

# Going green doesn't cost the Earth

## What makes a green office?

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Here are some ideas about how to improve your office environment and achieve cost savings by carrying out a simple review of your everyday activities.

Improving the work environment through green initiatives saves money. Consider the day-to-day activities of your staff and, by involving employees, they'll have the chance to talk to each other and come up with their own ideas. Make sure everyone understands what you're doing, why you're doing it and what you hope to achieve. New initiatives can be fun and don't be afraid to test out any suggestions even if some ideas don't work for your office.


### Travel

How people get to work each day is as important as any travelling done as part of their job. If it's possible, give staff the choice of flexi time or working from home.

### Printing

Printing isn't just about the paper - it includes the ink that's on the paper, the machine that prints it and the power that runs the printer.

Encourage email communication and

discourage printing emails or writing internal memos. Get everyone to put -  Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail - at the end of all email messages and use recycled or FSC paper. Set the printer to draft (uses less ink) and print only when it's necessary.

### Purchasing

Goods available locally need to be compared with those from national suppliers and look for green products throughout the entire supply chain. Use what works for you and set out clear guidelines for purchasing staff.

### Energy

Reducing the amount of energy used is an immediate cost saving and a positive environmental impact. Immediate and obvious savings can be made by using energy efficient products and improving lighting arrangements. Energy efficient equipment can be phased in by replacing old equipment with low energy computers, monitors, printers and copiers.

Install a water and energy efficient dishwasher in the kitchen and make sure that electronic

equipment and lights are switched off when not in use. Replacing standard light bulbs with low energy or fluorescent light bulbs can save up to 75% per light bulb over its lifetime.

### Water

Increasing water efficiency reduces your office's impact on both general water consumption and waste into the sewer. Putting a 'Hippo' into each toilet cistern is nearly as good as installing low flush toilets and urinals and will help to cut water usage.

Discourage bottled water by providing drinking water. Eight out of ten plastic water bottles end up in landfill.

### Recycle

Almost anything can be recycled - paper, plastic, metal, mobile phones, computers, ink cartridges and light bulbs. See what's already being recycled and look at what else can be included. General waste can be reduced by recycling used printer paper and cartridges as well as the old machines and other equipment.

For further environmental information and advice, I can be contacted through my website [www.consultmartin.co.uk](http://www.consultmartin.co.uk)