendan-c

4. Choose natural products for personal care & bathroom cleaning

Not only are **natural skincare** and body care products better for the planet when they wash off your body into the sewer system, they're also better for the clarity of your bathroom air. Choose shampoos, conditioners, face care products, and creams that are made with natural essential oils or no scents at all.

Make sure your bathroom is also groomed regularly using natural, organic **bathroom cleaning products**.





Photo credit: Flickr / Annouk




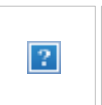
5. Redecorate with low-VOC materials


Take the VOC count in your bathroom down even further by using low-VOC paints, naturally-cured and sealed ceramic tiles, and other materials verified to be good for your indoor air quality.



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Photo credit: Flickr / ang.d

6. Install a low-flow showerhead

Your shower quality will not change with a low-flow showerhead, but you'll save up to \$150 annually on water and energy costs by switching from a 1.5 gallons per minute (gpm) to a 2.5 gpm fixture.



Photo credit: Flickr / gfairchild

7. Switch to a low-flow toilet

Your old water-guzzling toilet may use more than 3.5 gallons per flush (gpf), making it extremely wasteful. A low-flow model will conserve water by sipping only 1.28 gpf, cutting water bills by up to \$90 annually.



Photo credit: Flickr / Jeff Sandquist

8. Stop up leaks

A dripping faucet will waste up to 10,000 gallons of water every year! Call a plumber or fix the leak yourself to shave a bunch of water and energy costs off of your monthly utility bills.



Photo credit: Flickr / missmoney

9. Employ water-saving habits

Don't forget to also incorporate water-saving habits into your eco-friendly bathroom to conserve even more water and energy, like taking shorter showers, turning off taps while you brush your teeth or shave, employing the yellow-mellow-brown-down toilet flushing method, and saving water in buckets while waiting for it to heat up.



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10. Use energy-saving bulbs

Of course, any eco-friendly bathroom should also be fixed up using energy-saving light bulbs like CFLs or LEDs.



Photo credit: Flickr / Virtanas

About the Author:

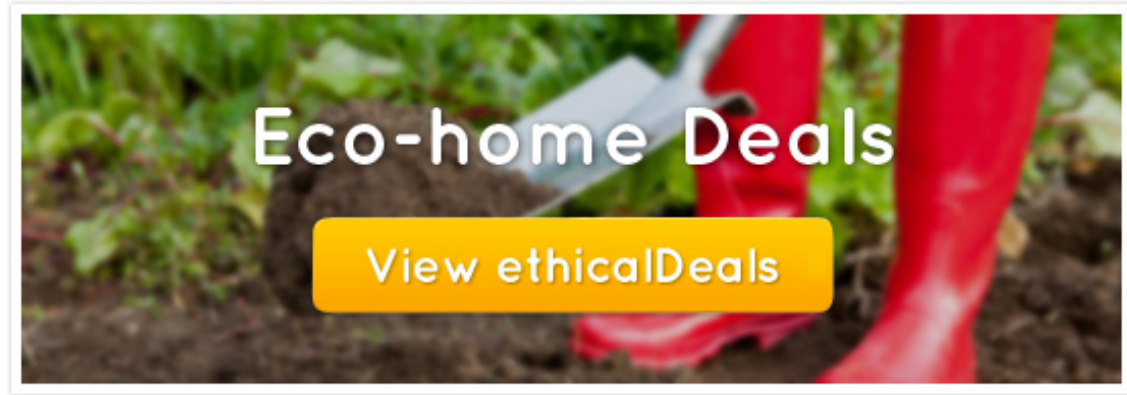
Maryruth has been seeking the keys to environmental justice—both at home and at work—for over a decade. Growing up adjacent to wild spaces, Maryruth developed a healthy respect (and whimsical appreciation) for things non-human, but her practical mind constantly draws her down to earth to ponder tangible solutions to complex eco-problems. With interests that range from green living to green business, sustainable building designs to organic gardening practices, ecosystem restoration to environmental health, Maryruth has been exploring and writing about earth-matters for most of her life. Of special interest is the subject of ecopsychology and the role the natural world plays in the long-term health and well-being of humanity. You can learn more about Maryruth's work by [visiting her site](#).

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