

Planetary Wellbeing

Cut Pollution & Toxicity
Ensure Animal Wellness

Guard Water Resources

- Home Irrigation
- Indoor Water Consumption
- Landscape Design
- **Low-Water Consumerism**
- Personal Hydration

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Understand Your Water Footprint to Cut Water Use

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Many people blindly think that water is an unlimited commodity with sources that never run out. The truth is that there are major shortages of valuable fresh water in the United States and all over the world. In fact, scientists are predicting that future wars will be fought over restricted water supplies, and not over energy resources like oil. It's a big deal!

Thankfully, there's a way for you to figure out just how much water you're consuming on a daily basis: calculate your water footprint, which is your daily water use, both direct and indirect (the water used to manufacture your products). At Hearts, we're doing everything we can to shrink our upstream water footprint by developing eco fashion that uses low impact processes. Our iHeart Change initiative also helps global water issues by supporting **Generosity Water**. We hope that the discovery of your own water footprint will help you pinpoint where you make the biggest cuts to reduce your impact on our planet's water choices. Good luck!

Quick Guide: Everything About Water Footprints

- **What is a water footprint?** A water footprint reflects how much freshwater to produce and use goods and services. The average America's water footprint is 1,158 gallons per person per day, which is almost seven times greater than the average Nicaraguans' at 171 gallons.^[i] Americans have some of the biggest water footprints in the world.
- **Understanding lifecycle water use: A vehicle's water footprint:** The lifecycle of a vehicle includes the production of parts and the assembly of the vehicle, which cumulatively equals 264 gallons.^[ii] Maintaining the vehicle consumes 15.59 gallons of water monthly.^[iii] Since fuel production requires huge infusion of water, a vehicle's greatest water consumption occurs during driving phase.^[iv]
- **Surprising water footprints for common products:** Check out these water footprints: ^[v] ^[vi]
 - 33 gallons = one apple
 - 1582 gallons = 2.2 pounds of pork meat
 - 34 gallons = one cup of coffee prepared from 7 grams of roasted beans
- **Water, not oil wars:** Conflict over limited water resources are already taking place in some of the most water stressed regions of the world, such as in Africa and Asia.

Take Action! Effective Ways to Shrink Your Water Footprint

1. **Calculate your personal water footprint:** You can't reduce what you don't understand. Using a water footprint calculator like the WaterFootprint.org's **Your Water Footprint** tools (they have a quick and an extended calculator) is the easiest way to find out your personal level of water consumption. It may take a few minutes, but it's worth the time.

2. **Develop a water footprint reduction plan.** Using what you learned from your water footprint calculation, determine where you waste the most water so that you can develop a plan to practice low water use. (Hint: It's likely in your diet!) Check out our guide on how to cut out the most common [big water wasting](#) habits to start.
3. **Become a vegetarian:** It takes more water to raise animals than to grow grains and vegetables, so consider [becoming a vegetarian](#) to help make a difference with your water footprint.
4. **Pay attention to water use labels:** Only spend your money on and use products that are made by companies that invest time and energy in implementing low water use standards. [ENERGY STAR](#) and [WaterSense](#) are two EPA-sponsored companies that practice these standards.
5. **Always demand third party verification for water footprint claims:** The average consumer hates greenwashing – in fact, a Forrester poll found that 71% of people will stop buying a product if they discover a misleading environmental claim. [\[vii\]](#) That's why you should be wary of putting your faith in marketing claims made by companies like major food retailer, [ConAgra Foods](#). They tell consumers that they make an effort to practice water efficiency during the making of their products, but unless those claims are backed up by a regularly audited, third-party verified evaluation system.

Dig Deeper: Help Save Water and Your Environment

- Dig deep into the well of water shortages to find out more about future world water wars with [Blue Gold](#), the film.
- [Get information and resources](#) to do your part to help preserve the earth's fresh water supply.

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