7 ways to go green in your home.

From recycling a piece of paper to installing solar panels, there are a lot of ways to create a more environmentally friendly home. However, some are certainly simpler than others. If you're interested in taking some steps toward sustainable living, see what comes second nature to the eco-experts. Discover seven helpful hints to go green (and then go greener).

1. **Light the house with LEDs.** Trying to save the environment? How about saving some money, too? LEDs (or light-emitting diodes) use 75 percent less energy and last 25 times longer. With that, we're giving the green light to AmazonBasics bulbs. They're less than $20, and each one will last longer than 13 years.
   Go greener: *Install automatic timers or motion sensors.*

2. **Use a smart thermostat.**Control your heating and cooling costs … and your energy emissions. Just set your schedule and your programmable thermostat will operate accordingly. Fun fact: If everyone used a smart thermostat, we would offset 13 billion pounds of greenhouse gas emissions each year, which is equivalent to the emissions of 1.2 million vehicles.
   Go greener: *Insulate your heating ducts.*

3. **Pay attention to other temperatures, too.** Are any of your essentials working harder than they need to? Set your refrigerator to 37° F, your freezer to -3° F and your water heater to 120° F.
   Go greener: *Upgrade to energy-efficient appliances.*

4. **Buy reusable bottles.** Did you know that people across the world purchase one million plastic bottles per minute? And that 91 percent of all plastic is tossed in the trash? And that plastic bottles

take 400 years to decompose naturally? With filtered water and reusable bottles, your family can save the world with every sip.
Go greener: *Turn off your ice maker after you have enough ice.*

5. **Wash clothes with cold water.** When you do a load of laundry, 90 percent of the energy goes toward heating the water. Just heating the water! Simply switching the setting from "hot" to "warm" could cut your energy use in half and switching to "cold" could cut it even more. Need an example? Let's say you used cold water four out of five times for a year. You could cut out 864 pounds of CO2 emissions, which is the same as planting 0.37 acres of U.S. forest.
   Go greener: *Hang your clothes to dry.*

6. **Leave your shoes at the door.** The most common spot for shoe storage? The closet, of course. But when you carry shoes across your house, you're also carrying toxins, pollutants and allergens – and they can go airborne. Because shoes naturally pick up all things that are unhealthy to breathe, keeping them close to the door is considered safest.
   Go greener: *Donate unwanted apparel.*

7. **Unsubscribe from unsolicited mail.** If your mailbox is constantly crammed, there's a quick fix to save time… and trees. According to the Federal Trade Commission, you can actually opt out of "junk mail." In addition to reducing paper production, you'll also reduce the amount of toxic chemicals (ink) and airplane/automobile exhaust (delivery).
   Go greener: *Enroll in online statements.*

Now that your home is greener, contact your agent to make sure all your smart-tech is properly covered.