

# Tips from True Green@work\*

## **GREEN** (At your desk)

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### **A. Coffee**

1. Switch to organic and Fair Trade labeled brands.
2. Use your own mug (1.9 million tons of paper and plastic cups and plates are thrown away in the U.S. each year.)

### **B. Pens and Pencils**

1. Use long-life refillable pens made from recycled plastic, paper or timber.
2. Look for pencils manufactured from wood substitutes such as recycled paper, old plastic cups, wood off cuts and reclaimed denim.

### **C. Paper**

1. Use both sides. Collect used single-side printed paper and use back side for note paper.
2. Format documents to avoid printing unnecessary pages.
3. Proofread carefully on screen to avoid printing multiple copies.
4. Keep a recycling box next to your desk to separate paper from organic waste and recyclable containers.

### **D. Other Stationery**

1. Use a desk caddy to save envelopes, rubber bands and paper clips for reuse.
2. Establish an exchange spot for items such as bubble wrap and padded envelopes.
3. Request envelopes that have resealable flaps and space for multiple addresses.
4. Use tape dispensers that are refillable rather than disposable.

### **E. Sleep More**

1. Activate sleep mode on your computer. Go into system preferences and set them to put the screen and hard drive to sleep after 10 minutes of inactivity.

### **F. Correspondence**

1. Resist the urge to throw unwanted printed correspondence in the recycling bin.
2. Make the effort to remove your business from mailing lists by contacting the Direct Marketing Association or individual companies.
3. Write "not at this address, return to sender" and put it back in the mail.

### **G. Plant Life**

1. Plants not only look nice, but also act as a natural air filter, absorbing airborne pollutants and computer radiation while replenishing oxygen levels.
2. Indoor plants help protect you from the germs of your colleagues, research showing they significantly reduce the incidence of fatigue, coughs, sore throats, and other cold-related illnesses.
3. Plants have a measurable effect in reducing stress levels.

### **H. Shut Down**

1. Left on all day, every day, a computer will over a year use nearly 1,000 kilowatts of electricity.
2. By switching off your computer before you go home you'll cut its electricity use to less than 250 kilowatts.
3. Do the same with other office equipment.

\*Source: McKay, Kim (2008), TrueGreen@work, National Geographic, Washington, D.C.

For a list of resources, go to [www.neuearth.com](http://www.neuearth.com) and visit resources.



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# Tips from True Green@work\*

## **GREENER** (Office)

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### **A. Team Effort**

1. What any individual can do is limited without a team.
2. Create a management plan that requires the commitment of everyone in your workplace.
3. Start simple – provide collection bins at all employees' desks or workstations.
4. Provide briefings and other information to explain and encourage ways to conserve energy and minimize waste.

### **B. Office Machines**

1. Choose copier models that allow double-sided printing and copying.
2. Minimize the need to replace computers so often by choosing models whose life can be extended through upgrades and repair.
3. A good place to start when choosing machines is the Green Electronic Council's Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool, which rates computer companies on their material use and end-of-life take-back policies.

### **C. Office Supplies**

1. Purchase recycled paper and envelopes, as well as refillable/recyclable ink and toner cartridges.
2. There is no good reason a cartridge can't be reused up to four times. This will not only cut waste but also save up to 90 percent on the cost of a new cartridge.

### **D. Kitchen Facilities**

1. Have separate bins for recycling plastic, glass, and aluminum containers, along with one for food waste.
2. Avoid the cost of disposable paper, plastic, or foam cups, plates and utensils by investing in the real thing.

### **E. Tissue Paper and Cleaning Agents**

1. Choose products made from recycled paper or tree-free alternatives.
2. Reusable and laundered roll towels can be cheaper than paper towels and make for less waste in your bathroom.
3. Some cleaning products contain toxic contaminants at levels that pose risks to both human health and the environment. Use a cleaning contractor committed to clean and green products and processes.

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# Tips from True Green@work\*

## **GREENEST** (Company)

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### **A. Designing a green workspace**

1. A sensor system to control lighting also reduces heat generation and the need for air conditioning.
2. Consider rooftop solar energy panels, rainwater collection for irrigation, recycled building materials, and a vegetated roof.
3. Operable windows, skylights and ceiling fans maintain comfort while minimizing the need for artificial cooling. Operable windows, skylights and ceiling fans maintain comfort while minimizing the need for artificial cooling.
4. Vegetated, or “green” roofs serve as a thermal insulating mass and help manage rainwater runoff. Installing a rooftop garden costs more, but a green roof will also last years longer than a standard roof.

### **B. Suppliers**

1. Your own purchasing power is a means to influence the network of businesses you buy from.

### **C. Employees**

1. Can be sitting on a gold mine of suggestions for small, cheap, and easy to implement changes that can lead to big improvements.
2. Set up a suggestion box.
3. Establish quality circles – teams of workers who gather to discuss ways to improve processes.
4. Quality circles have been used in companies around the world to improve quality, lower costs, and motivate staff.

### **D. Shareholders**

1. Whenever possible send electronic documents rather than printed materials.
2. If you must print, double side pages and use software such as GreenPrint, which eliminates wasteful pages in any printout automatically.

### **E. Customers**

1. Efficient on-line transaction, delivery and administration systems reduce the need for materials, transportation, and storefront space.

### **F. Community**

1. A multitude of groups engage in practical efforts like planting trees, rehabilitating public open spaces, recycling garbage, turning used cooking oil into biodiesel, and promoting renewable energy.
2. Set aside time – on Friday afternoons, for example – when staff can work individually or collectively on social projects. Make the work part of performance reviews, with agreed goals and evaluation indicators.

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# Tips from True Green@work\*

## **TOTALLY GREEN** (what we all can do)

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1. By eliminating inefficient and unnecessary lighting you'll also reduce heat, reducing the cost of air conditioning.
2. Make it part of your procurement policy to favor local trade, to eliminate carbon emissions generated through transportation.
3. Consider purchasing Hybrid vehicles.
4. Visit [greenfleets.org](http://greenfleets.org) to get guidance on what you can do to cut fleet emissions and costs.
5. Look for gasoline blended with biofuels made from renewable or recycled sources, such as ethanol.
6. Find ways to avoid any air travel that isn't absolutely necessary. Virtual meetings – teleconferencing, web-conferencing, or video-conferencing can be just as effective.
7. Arrange a waste audit. Contact your local solid waste utility or state environmental agency for advice and information about finding qualified waste auditors.
8. Transform something you would otherwise throw away into something useful to your business or others.
9. Combine with neighboring businesses to collect quantities sufficient to interest a recycling service.
10. Organize a workplace collection. For example, working phones can be sent to developing countries to help bridge the digital divide; otherwise they can be dismantled and their materials recovered to make other products.
11. Donate old computers to schools, charities, or organizations that can refurbish or reuse the parts.
12. Using rechargeable batteries can significantly reduce waste, plus save you money. Ask your suppliers about their preparedness to take back products at the end of their life for reuse or recycling.

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