

Live in a Condo?

15 ways to save money and reduce your impact on the environment

Living in a condo building gives you a great opportunity to reduce your impact on the environment and save money. If you work smart, your shared space and resources can really make a serious impact on your carbon footprint. Here are some tips:

1. Start by getting an [energy audit](#) or by using a [home energy savings calculator](#) to see where you will get the most mileage for every energy-efficient renovation.
2. Ensure that your condo is individually metered for water, electricity and gas so you are in control of your own bills and can practice conserving these valuable resources.
3. Install programmable thermostats and ask for training on how to use them most effectively. Programmable thermostats allow you to save as much as [10% on your energy bills](#).
4. Start a community board for commuting so that you can share rides to work. This ride-share program can also work for long trips during vacation times.
5. Use bicycles instead of driving. If your condo doesn't have bicycle racks on the premises can they be installed?
6. Organize 'swaps' with other residents for things such as clothing and toys in order to share resources. Donate leftover clothing and toys to charity.
7. Create a library for tools, books, small kitchen appliances and sporting equipment so other residents can share these items rather than buying them.
8. Create a forum where residents can share storage space. Renting lockers, storage and parking spaces will mean that you don't have to travel to storage facilities.
9. Ensure that all plumbing fixtures are water-efficient and that appliances are [Energy Star](#) certified. Repair plumbing leaks to reduce wastage.
10. Switch to eco-friendly cleaning products.
11. Swap all incandescent lights for LEDs which are the most energy efficient, saving you money.
12. Install [Heat Recovery Ventilators \(HRVs\)](#) to recover energy from the heat exhausted from your suite.
13. If you don't have a recycling and organic waste program, suggest that one be installed. Recycling means you pay less for waste removal while organic programs provide compost which can be utilized to save money in landscaping for the building.
14. Ask your building management to consider switching out decorative landscaping flower beds for community gardens where residents can grow herbs, fruit and vegetables. This could include roof gardens and raised beds to encourage the growing of food that is local and organic.
15. Organize clean ups of local rivers, beaches and green spaces with other residents in your condo building.