

Conserving Water in the home

Food Preparation

Water is required by the human body. It is available in many forms. Menus should be planned to include canned and bottled juices as well as foods with a high moisture content. These foods include:

- Fruits: berries, cherries, apples, oranges, strawberries, tomatoes
- Vegetables: carrots, potatoes, green beans, cabbage, lettuce

To minimize thirst, it is advisable not to overseason foods.

Large quantities of water are often used during the initial preparation of food and for the clean-up. To conserve water, keep these tips in mind:

- * Wash raw fruits and vegetables in a bowl or pan of water rather than under running water. The water can be re-used to rinse dirty dishes before washing them.
- * Defrost frozen foods in the refrigerator rather than under running water.
- * Wash dishes in a pan of hot, soapy water and rinse in a second pan of hot water rather than under running water.

* When waiting for tap water to warm, collect cold water for future use. A container with a spigot could be used for short term storage.

Water use can be minimized also during other food preparation steps, although the savings will not be as significant. Keep these points in mind:

- * Use a minimum amount of water for cooking foods such as frozen vegetables and stews. This will maximize nutritional value as well as saving water.
- * Cook foods over low heat in covered pans to decrease the rate of moisture loss.
- * Cover or wrap foods in aluminum foil during baking to minimize the evaporation of liquid.
- * Save leftover vegetable juices for reconstituting soups, cooking raw or frozen vegetables and stews and for making gravy. Leftover fruit juices can be used for drinking and for making gelatin salads.
- * Minimize the number of cooking utensils and dishes used to cut down on water needed for dishwashing.

Note: Water should not be conserved at the expense of cleanliness. It is important to wash hands before food preparation, clean cutting boards and work surfaces, and wash cooking utensils and dishes.



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Water Storage

Drinking water can be stored for short periods of time as an emergency measure. Clean plastic and glass jugs with tight-fitting lids or stoppers are good storage containers. Fruit jars, quart jars, and picnic vacuum jugs are also adequate.

All water to be stored for later use should be purified first:

Boiling--Boil vigorously for 1 to 3 minutes to destroy bacteria that might be present. Before drinking, pour the boiled water from one clean container to another several times to improve the taste.

Bleach method--Any household bleach solution that contains hypochlorite, a chlorine compound, as its only active ingredient will purify water easily and inexpensively. Bleach solutions with 5.25% of sodium hypochlorite are available in grocery stores.

Add bleach solution to water in any clean container in which it can be thoroughly mixed by stirring or shaking.

The following table shows the proper amount to add.

Water Purification by Bleach Method

Amount of water	Amount of solution to add to--	
	Clear water	Cloudy water
1 quart ($\frac{1}{4}$ gallon)	2 drops	4 drops
1 gallon	8 drops	16 drops
5 gallons	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon	1 teaspoon

Add bleach solution to water and stir, then let the mixture stand for 30 minutes. After this length of time the water should still have a distinct taste or smell of chlorine. If this taste or smell is not present, add another dose of solution to the water and let the water stand another 15 minutes. Taste or smell of chlorine in the treated water is a sign of safety.