



## Ten tips for a Greener Bathroom

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Mirror, mirror on the wall, who has the greenest bathroom of them all? Not you? Perhaps asking environmental questions of the mirror is not the best idea, but greening your bathroom is! With all of the water, products and tissue paper used in this one room, this is part of your home that deserves some attention. Here are 10 ways to make your bathroom greener:

1. **Save that water!** – Shower water and your money don't need to get sucked down the drain. Our toilets and tubs are consuming more than half of our home's water, so when replacing them, look for water-efficient models with the WaterSense label. It's best to get a low-flow toilet and to install low-flow showerheads. Also, try taking a shorter shower and turn the water off when you brush your teeth.



2. **Paper tissue, a "green" issue** – Look for and buy toilet paper and tissue products that have lighter environmental impacts –

manufacturing that doesn't release harsh chemicals into the waterstream; waste reduction through use of recycled content; new paper content that comes from sustainably-harvested trees; and even reduced packaging. Make sure that the products you're buying are providing proof of environmental claims – wherever possible, look for credible third-party eco-labels such as EcoLogo or Green Seal. This way you can ensure that your choice is the most environmentally responsible.

3. **Chemicals, chemicals down the drain** - Every day, we are applying dozens of products to our skin and scalp and then washing most of them away. The truth is, there is no "away". Many of the products in regular use today contain chemicals suspected, some proven, to cause cancer, birth defects and other health problems. These chemicals also end up in our water systems and have harmful impacts on aquatic life. Do your part and look at the ingredients list on products before buying them. Choose products that are the most transparent with their health claims and visit Campaign for Safe Cosmetics ([www.safecosmetics.org](http://www.safecosmetics.org)) for safer and greener personal care products to purchase.

4. **Bath towels and wash cloths** – Drying off with a nice and soft towel doesn't

need to dampen your conscience. A variety of environmentally preferable materials exist such as organic cotton, and some bamboo, and wood pulp products where the manufacturing process doesn't use harsh chemicals. You can also look to environmental textile certifications like the Global Organic Textile Standard [GOTS], Skal "EKO Sustainable Textile" or Oeko-Tex), to help you identify legitimately greener options.

5. **"Green" cleaning products** – Choose cleaners that tackle dirt but don't create noxious fumes that can harm your lungs. Bathroom cleaners can contain many harmful chemicals, so make sure to read the labels carefully. Eco-labels like EcoLogo and Green Seal help to determine which cleaners are genuinely greener. Washable microfiber mops work wonders to clean floors. Steer clear of products that use antibacterial agents (these typically have triclosan in them and have been linked to super germs). When in doubt, baking soda and vinegar make for great, homemade cleaning remedies.

6. **Smell the scent-free air** – Bathrooms get doused in their fair share air fresheners and perfumed products, but don't be fooled by products that smell like oranges and claim to be "all-natural". Fragrances in most products hold their scents thanks to phthalates, chemicals that may cause hormone disruption and developmental problems in children. If you aren't willing to give up air fresheners, choose ones that are scented with essential oils. Or just open up a window or turn on the fan to get the air moving around.

7. **Greener lights, healthier sights** – If you are still using old incandescent light bulbs in your bathroom, it's time to get the

ladder and replace them with more efficient CFL bulbs. Take it one step further and arrange a home energy audit to help save not just on your electricity bill, but your water bill, too.

8. **Buy only what you need, and buy to last** – Buying toiletries is a monthly chore, but your choices can make a difference to the environment and your health. Buy products made from recycled or recyclable materials and buy the larger container and refill when you can (this reduces waste).

9. **Recycle those toilet paper rolls!** – It's a faux-pas to leave the toilet paper roll empty on the tissue holder, but it's even worse to throw it in the trash! Make sure to recycle all paper products that you can and look for products packed in recycled materials.

10. **Greener bathroom renovations** – From paint to the appliances you choose, building and remodeling can have a major impact of the "health" of your bathroom.

There are lots of greener options out there like recycled glass tiles for your shower and greener flooring options like bamboo or linoleum, which is made with natural raw materials: linseed oil, pine resins, wood flour, flax, ground limestone and pigments on a natural jute backing. Also, look for products that carry third-party eco-labels like EcoLogo, Green Seal and WaterSense when shopping for new supplies to outfit your greener bathroom.