

Sustainable Living Guide





Sentinel believes that sustainability – or living “green” – is at the heart of protecting our future. Living “green” refers to the active choices you can make to minimize your negative impact on the earth. From ways to save energy and water to recycling already-used materials and actively buying reusable items, we can show you how living “green” can even save you some “green.” This Sentinel Green Lifestyle Handbook is a room-by-room guide to your apartment, providing ways to save money while saving the planet.

Visit coolclimate.org/calculator to see how you compare to similar households in the US and for direct resources showing you how to reduce costs and usage in specific areas.



In the Kitchen



- Refrigerators should be kept at the manufacturer's recommended settings. When in doubt, call the management office.
- Open the refrigerator door with a purpose – not to browse!

- A clean oven heats up quicker than a dirty oven.
- Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator the night before to reduce cooking time.
- Use the oven light to check on food instead of opening the oven, which causes the temperature to drop each time.
- Use your dishwasher rather than individually handwashing items – a dishwasher uses about 1/4 the energy than washing dishes by hand and saves more than 7,000 gallons of water each year!
- Rinsing dishes before loading them in the dishwasher increases the total water and energy used. Save yourself the rinsing - just scrape food off dishes.
- Turn off the drying function of the dishwasher to save energy; dishes can air-dry instead.
- Sort your trash so items that can be recycled are disposed of properly.
- Research your dish soap and hand soap: biodegradable soaps are a more environmentally-friendly option.
- Opt-out of using plastic bags when food shopping and purchase reusable bags.
- Buy silicone-based reusable storage bags instead of plastic bags for your packed lunches.
- Avoid plastic water bottles by investing in reusable water bottles and/or a water filter pitcher.
- Bring a reusable mug to your favorite coffee shop instead of using the Styrofoam/ plastic cups and straws.
- Use microfiber cloths or dishtowels instead of paper towels.

- Use metal or paper straws.
- DO NOT pour grease down the sink; if you're not interested in reusing it, then collect it in a disposable container like a milk carton, seal it and toss it in the trash. Or do a quick search to see if your city has a cooking oil recycling program.
- Attend local farmers markets for fresh produce – eat healthy and also support your community.

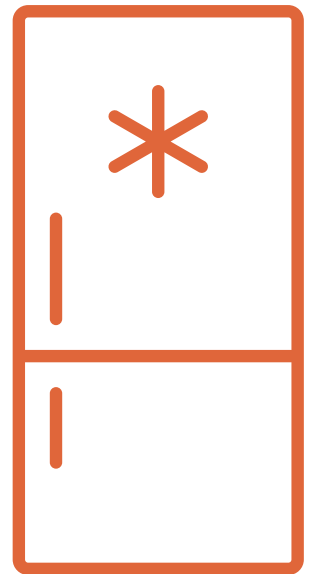
WHY? *It is estimated that 50% of all greenhouse gases come from meat, dairy and egg farming methods, so try a more vegetable-based diet.*

- Meal planning for the week helps reduce food waste.



FUN TO TRY! *Meal kits can be a great option if you choose an organic company that doesn't waste much plastic because all of the ingredients inside are fully used for each meal, reducing food waste.*

- Placing a box of baking soda in the refrigerator, freezer, cupboard, etc. will absorb odors without harsh chemicals.



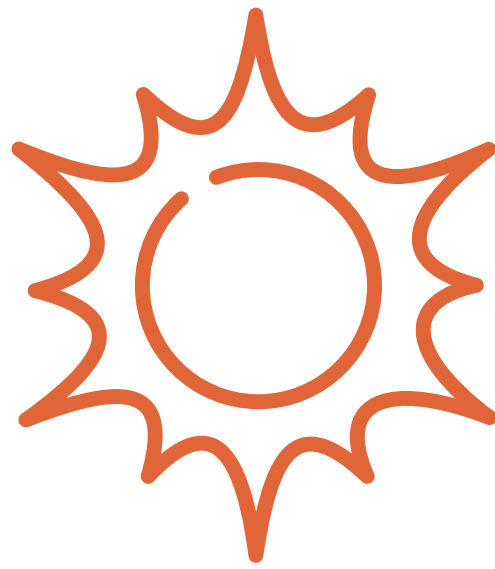
Check www.greenpages.org or www.dinegreen.com for restaurants that are certified green in your area.



In the Living Room

In the Summer

- Open windows for fresh airflow when outside temperatures are moderate (65 to 74 degrees Fahrenheit). On high humidity days, it's best to leave windows closed.
- Use fans to effectively circulate air (this works in both summer and winter).
- Make sure windows and doors are closed when the air conditioning is on.
- Make sure there is no furniture blocking your vents.



EASY: Turning off just one 60-watt incandescent bulb that would otherwise burn eight hours a day can save about \$15 per year!



In the Winter

- Make sure windows and doors are closed when the heat is turned on.
- Make sure there is no furniture blocking the vents.
- Layer your clothes and wear that fuzzy sweater!
- Purchase a down comforter for maximum bedtime warmth.
- Covering wood-style flooring and tile with accent rugs can help insulate your apartment.

Also...

- Turn off lights when not in use.
- Pull-up blinds during the day to take advantage of natural light; close them at night to retain heat and cool the air more effectively.
- Use LED or CFL (Compact Fluorescent Light) bulbs.

WHY? *Qualified fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) provide high-quality light output, use 75% less energy and last 6-10 times longer than standard incandescent light bulbs, saving money on energy bills and replacement costs.*



- Consider renewable sources for furniture and décor, including cotton, wool, hemp, soy, bamboo and cork.
- Buy products in reusable or recyclable packaging.
- Sprinkle baking soda onto carpets and vacuum to remove odor from stains or spills naturally.

In the Bathroom



- Contact management immediately for any leaks/drips around the apartment such as running or leaking toilets/faucets/shower heads.
 - DO NOT leave water running while you are brushing your teeth or washing your face.
 - If you are taking a bath, plug the drain from the beginning and balance out the temperature as the tub fills.
 - Shorten your showers; aim for between five and ten minutes.
 - While you wait for the shower to heat up, collect the cold water – you can use it to water plants around the house.
 - Pay attention to the chemicals in your everyday products.
- ONLINE:** Visit www.ewg.org/skindeep/ to see toxicity ratings of regular household products.
- ONLINE:** Visit www.goodguide.com to find out what products (sorted by category) contain certain chemicals and how they rate on a scale of 1 to 10 in safety.
- A natural air freshener can be made from one part white vinegar, three parts water and a few drops of pure essential oil – choose your favorite fragrance.

In the Bedroom

- Thrift store shopping is trendy and environmentally-friendly.
- Swap clothes with friends and family members.
- Give your old clothes, furniture and household goods to community organizations that will give them a second life.

Consumer electronics play an increasingly larger role in your home's energy consumption, accounting for 15% of household electricity use. Many consumer electronics products use energy even when switched off.

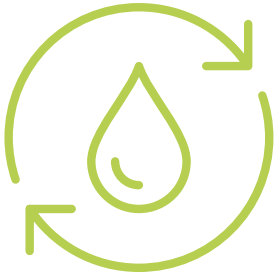
- Unplug electronics when not in use (chargers, radios, lamps, etc.).
- Most electronics (phones, TVs, cameras, DVD players, computers) can be dropped off at electronic stores for recycling.
 - ▶ This helps reuse valuable material.
 - ▶ Supports schools, low-income families and non-profits in need of electronics.
 - ▶ The demand for recycling goes up, therefore creating jobs.
 - ▶ Electronics may contain hazardous materials that are dangerous in landfills and may pollute the air.
 - ▶ Manufacturing new electronics causes greenhouse gas emissions.

COOL: *Some manufacturers offer money towards a new item if you trade in your old electronic device.*



Electronics

Doing Laundry



- Adjust the washing machine settings to accommodate your specific load size; to save water, try to wash full loads.

EASY: Washing full loads can save you more than 3,400 gallons of water each year.

- Washing laundry in cold water saves energy and keeps clothes in optimal shape and color.

COOL: Switching to cold water can save the average household more than \$40 annually (with an electric water heater) and more than \$30 annually (with a gas water heater).

- Research your detergent: biodegradable detergents are a more environmentally-friendly option.
- Reuse your towels and hand cloths.
- When cleaning spills/stains from clothing, rub seltzer or club soda and soak in cold water.

Pet Care

- Having a pet in general can raise your levels of oxytocin, a hormone that helps healing and new cell growth.
- Spaying and neutering pets is important because it helps reduce the number of animals in shelters.
- A low-carbon diet is just as important in pets as it is humans; just like us, their food (specifically beef and lamb) significantly increases greenhouse gas footprints.
- Use poultry-based foods that do not have animal by-products or artificial preservatives (often chicken and vegetable options).
- Use repurposed pet waste bags by using plastic bags that your clothing, food or home items came in.
- Your choice in cat litter matters; traditional cat litter has crystalline silica and bentonite clay, both of which are damaging to the earth and living creatures. Corn or wheat-based litters naturally clump and control odor while still preserving the earth.



- Consider carpooling with a coworker or family member.

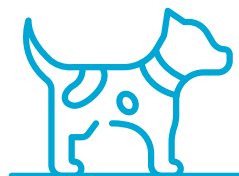
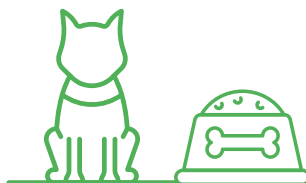
ONLINE: check www.google.com/transit for your nearest transit options.

- Bicycle or walk instead of driving whenever possible.
- Using cruise control on freeways and highways helps maintain speed and save on gas.

ONLINE: Check for fuel-efficient cars at www.greencars.org.

- Think local when shopping! Driving long distances for single errands consumes energy – try to consolidate your trips.

Transportation



- Sign up for electronic bills/flyers/mail instead of continuing to receive hard copies.

EASY: Stop the waste of junk mail by registering at www.dmachoice.org.

EASY: Visit www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0262-stopping-unsolicited-mail-phone-calls-and-email to remove yourself from credit card and insurance offer lists.

- Correct mistakes before printing by looking at Print Preview.

COOL: www.printgreener.com analyzes documents to find ways to optimize printing.

- Print on both sides of the paper whenever possible.
- Use colored ink only when necessary. Try switching to a lighter black/gray to save on ink.
- Try reusable gift bags instead of wrapping paper; or try using magazines, newspapers or scrap paper to wrap gifts.

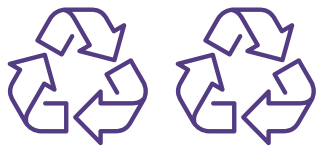
- Use your phone for to-do lists – save paper!
- Buy products in bulk to reduce packaging waste.
- Use reusable coffee filters such as hemp or cotton or try refillable pods rather than single-use pods.
- Recycling:

EASY: Go to www.earth911.com and www.greenegadgets.org to check where specific items can be recycled near you. Download the iRecycle app created by Earth 911.

EASY: Recycle eyeglasses by visiting www.lions-clubs.org/en/resources-for-members/resource-center/recycle-eyeglasses.

EASY: Soles4Souls (www.soles4souls.org) is a great place to recycle old shoes.

COOL: Join www.freecycle.org, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people exchange things for free – it's all about reuse and keeping good stuff out of landfills. Each local group is moderated by local volunteers and membership is free.



Miscellaneous

Resources

- ▶ conserve-energy-future.com/25-staggering-ways-to-reduce-reuse-recycle.php
- ▶ coolclimate.berkeley.edu/
- ▶ www.electronicrecycling.org
- ▶ www.energystar.gov/buildings/owners_and_managers/existing_buildings/resources_your_property_type/energy_star_multifamily_housing_1
- ▶ www.energystar.gov/products/top_10_tips_renters
- ▶ www.epa.gov/cfl
- ▶ epa.gov/recycle/electronics-donation-and-recycling
- ▶ www.epa.gov/watersense/start-saving

- ▶ www.fueleconomy.gov
- ▶ www.goodguide.com
- ▶ www.greenamerica.org/green-living/green-money-savers
- ▶ www.lamprecycle.org
- ▶ www.slowfood.com
- ▶ www.vinegartips.com
- ▶ www.wateruseitwisely.com
- ▶ energysage.com/energy-efficiency/101/ways-to-save-energy/
- ▶ thewaterproject.org/water-conservation-tips

