

Kitchen Essentials

It's amazing how much time we spend in the kitchen. Food procurement, preparation, and clean up take a lot more time than actually eating! I've got 2 tips for each area below, and there are lots more on [our website](#).

Procurement

- Growing food is a great way to save energy. It can be as simple or as complex as you'd like. A couple of containers of veggies on the porch of an apartment can provide food for one or two, and some fresh food and herbs can be grown in a kitchen window. I'm saving salad containers from Panera to use to grow lettuce and spinach in the window.
- Remember that 7th grade science lesson about food chains? By eating lower on the food chain we can also save energy. By eating plants rather than the animals that eat the plants, YOU get the benefit of the energy the animal would use moving, digesting, respirating, etc. Beans and nuts are great sources of protein.

Preparation

- To minimize the amount of energy used in heating your food, plan menus with items that can be heated at the same time at the same temperature rather than items that need different temperatures or different methods (stove top and oven).
- Think through all of the things you'll need for a recipe and get as many out of the fridge as you can at one time rather than opening the fridge multiple times.

Dining

- The best choice is to use and wash reusable china and utensils. Using compostable plates, napkins and other dinnerware is ok as long as you compost them! Disposable dinnerware just adds to landfills and wastes non-renewable resources like petroleum to make the plastic. It also has a big impact as those resources are extracted, refined and transported.
- Cloth napkins are another easy change to make. You can get them pretty cheaply at a second hand store, and wash and reuse them.

Clean up

- Rather than let the water run down the drain as you wait for it to heat up for washing, save the water in jugs and use it to water the plants, make the coffee and fill the dog dish, etc.
- Use reusable containers to store leftover food rather than plastic bags, foil, etc. that end up getting tossed.

Look for more ideas of how to lower your impact on creation on [our website](#).

