9 Simple Tricks to Reduce Your Environmental Footprint
Follow these tips to reduce your environmental footprint

1.   Prevent standby power usage
Even if your appliances are off, they are still using energy when they are plugged in. Standby power accounts for 5-10% of residential energy use, according to the Department of Energy. **Reduce your power usage** by unplugging your appliances when you go out of town.

2.   Bring your own to-go container
Many of us take our delicious leftovers home with us after eating at a restaurant. These to-go containers are usually composed of Styrofoam, single-use plastic, or paper that are usually only used once. Reduce your waste by keeping a Tupperware container in your car to take your leftovers home.

3.   Use WaterSense Appliances
Looking to replace a dishwasher, clothing washer, toilet, sink faucet, shower head, or irrigation controller? Look for an appliance with the EPA's WaterSense label. WaterSense labeled products use at least 20% less water, and performs as well or better than non-certified models.

4.   Go paperless
How much mail do you get every day and how much of it do you need? Reduce tree depletion and paper waste by unsubscribing from catalogs and signing up for paperless billing so your statements are emailed to you.

5.   Bring your own grocery bags
Keep durable bags in the trunk of your car for your groceries to avoid the waste from plastic and paper bags. Plastic bags can take up to 1,000 years to decompose and are wasteful.

6.   Wash clothes in cold water
According to EnergyStar, about 90% of the energy it takes to operate a clothes washer is from heating the water. Unless dealing with heavily soiled clothing, washing in cold water will still clean your clothes, cut energy usage, and prolong the life of your clothing.

7.   Lower the thermostat
Save energy and money on your heating and cooling bills by simply resetting your thermostat when you are asleep or away from home. You can do this automatically without sacrificing

comfort by installing an automatic setback or programmable thermostat. The Department of Energy recommends setting the thermostat in the Winter to 68°F while you're awake, and lowering the temperature when you're asleep or away. **Turning the thermostat back** 7°-10°F for 8 hours while you at work can save you as much as 10% a year on your heating bills.

8. Skip bottled water

Plastic bottled water is usually used only once and is an incredible waste of our planet's limited resources. Instead of buying a plastic water bottle, purchase a durable and reusable bottle to keep with you a daily basis.

9.Reduce paper towel use

Instead of throwing away that old T-shirt, consider repurposing it and use old clothes in place of paper towels for household cleaning.

How many planets would we need to support your lifestyle if everyone lived like you? **Take this quick quiz** to gain insight on your ecological footprint.

###