



Your hobbies

Making your favourite pastime greener will pay off for the planet.



COOK

While partners sometimes resent time spent on a hobby, if yours is cooking, chances are they'll be more than supportive. Still, to green up your efforts you'll want to buy organic or local ingredients, choose sustainable fish and waste as little as possible. Remember, if you're using the oven, make sure to fill it rather than use it for just one dish — a great excuse for baking more than one cake at a time. If you are overwhelmed by the task, start slowly: choose one action a week and your kitchen will be greener in no time.



SPORTS STARS

If your favourite pastime involves a weekly trip to a tennis court, football field or other team activity, there is plenty of scope to green up the experience. Car pool with your teammates or put up a rideshare request on a bulletin board if you always swim or play at the same time and location. If your friendly team is waving the flag for a local sponsor (or is required to wear a uniform), consider adding the logo of your favourite green charity, too, to keep its name in the public's mind.



GREEN THUMBS

It's no secret that gardening's status as an eco-friendly hobby soared in 2008 when Michelle Obama picked up a garden trowel to start on the US first family's veggie patch. Starting your own garden? Unless you have a good supply of greywater you'll usually garden greener by choosing drought-friendly plants and, even if water restrictions don't dictate it, always water outside the hottest parts of the day. If you don't have your own green patch, consider helping one of our World Heritage Areas fight invasive species: Lord Howe Island's Ian Hutton hosts regular bush regeneration holidays (www.lordhowe-tours.com) while the island's administrators get occasional funding for (expenses paid) volunteer stints for keen weeders (Ph: 02 6563 2066).



READ BETWEEN THE LINES

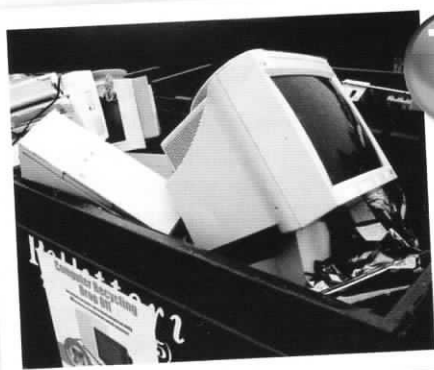
While reading is a boon for the brain, chemical inks and all those trees mean this chilled-out hobby isn't quite as kind to the planet. Electronic devices such as Kindle have been touted as the greenest thing in the future of reading, but, as with all equipment, emissions

from its production and end-of-life disposal should be factored into any eco claims. Until book rental services such as the US-based Book Swim (www.bookswim.com) hit our shores, engage with your community and green up your book collection in the good old-fashioned (and free!) way: join your local library and then actually use it.



HOOKED ON GADGETS?

If spending your spare time watching back-to-back DVDs or surfing the web till midnight is your thing, chances are your power bill will feel it. Switching to green power will help, as will installing master switches allowing all appliances to



instantly switch to standby. Australia's e-waste is growing three times faster than general household waste. If you can't give your old gear away on a service such as [freecycle](http://www.freecycle.org) (www.freecycle.org), find a local e-waste alternative (www.recyclingnearyou.com.au).

Clockwise from top: Car pool for travel to venues, recycle old computers and phones and consider starting a veggie garden.

