

Water Use and Water Scarcity

How Much Water Do You Use?

Your Household Water Use

Everyone relies on water in their daily lives, and most people in the United States are very water-dependant. Use the online Water Use Calculator <www.owasa.org/pages/WaterCalculator.html> to estimate your household's "direct" water use.

Indirect Uses of Water

Much of what people use and consume requires water for its production. This is referred to as "indirect" water use. Here are some examples of items most people in the United States use that require water in the production process.

NOTE: Many of these items are produced and traded worldwide. Consider that you may use goods that are produced using water from countries other than your own. Additionally, water supplies in some countries may cross international borders.

How much water does it take to...	
manufacture a new car?	39,090 gallons
make one pound of plastic?	24 gallons
refine one barrel of crude oil?	1,851 gallons
produce one ton of steel?	62,600 gallons
make one pound of wool or cotton?	101 gallons
grow and produce one loaf of bread?	150 gallons
grow and produce one chicken?	400 gallons
grow and produce one orange?	13.8 gallons

Data from the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Geological Survey

Facts About World Water Availability

- 97% of the world's water is salt water.
- 2% of the world's water is fresh and locked in polar ice caps.
- 1% of the world's water is fresh and available for human use.
- Over half of the world's freshwater resources is polluted, with some sources being more contaminated and toxic than others.
- Water scarcity, or unmet water needs, may lead to economic, social, or environmental problems.