

## Why live sustainably?

Simply put, we consume too much. "Sustainability" is the capacity to provide for present needs without compromising our ability to provide for the future.

However, because of the way we (especially Americans) live, our planet is on the fast track to running out of natural resources. It is not looking good for future generations.

So, why not live sustainably? It is better for people, the planet and the economy!

## Reduce your carbon footprint and save money, too!

As a renter, there are quite a few things you can do to live sustainably. With small changes in your habits, you can live with less impact and, in the long run, save quite a bit of money.

This brochure provides tips on easy ways to make positive, sustainable changes in the way you live in your rented apartment or home. All it takes is a little thought and voilà, you are a part of the solution in your community!



[www.cooldavis.org](http://www.cooldavis.org)

### In the Laundry

- 1 Air-dry laundered clothing instead of using the electric or gas dryer.

### On the Patio

- 1 Grow some vegetables and herbs in containers.
- 2 Try composting food scraps via worm composting.

Visit [DavisRecycling.org](http://DavisRecycling.org) for information on starting a worm bin.



*A folding clothes drying rack fits almost anywhere.*

### Ask the Landlord

- 1 Request low-flow shower heads and aerators.
- 2 Request an indoor recycling bin (iBIN). Most managers have blue iBINS available for residents. See [DavisRecycling.org](http://DavisRecycling.org) for details.
- 3 Request an outside area in the complex for drying clothes on lines and racks.
- 4 Report leaks to the landlord.
- 5 Report damaged door and window weatherstripping.

### Resources:

<http://coolcalifornia.org/calculator>  
<http://coolersmarter.org>  
<http://carbonfootprint.com>  
<http://zerowastehome.blogspot.com/p/tips.html>  
<http://blogs.ucdavis.edu/sustainability/2011/09/29/103/>  
<http://sierraclub.org/tips/see-all.aspx>  
<http://squidoo.com/Carbon-Footprint-2>  
<http://DavisRecycling.org>

## Cool Solutions: A Renter's Guide to Sustainable Living



*A model apartment demonstrates ways to reduce your carbon footprint in each living area.*



*"Together, is it possible to create a sustainable and just way of living lightly on this earth? We have no choice but to try."*

*—Lynne Nittler, Cool Davis*

# Make Sustainable Habits a Part of Your Daily Life

## In the Living Room

- 1 Set your thermostat according to the weather. Keep it 68° or lower in winter, 72° or higher in summer and off whenever you're not home.

Ventilate, heat and cool by opening and closing windows.

- 2 Use natural daylighting when possible.
- 3 Keep a throw blanket on the couch and/or layer clothing before turning on the heat.
- 4 Switch light bulbs to LEDs, which use the least energy, don't contain mercury and last 20 years or more. They are by far the most environmentally sustainable lighting solution.



*A built-in valance (or fabric placed across the top of a curtain) can prevent drafts that originate at the window.*

- 5 Use Smart Power Strips that shut off power automatically for idle electronic products.
- 6 Designate an area for shoe storage at the entrance to keep carpets cleaner and require less electricity for vacuuming.
- 7 Ride your bicycle. Biking cuts your carbon footprint and your transportation expenses while it improves your health.  
  
Mount a bike rack and hook on the wall for easy storage and access to your bicycle and helmet.
- 8 Use alternative transportation to reduce your carbon emissions—transportation is a big part of reducing carbon emissions. Keep a Unitrans schedule handy!
- 9 Place a corkboard on the door for reminders to turn down the thermostat, turn off lights, etc., before leaving your apartment.

## In the Kitchen

- 1 Make your own cloth veggie bags for produce, and bring tote bags for bagging groceries at checkout stands.

Designate a storage area for both kinds of bags so they are handy for shopping.

- 2 Buy foods that are locally grown and prepared.
- 3 Install aerators in your faucets to reduce water waste.
- 4 Drink filtered or tap water in a reusable canteen instead of buying water in plastic bottles. Metal is best.
- 5 Use hand towels and rags instead of paper towels, and use dishcloths instead of sponges.
- 6 When washing fewer dishes, have two basins in the sink—one for washing and the other for rinsing.  
  
Only use the dishwasher when it is completely full, and open it before the dry cycle to let the dishes air dry.
- 7 Use recycling bins, and sort as much as possible.  
  
Have separate bins for glass/plastic/cans, paper/cardboard, clean film plastic from packaging/plastic bags (recycle at most grocery stores), landfill and compost.



*Cloth veggie bags for produce and bulk items replace plastic bags.*

- 8 Minimize use of electric gadgets. For example, mix your cake batter by hand.
- 9 Use rechargeable batteries to reduce toxic waste and save money.



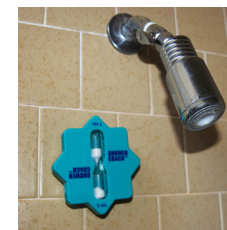
*LEDs are kinder to both the environment and your pocketbook.*

## In the Bedroom

- 1 Use curtains with a valance to help prevent cold or hot air next to the windows from circulating as drafts.
- 2 Thermal curtains help keep the interior warmer in winter, or prevent west sunlight from heating up a room in summer.
- 3 Use Smart Power Strips for your electronic needs.
- 4 Use laptops vs. desk models to conserve energy. Shut down computers when not in use.
- 5 Unplug and turn off all electronics at night.
- 6 Open windows for fresh air and air circulation instead of using A/C.
- 7 Improve air quality with a living plant.
- 8 If possible, use exterior shades for west- and south-facing windows to reduce heat from the summer sun.

## In the Bathroom

- 1 Install low-flow shower heads to reduce water waste.  
  
Take shorter showers. Aim for five minutes or less.  
  
Turn off the water while lathering to save water. It's easy with shower heads featuring an on-off control.  
  
Don't walk away from the shower while waiting for the water to warm up.
- 2 If your toilet is not already low-flow, place an object such as a brick in the tank to raise the water level and reduce the amount of water used for each flush.
- 3 Use recycled-content toilet paper.
- 4 Turn off the faucet when brushing your teeth or washing your hands.



*Suction-cup mounted shower timers are available at hardware stores.*