Saving Energy

Most of the energy we use today comes from natural gas, oil, and coal. They are fossil fuels. They take millions or even hundreds of millions of years to form. We can't make more quickly. They are nonrenewable. We need to save energy whenever we can. You can help.

Reduce

A good way to save energy is by not wasting things. Don't use paper plates or cups all the time, because you only use them once and then throw them away. Write on both sides of your paper. Use a lunch box and reusable bottle instead of paper bags and boxed drinks.

Use a water-filtering pitcher and refillable bottle at home instead of several bottles of water that use a lot of plastic and energy to make. Buy one big bag of chips—not ten little ones. **Reducing** waste saves energy. It takes energy to make things and to get rid of them. Buy things without a lot of packaging. Some candy has more plastic wrapping around it than food in it. What a waste!

Reuse or Repair

Try to use things more than once—**reuse** them. Wash out plastic containers and use them again. Wrap presents in reusable gift bags or recycled fabric. Buy toys and games at yard sales or exchanges, and you can save energy and money, too.

Paint an old bike instead of buying a new one. Repair broken or old things whenever you can. Give your old clothes and toys to someone who needs them—do not throw them away.

Recycle

Many things can be recycled—cans, paper, glass, plastic, electronics, clothes, and tires. Almost anything can be recycled in some way. It only takes a minute to **recycle**, and it saves energy. It takes a lot of energy to dig up metal and make a can. It only takes a little energy to make a new can from an old one. Cans can be recycled over and over again.

Saving Energy

Plastic bottles can be recycled into more plastic bottles, clothes, shoes, and rugs. Paper can be recycled into boxes and bags. Companies reuse the expensive metals and minerals from recycled electronics. Old clothes can be made into new thread. Ground-up old tires can be used to make playgrounds safer and to pave roads. Do not throw away anything you can recycle.

Save Electricity

You use a lot of **electricity** every day. Use only what you need. Do not turn on two lights if you only need one.

Remember to turn off the lights when you leave a room. Turn off the TV and video games, too. Unplug devices you aren't using. On a sunny day, read by a window. It's a simple way to save energy.

Keep the refrigerator door closed. Know what you want before you open the door. If you're pouring a drink, don't leave the door open. It takes a lot of energy to cool things.

If the air conditioner is on, keep doors and windows closed. Avoid going in and out a lot. If you can, just use a fan and wear light clothes instead of using the air conditioner.

When you leave a room, remember to turn the lights off.

Save Gasoline

It takes a lot of energy to operate a car. Walk or ride your bike wherever you can. If you and some of your friends are going to the same place, go together or carpool. Take the bus instead of asking for a ride to school.

Save Heat

It takes a lot of energy to heat houses and water. If the heat is on, keep doors and windows closed. Wear warm clothes instead of turning up the heat. At night, use blankets to stay warm.

Take showers instead of baths, and do not stand in there for a long time. Only use the water you need. Heating water uses a lot of energy.

You Can Make a Difference

The things you do every day make a difference. If everyone saves just a little energy, it adds up to a lot. When you save energy, you save money, too. You have more money to spend on other things.

Saving energy also helps protect the environment. Using less energy uses fewer natural resources and keeps our planet healthier for longer. Everyone can do a little bit to save energy and improve the environment.

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