

Eco maniac

Use plants, water filters, organic sheets and other earth-friendly goods to give your entire apartment a green sweep. By **Gretchen Kalwinski**



\$89.99 at Bed, Bath & Beyond (locations throughout the city, bedbathandbeyond.com).

Shower power Buy a hemp shower curtain. Sure, the light tan color is a little drab and it's pricier than PVC (vinyl) ones, but you don't need a liner, hemp is naturally resistant to mildew and bacteria, and the EPA reported in 2002 that PVC shower curtains "can cause elevated indoor-air toxic concentrations." *\$99*

at Bean Products (1500 S Western Ave, 312-666-3600, beanproducts.com).

Skin deep Since conventional body products often contain cheap, synthetic and potentially toxic ingredients, using organic products is a no-brainer. Treehugger.com recommends making sure that you buy only products that have the USDA Organic seal, which means the product is truly free from synthetics and supports organic farming and agriculture. Dr. Bronner's and Aubrey Organics never test on animals and led the fight for the USDA seal. We recommend Dr. Bronner's Pure Castille Peppermint Soap (pictured, right) and Aubrey Organics Camomile Luxurious Volumizing Conditioner. *\$12.49 and \$13.78, respectively, at Whole Foods (locations throughout the city, wholefoods.com).*



Bedroom

Sound asleep Drown out serious noise pollution from the El and nighttime sirens with the soothing trickle of a waterfall fountain lulling you to sleep. No need to rely on white-noise machines—the Art Institute gift shop has a gorgeous fountain made of slate. *\$115 at the Art Institute gift shop (111 S Michigan Ave, artinstituteshop.org).*

Sheet sandwich Use chemical-free organic cotton sheets to avoid skin irritation and aggravated allergies. The Haven "Hotel

Kitchen

Refined recycling Rubbermaid is fine, but plastic ain't good for landfills—plus, it's not all that attractive. For separating paper and (non-funky) plastic recyclables, try Nice Home's metal bins (pictured, above) in colors like baby blue bright or orange. *\$19.99–\$29.99 at Target (locations throughout the city, target.com).*

Bag it Our Old World grandmothers reused plastic baggies. We should, too. After washing, hang 'em on a nifty Countertop Bag Dryer, a multipronged wood contraption shaped like an upside-down cone. *\$19 at gaia.com.*

Hit the bottle Bottled water wastes plastic and oftentimes is just repackaged tap water anyway (ahem, Aquafina). By installing a filter that attaches to your faucet and toting a reusable bottle, you save plastic and cashola. Brita filters are easy to install; just screw the attachment onto your faucet and change filters when the little warning light flashes. *\$19.97–\$39.97 at Home Depot (locations throughout the city, homedepot.com).*

Got any herb? Grow cooking herbs (mint, basil, parsley) in your kitchen window—you won't waste plastic packaging and won't have to buy tiny bunches of herbs at jacked-up prices. Gethsemane Gardens has a range of herbs and cute pots to transplant them into once you're home. *\$3.99–\$8.99 at Gethsemane Gardens (5739 N Clark St, 773-878-5915).*

Bathroom

In hot water Take shorter showers or get a luxury low-flow shower head, which can save about 4,000 gallons of water per year. *\$59.99–*

Collection" at Macy's is available in a variety of soothing neutrals and has a 400 thread count. \$49.99–\$59.99 on sale at Macy's (two locations in the city, macys.com).

See the light Choose soy candles instead of paraffin ones, which produce carcinogens and soot. Tatine's soy varieties, like creeping moss and ginger grapefruit, smell fabulous. *\$15–\$24 at tatinecandles.com (online shop opens mid-August).*

All rooms

Air fresheners Not only do these plants absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen, they also help to clean the not-so-fresh air that drifts into apartments near highways or busy streets. Garden centers and nurseries throughout the city always have a supply of the best air-filtering plants: English ivy, spider plants (pictured, above), peace lilies and rubber plants. *\$4.99–\$32.99 at Grand Street Gardens (2200 W Grand Ave, 312-829-8200, grandstreetgardens.com).*

Clear the air If you're not into houseplants, buy an indoor air purifier instead. Sharper Image has a wide variety of nonhidesous ones. *\$149.95–\$499.95 at Sharper Image (835 N Michigan Ave, 312-335-1600).*

Pull the plug Your TV and stereo, as well as cell-phone and camera chargers, gobble energy even when not in use. For simplicity's sake, plug your electronics into a surge protector, and just flip the switch when you head out for the day. *\$9.99–\$39.99 at Best Buy (locations throughout the city, bestbuy.com).*

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