

How Green Is Your Office?

A guide to ensuring your office is as green as it can be



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Top office tips

- If you have to print a document or email, just print the text you need.
- Put on more clothes rather than turning up the heating!
- Turn off your monitor when you go for lunch, a meeting or even a tea break.
- Turn off your PC if you're not going to be using it for a few hours.
- Use timer switches to turn off vending machines when the office is closed.
- Make the most of natural lighting - open the blinds!
- Use hand-dryers rather than paper towels.
- Use a laptop and projector to run meetings electronically.
- Mark junk mail 'Return to sender' or ask to be removed from the mailing list.
- Use (or install) video-conferencing to save travel for meetings.

PCs, monitors and PDAs

- Leaving your monitor or computer on stand-by mode still consumes significant amounts of electricity, as much as 30% of normal use in some cases.
- Switch off your monitor every time you are away from your desk for a few minutes.
- Shut down your PC every time you are away from your desk for more than a couple of hours.
- Change the settings (**Start » Control panel » Display**) to automatically switch off monitors and/or shut down when not in use.
- A light flashing on your monitor shows that it is still on and is wasting energy.
- Collect unused discs, erase them, put new labels on them and make them available for re-use.
- Note that setting-up a screen saver does not save any energy. They are there to stop the image of a static screen from being imprinted on the monitor glass.
- Leave your personal digital assistant switched off while in the holder. It will still charge and you only need to turn it on for a minute or so before removing it to let it synchronise.

Lighting

- Make the most of natural light. Don't block it with filing cabinets, plants or blinds that are permanently shut!
- Switch off lights when you are last to leave rooms and when they are not needed.
- Turn off lights in the toilets, kitchen, meeting rooms etc. when not needed.
- Flickering fluorescent tubes use up more energy. If you see one, report it!
- Turning off fluorescent tubes frequently does not mean that more electricity is used when they are turned back on and does not have a significant impact on the life of the tube (compared to the energy saved).

Heating and other equipment

- Keep doors and windows shut (and avoid opening them to cool a room if the heating is still on).
- Water coolers, vending machines and boilers can be connected to timer switches so that they are not constantly in use over evenings and weekends.
- Never turn on local A/C units for cooling purposes if the heating is on. The systems end up working against each other, wasting energy in the process.
- If you feel the cold, consider wearing a thicker shirt or blouse, a jumper or a fleece to work.
- Check that the radiators in your room are set appropriately. It is not necessary to continually turn your radiator up and down from minimum to maximum. Thermostatic radiator valves work by stabilising the local temperature to that set by the switch e.g. if the valve is set to II, the radiator will work to heat the air around the thermostat to the level of heat corresponding to 'II'. Generally, once set, they do not need to be touched again.

Paper, printing and photocopying

Photocopying

- Use the size reduction feature offered on many copiers. Two pages of a book or periodical can often be copied onto one standard sheet.
- Photocopy double sided.
- Put a paper recycling box beside the photocopier.
- Recycle all toner cartridges.
- Switch off the copier overnight (a photocopier left on overnight wastes enough energy to make 5,300 A4 copies).

Paper

- Re-use paper that's already printed on one side by manually feeding it into copiers and printers for draft documents.
- Once-used paper can also be reused in plain paper fax machines — they only need one clean side.
- Re-use old paper for notepads.
- Re-use internal and external envelopes by using re-use stickers.
- Recycle all paper including white and coloured stationary, stapled paper, magazines and cardboard that cannot be re-used again (if possible).
- A box containing paper that has only be used once can be placed at printers.
- Do this by using the manual feed tray on the machine.
- Contact the waste minimisation team to obtain a supply of 'reuse' stickers.
- Stop junk mail by marking it RETURN TO SENDER and re-posting it.
- Register with the Mailing Preference Service by writing to MPS, Freepost 22, London, W1E 7EZ; phone 0207 766 4410 or visit www.mpsonline.org.uk (service is for UK residential addresses only).

Printing

- Do you really need a hard copy of it? Can you save the message/attachments instead?
- **Don't** print this document out. It's much better to save it on your system where all users can read it online.
- Instead of printing a web page, bookmark it or save the page.
- Proof the document on screen before printing.
- Consider changing the margin sizes, especially on drafts.
- Reducing the point size of your text may save lots of paper.
- Check margins when printing on headed paper.
- If you only need the page you are working on, go to **File » Print** and click on **Current Page** on the 'Page range' section.
- If you only need a specific number of pages, go **File » Print** and put the page numbers in on the 'Page range' section.
- Check if your printer will print multiple pages on an A4 sheet (2, 4, 6, 9 or 16 pages).
- Check if your printer can print double sided (most larger laser printers can).
- If you do print something, retrieve it immediately. This helps to avoid the need for printing it again (because it has gone walkabout etc.)
- Switch the printer off at night - the last person to leave the office should do this.
- Recycle all ink toner cartridges.

Reducing the length of emails for printing

- When replying to e-mail messages most users have Outlook set to 'Include original message text'. A long exchange can lead to several pages of text which can waste paper when printing the most recent message.
- To insert the original email into your response (for reading and printing if necessary);
- Select **Tools** on the Outlook menu bar
- Select **Options » Preferences**
- Select **E-mail Options**
- Under **On replies and forwards** choose the option **Attach original message**.

Other office tips

- You can run meetings electronically by using LCD equipment to project agendas and papers rather than having everyone bring hard copies. You can also take notes on scrap paper or record minutes directly into your laptop (if you have one).
- Paper towels are often a major source of waste. Try to use hand dryers, where available, rather than paper towels. (The advice from a local authority environmental health department is that the risk of cross-contamination from using hand dryers is minimal.)