



Girl Scouts Go Green

**Making a Difference through Conservation
Online Patch Program**



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One of the provisions of the Girl Scout Law is that Girl Scouts use resources wisely. What exactly does that mean? How can you, as a girl, make a difference through conservation of resources? Complete this program and you will know some ways to make an impact!

Steps

1. Water
2. Energy
3. Resources
4. Habitat
5. The Three R's

Purpose

When I have earned this patch, I'll know how I can make small changes in my life and my household that will help us to "Go Green!"

Step 1

Water

1. Where does your water come from? Where does it go? Contact your local water district to find out where your water comes from. You may be surprised to learn that your water comes from hundreds of miles away. Or you may find out that it comes from a well, lake or other water source in your region. What is the journey like from its source to your tap? And what about when it goes down the drain? Where does it end up once it goes down the drain? Your water or sanitation district may even offer tours of their facilities. If you're lucky enough to be able to take one, round up some fellow Girl Scouts, so you can learn together!
2. Identify the heaviest uses of water usage in your household, and with your family's help, devise and implement ways to cut back. These could include reducing sprinkler times (or turning sprinklers off completely), adjusting the schedule to run in the early morning when there will be less evaporation, adding a cover for your pool, taking shorter showers, and only running full loads of clothes or dishes. Your local water district may even have devices, such as faucet



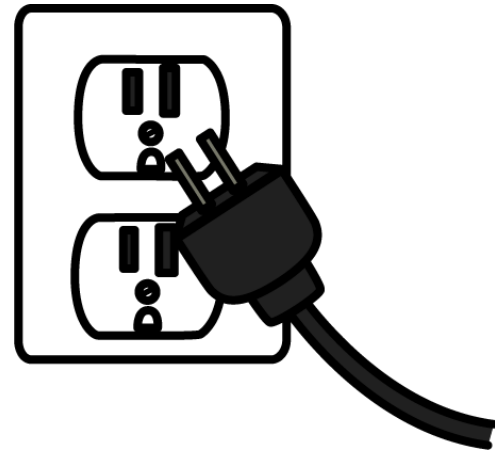
aerators, shower heads, and shower timers that they can offer you for free to help you with your quest.

3. Investigate the “hidden water” in your everyday life. *Did you know?* Nearly 95 percent of your water footprint is hidden in the food you eat, energy you use, products you buy, and services you rely on! Do some research using the key terms “water footprint” or “hidden water,” and share your findings with your family and friends. Are there any ways to reduce your “hidden water” usage?

Step 2

Energy

1. Learn about renewable energy (examples might include solar, wind, and geothermal). How is energy generated through these methods? Which energy sources are the best for your region? Are any renewable energy sources contributors to the energy your household uses?
2. Look around your house – are there any instances where energy can be saved? (Examples might include devices that are infrequently used, but could be unplugged between use; washers and dryers running on loads that are less than full; lights left on; and more!) Make a list of potential energy “vampires” and discuss with your family. Create a plan for saving energy in the house, based on your list.
3. Energy is also used, in the form of fossil fuels, in your vehicle. Work with your family to determine ways to cut down on driving. Maybe you can carpool with another family to school one day a week, or combine trips to reduce back-and-forth, or even bike or walk instead of driving. Every little bit helps!



Step 3

Resources

1. Learn about natural resources, such as: fossil fuels, fresh water, wood and other plants, and metal ores. Additionally, renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, geothermal, and hydro energy are natural resources. Which of these resources are renewable, and which are not? Create a visual aide, such as a poster, photo collage, or flash cards, and share your findings.



2. Survey a room in your home. What natural resources are being used? Which are renewable, and which are not? Create a tally chart of your results.
3. Identify ways that your household uses nonrenewable natural resources. Determine how these could be replaced with renewable resources, or at least replaced with less resource-intensive items (for example, this could include single-use water bottles, plastic shopping bags, and more).

Step 4

Habitat

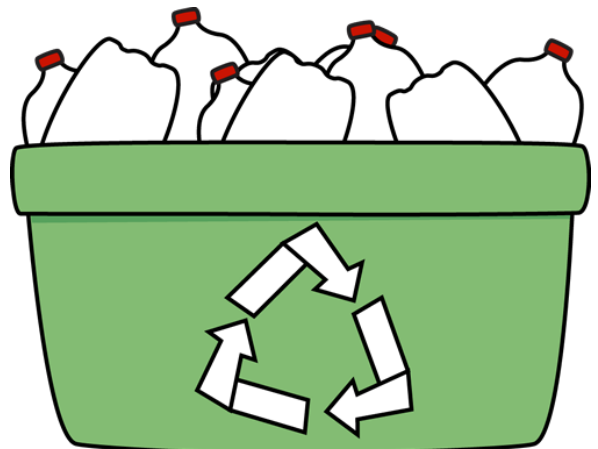
1. Visit a wildlife refuge, natural park space (not heavily landscaped), or native garden. Take time to quietly observe your surroundings, from high to low. From the birds in the sky to the bugs and plants on the ground, make observations of your environment using all of your senses. How is the environment different here than in a parking lot? How is it different than a heavily-landscaped space, or a farm? Is it similar or different than the environment in your neighborhood?
2. Visit a nursery that features native plants and talk with an expert. Why are native plants beneficial to the environment? How can they help save water? How can they help with populations of pollinators and other native animals?
3. Research the plants and animals that are native to your region. Through your research, try to answer the following question: why is preservation of natural habitat important, even if you personally don't like to spend time outdoors? Share your findings with your friends, family, or troop.



Step 5

The Three R's

1. Recycle - Learn about the numbers printed on plastic items and what they mean. Which ones can be recycled in your community? Make a sign for your recycling container at home with your results (set one up if you don't have one already!), and encourage your family to recycle.



2. Reuse - Rescue an item from your trash stream and figure out how to reuse it. For example, an empty tissue box can be used to store plastic shopping bags (so they can be used to collect and dispose of trash!); an empty plastic tub from your margarine, yogurt, cottage cheese, etc. can be used to store small things, or to bring lunch items in. All kinds of materials can be used for arts and crafts. The possibilities are endless!
3. Reduce – One of the greatest sources of trash in our landfill is organic matter (food scraps). This is a waste on many levels: once buried, these scraps don't decompose well, so they take up a lot of space in the landfill, and they could be used to make healthy, fertile soil instead! If you have the space available, you can compost your food scraps instead of throwing them in the trash. Setting up a home compost system is easy. Do some research online to find out how, what to put in your compost pile, and what to NEVER put in your compost pile, and how to use your compost in the garden. You may even decide you want to try vermicomposting, or composting using worms!

Now that I've earned this patch, I can give service by:

- Educating others about the conservation of resources, and how easy it can be.
- Setting up a recycling program in my household, school, or community.
- Protecting native habitat and the organisms that depend upon it.

I am inspired to: