



TIPS FOR DIVERS & SNORKELERS

- Before booking a reef trip, **check weather conditions**; it's best not to go out in rough seas. Poor visibility, strong winds & waves reduce safe interaction at the reef.
- Remember that even the **lightest touch** with hands or equipment **can damage sensitive coral** polyps.
- Snorkelers should **wear float-coats** to allow gear adjustments without standing on the coral.
- Avoid contact with the ocean bottom, **divers should only use the weight needed and practice proper buoyancy control**. Lifeless areas may support new growth, if left undisturbed.
- Please **don't feed the fish**; it destroys their natural feeding habits, and you might be injured.
- Remember, **it's illegal to harvest coral** in Florida and purchasing it at local shops only depletes reefs elsewhere.

TIPS FOR BOATERS & FISHERMEN

- **Bring your trash to shore** and **recycle** it.
- **Avoid collecting fish** -- most die within one year.
- **Avoid harassing fish and invertebrates**; it only makes them wary of people.
- **It is illegal to dump trash at sea**; plastic bags and other debris can injure or kill marine animals. Try to retrieve fishing gear and equipment, especially monofilament line.
- **Accidental boat groundings damage the reef**. Prop damage destroys shallow seagrass beds. Consult tide & navigation charts and **steer clear of shallow areas**. Remember, "**Brown, brown, run aground. Blue, blue, sail on through**".
- **Use reef mooring buoys** if available. Otherwise, anchor in sandy areas away from coral and seagrasses so that anchor and chain do not drag or grate on nearby corals or tear-up seagrass beds.
- **Practice good seamanship, and safe boating**. Maintain a safe distance from fisherman. Know and observe size and catch limits; release any fish you can't eat.
- Avoid wildlife disturbance by staying at least 200 feet offshore, keeping speed and noise to a minimum, and avoiding boat wakes near isolated mangroves.

- **Camping, campfires, and collecting of any kind is prohibited** on all National wildlife Refuges. Personal watercraft and airboats are prohibited in all National Parks.
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TIPS FOR ECO-FRIENDLY LIVING

- Read labels and avoid purchasing over-packaged, non-recyclable single-serving products.
- Purchase natural, biodegradable, non-phosphate, non-toxic, non-aerosol, non-plastic products.
- Avoid items produced by companies that are known exploits of the environment.
- Avoid temptation to purchase marine life - dead or alive. Coral Reefs around the world are being decimated by mass harvesting for the "curio" (i.e. souvenirs/dust collectors, jewelry and aquariums).
- Conserve energy by sharing rides, buying fuel efficient cars, riding bikes, and walking when possible.
- Call the municipal power company to conduct a free energy survey of your home or office, and then act on it.
- Conserve water by using water-reducing fixtures, limit shower time and fix leaks promptly.
- Landscape with native plants and trees and avoid species that require watering. Mulching around trees and shrubs helps retain moisture.
- Reduce rainwater runoff through landscaping and porous pavements.
- Composting organic kitchen and yard waste is a free and healthy alternative to chemical fertilizers.
- Hand-weeding and removal of insects and eggs is an effective alternative to chemical pesticides for minor pest problems. Try natural pesticides like tobacco water or hot pepper for more serious infestations.
- Encouraging natural predators, planting a variety of species together (versus clusters of one species), planting pest resistant plant and companion plants that have insect-repelling properties all are great options for pest control.
- Sort your trash according to local recycling laws; try to compost organic matter and yard waste, and purchase recycled products to support the industry.
- If curbside recycling hasn't reached your area yet, call your municipality to find the nearest location of your nearest receptacles.
- Recycle old clothing and other unwanted items through yard sales. What does not sell, donate to a local charity.
- Recycle old motor oil and antifreeze at gas stations that have the facilities.

TIPS FOR ECO-FRIENDLY DRIVING -- SAVING AT THE PUMP

From **Alliance to Save Energy**

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As Earth Day and the 2004 summer vacation season approach, U.S. motorists are already reeling from record-high gasoline prices. To ease pain, the Alliance to Save Energy offers consumers tips for cutting gas costs:

Before Hitting the Road:

- Keep tires properly inflated. Properly inflated tires are safer, last longer, and can improve your gas mileage by more than 3 percent.
- Use the recommended grade of motor oil. Improve your gas mileage by 1-2 percent by using the manufacturer's recommended grade of motor oil. Select motor oil with "Energy Conserving" on the API performance symbol. It contains friction-reducing additives.
- Keep your engine properly tuned. Fixing a car that is noticeably out of tune or has failed an emissions test can improve its gas mileage by about 4 percent, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. DOE adds that replacing a faulty oxygen sensor can improve gas mileage up to 40 percent!
- Check and replace air filters regularly. Replacing a clogged or dirty air filter can improve your car's gas mileage by as much as 10 percent, according to DOE, and keeps impurities from damaging the inside of your engine.
- Plan ahead for the shortest, most gas-saving itinerary. With a little planning, you can not only save fuel, but wear and tear on your car as well. Avoid retracing your route to reduce the distance you travel. Combining errands into one trip saves you time and money. Several short trips taken from a cold start can use twice as much fuel as a longer, multi-stop trip of the same distance with a warm engine.
- If you own more than one vehicle, drive the one that gets better gas mileage whenever possible. Do you really need that SUV for trips to the video store?

Once You're Behind the Wheel:

- Don't speed! Gas mileage declines rapidly above 60 mph. Each 5 mph increase above 60 is like paying an additional 10 cents a gallon for gasoline.
- Road rage costs. Aggressive driving wastes gas and can lower your gas mileage by 33 percent at highway speeds and 5 percent in town. Nix jack-rabbit starts in favor of slow acceleration from a dead stop. Sensible driving also is safer for you and others - so you may save more than gas money.
- Avoid excessive idling, which gets 0 miles per gallon. Cars with larger engines usually waste more gas while idling than those with smaller engines.
- Take advantage of cruise control. Using cruise control on the highway helps maintain a constant speed and, in most cases, save gas.
- Use your overdrive gears to lower engine speed, save gas, and reduce engine wear.

Think Before You Commute:

- Stagger your work hours, if possible, to avoid peak rush hours. You'll spend less time sitting in traffic, consume less fuel, and avoid additional stress.
- Take advantage of available carpools and ride-share programs. Sharing your commute with others cuts weekly fuel costs, reduces wear on your car, and may allow you to use less-congested High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes.
- Consider public transportation. Check the American Public Transportation Association's website for local information (www.apta.com/links/state_local/).
- Consider telecommuting - working from home - if and when possible.

Taking a Trip:

- It's a "drag." Avoid carrying items on your vehicle's roof. A loaded roof rack or carrier increases aerodynamic drag, which can cut mileage by

5 percent. Place items inside the trunk whenever possible to improve your fuel economy.

- Travel light. Avoid carrying unneeded items, especially heavy ones. An extra 100 pounds in the trunk cuts a typical car's fuel economy 1-2 percent.
- When renting a car, ask for a model that gets better fuel economy. Also, remember to fill up the tank before returning the car to the rental company, which always charges much higher gas prices - and perhaps even an extra gas surcharge.

Craving that "New Car" Smell?

- When buying a new vehicle, think high gas mileage. Check out the DOE website (www.fueleconomy.gov) and the ACEEE website (www.greencars.com) for information on fuel-efficient vehicles. Learn about current electric drive vehicles on the Electric Drive Transportation Association website (<http://www.electricdrive.org>).
- Consider purchasing a hybrid, which can provide a \$1,500 tax deduction this year. Consumer Reports says that in its tests, the redesigned Toyota Prius hybrid - which gets 44 mpg with near-zero emissions - outscored four midsize family sedans and finished sixth out of 15 similarly priced sedans. The consumer magazine named the Prius its "Top Pick" in the Green Car category.

And Finally.....

- Get your exercise! Whenever possible, walk to your destination. You'll lose weight, lower stress, save gas, and reduce pollution.
- The Alliance to Save Energy is a coalition of prominent business, government, environmental, and consumer leaders who promote the efficient and clean use of energy worldwide to benefit consumers, the environment, economy, and national security. for more info, go to www.ase.org

"All of these alternatives and recommendations would result in a public outcry from private systems and businessmen. But the situation of the ecosystem is so critical that it may require strong and immediate actions such as the ones mentioned above.

If sensible planning were carried out on the land, the water of the Keys would soon see the effect and the marine life of the reefs and the lagoon would again flourish, for the people of the Keys could not live with nature ashore and appreciate their surroundings without coming to the realization of the need to protect their waters."

-Dr. Gilbert Voss, Coral Reefs of Florida, 1988