Home Water Efficiency Audit

Do you know how much water your household uses? A home water audit like this can help.
By monitoring how much water you use and fixing leaks promptly, you can save water and money.

Just follow the steps and add the information you collect to the Audit Form as you go.

STEP 1

How Much Water Do We Use?

- Find out where your local water supply comes from by checking your water bill.
- If you have a water meter, it's usually located in the ground outside, towards the front of the property.
- Check how much water your home is using each month by taking monthly water meter readings to compare to monthly bills. You can quickly detect any unexplained increases in water use that might indicate a possible leak.

STEP 2

Where Do We Use Water?

- Complete the Audit Form below using the Water Usage Calculator on page 2.

Water Use	No. of people in home (A)	No. of uses per week (B)	Litres of water per use (C)	Total per week (AxBxC)
Toilet				
Shower				
Bath				
Teeth cleaning				
Shaving				
Washing hands				
Drinking				
Washing dishes				
Dishwasher				
Washing machine				
Indoor cleaning, such as showers and floors				
Washing cars/bikes/boats				
Washing pets				
Watering gardens/lawns				
Outdoor cleaning, such as driveways and patios				
Pool/hot tub/water features				
Other				
Total				

You can use additional sheets of paper if you need more space for all your water-using places.

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Water Usage Calculator

Location	End use	Litres of water used
Bathroom	Toilet: dual flush 6/3 (or 4.5/3) single flush only	3 litres per half flush or 6/4.5 litres per full flush 11 litres per flush
	Shower	6–11 litres per minute
	Bath	120 litres per filled bath
	Brushing teeth: with water running with a cup	3 litres per minute 0.5 litre per person
	Shaving: with water running with a cup	3 litres per minute 0.5 litre per person
	Washing hands with water running	3 litres per minute
	Cleaning showers: with the shower running with a bucket	6–11 litres per minute 9 litres per filled bucket
Kitchen	Washing dishes: by hand dishwasher	15 litres per half-filled sink 7 litres per load Older dishwashers up to 25 litres per load
	Drinking	2 litres per person per day
Laundry	Washing clothes: by hand	22 litres per half-filled sink
	Washing machine (standard 6–9kg load capacity)	6–9 litres per kg of clothes Check the water consumption on the energy label or instruction manual
Outdoors	Washing outdoors, including pets, furniture, car: using a running hose using a filled bucket	15 litres per minute 9 litres per bucket
	Watering gardens: with a hose with a sprinkler	15 litres per minute 9–15 litres per minute
	Hosing driveways/pavements	15 litres per minute
	Topping up pool/spa/water features	15 litres per minute
Leaks	Leaks: slow-dripping tap leak toilet cistern leak pool/hot tub small leak	3–27 litres per day 10 litres (barely visible) to 260 litres (large) per day 130 litres per week

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STEP 3

Do you have any leaks?

- **Check Taps for Leaks**
  - Place a measuring cup (that measures millilitres) under the leaky tap and start a stopwatch.
  - Leave the cup under the leaky tap for 15 minutes.
  - Note down how many millilitres were captured, then calculate how many litres per hour the tap is leaking.
  - You can then work out how much water would be wasted in 1 day, in 1 week and in 1 year.

- **Check Toilets for Leaks**
  - Remove the cistern cover and pour in enough food colouring to change the colour of the water in the cistern.
  - Wait for a few minutes to see if the water in the toilet bowl changes colour.

- **Check How Much Water Your Toilets Use**
  - Remove the cistern cover and shut off the water supply to the toilet. Identify where the cistern fill point is.
  - Flush the toilet to empty the cistern.
  - Refill the cistern to the fill point with a measuring jug and calculate how much water is used with each flush.

- **Check Your Tap Flow Rates**
  - Place a 10-litre bucket under the tap you are checking, turn it on halfway and start a stopwatch.
  - Leave the bucket under the tap for 30 seconds only.
  - Note down how many litres were captured in 30 seconds and double it to get litres per minute (the flow rate)

  A general guide for flow rates is as follows:
  - Sink taps flow should not exceed 12 litres per minute
  - Hand basin taps flow should not exceed 6 litres per minute
  - Shower flows, if you have them, should not exceed 9 litres per minute

STEP 4

Are your appliances water-efficient?

- If your appliances are reasonably new, the manufacturer's product information will tell you how much water they use.

Check efficiency of old appliances

- If your appliances are older, you can use your water meter to work out how much water each appliance uses.
- To do this, ensure all water-using devices are turned off and then record the water meter reading.
  - Use only one appliance while all other water-using devices remain switched off.
  - When the appliance is finished, check the meter reading again.
  - The difference in the meter readings is the amount of water, in litres, used by the appliance.
- Alternatively, contact a qualified plumber to help determine the water consumption of individual appliances and your overall household.