Tap Tips at home

* Be leak free- Check that your home is leak free. Check for running overflows and fix any dripping taps, cisterns or pipes. If you see a leak in a public place, please report it to your [Local Authority](http://www.taptips.ie/contacts.htm).
* A third of all the water used in the house is flushed down the toilet. Some larger toilet cisterns can continue to work effectively with a smaller flush. Place a [displacement device](http://www.taptips.ie/pushtaps.htm) such as a hippo bag or a bottle filled with water into the cistern or retrofit your cistern with a dual flush/mecon button.
* Instead of letting the tap run, use a basin to rinse/clean your fruit and vegetables. And you can use the leftover water to give your potted plants a drink.
* Only run your washing machine and dishwasher when they're full
* Don't leave the tap running while brushing your teeth- Turning the tap off when brushing your teeth can save over 7,000 litres of water per year.
* In the shower- Reduce the time you spend in the shower. A regular shower will use about 35 litres of water in 5 mins. But beware a power shower will use over 125 litres in the same time.
* Retrofit your faucets and showerhead with flow regulators/aerators which are very cheap, easy to fit and can reduce your flow by 50%.
* Hot Drinks- Fill the kettle with enough water for your needs. You will save energy too.
* Keep a jug of water in the fridge Instead of letting the tap run when waiting for cold water, fill a jug of water and keep it in the fridge.
* Know how to turn off your water supply- This could save thousands of litres of water and can prevent damage to your home in the event of a pipe burst.
* A lot of the water we consume everyday is imbedded in our food and the things we buy. Did you know it takes 2400 litres to produce one hamburger... why not try to buy products that need less water to be produced.
* All the chemicals that we put into the water and send down the drain, end up in the water system significantly polluting our water. Why not help protect this essential resource by using environmentally friendly cleaning/beauty products or make your own which are just as effective, cheaper and don’t pollute the water system.

Tap Tips in the Garden

* Regularly check your outdoor taps, pipes and plumbing fixtures for leaks.
* Ban the hose! Use a bucket of water not a hose which uses more water in one hour than the average family uses in a day.
* If you must water your plants, do it in the early morning or evening when it's cooler and only with a watering can, targeting only the plants that need water.
* Collect rainwater- Rainwater is excellent for your garden. Collect it in a [water butt](http://www.taptips.ie/pushtaps.htm) fed from your gutters but always make sure to securely cover large containers for safety.
* Grass can survive for long periods without water and will quickly recover when the next rain showers arrive. Raising lawnmower blades to a higher level will help stop grass from scorching in warm weather. Leaving the clippings on the lawn protects roots and returns nutrients to the soil.
* Compost- Recycle your green kitchen waste in a compost bin. Compost provides valuable nutrients and helps retain moisture in the soil.
* Mulches- Using mulch such as wood chips, bark or gravel will help prevent water evaporation and will suppress weed growth saving water and the need for weeding. These are especially valuable for shrubs, flowerbeds and new plantings.
* Regularly weed and hoe your garden, to ensure that watering helps your plants and not your weeds.
* Trees, shrubs and plants- use plants that require less water or native plants that are adapted to the Irish climate. These will also encourage the maximum amount of native biodiversity into your garden.

