

Make Your Dishwasher Better For The Planet

The dishwasher is a very helpful appliance that most of us have in our kitchens. Although most new dishwashers are quite efficient there are some easy steps you can take to make your dishwasher better for the planet.

Some of the easiest ways are to just change your habits. Only do a load of dishes when the dishwasher is full. You can also try to reduce your use of dishes. I know I am guilty of using five glasses in a day instead of trying to reuse just one glass over and over. Trying to use glasses or other dishes a few times over can stretch out the time between runs of the dishwasher.

There are also settings on the front of your dishwasher that could be changed. Turning off heated wash and heated rinse cycles saves electricity. You can also just use the regular wash cycle instead of the pots and pans cycle. The final setting is the heated dry. It is more efficient to just open up the dishwasher door and let the dishes air dry. If you do use the air dry method try to shake excess water off of your silverware or take the silverware basket out of the dishwasher and let it sit on the counter to dry. This will reduce the chance of your silverware getting tarnished.

Another part of the puzzle is using products that are better for the planet. Many dishwasher detergents still use phosphates in the mix. Phosphates help soften the water to make the detergent work better, but they also can cause algae to bloom in our waterways hurting aquatic life. There are earth friendly brands such as Ecover or Seventh Generation that do not contain phosphates, but they still work very well.

You can also use a better rinse aid. There is no need to buy the specific rinse aid brands you can find in the store. Just fill the rinse aid compartment with distilled white vinegar. I have been using the vinegar for a few months and my dishes have been spot free. And don't worry the dishes do not smell like vinegar.