

# GETTING STARTED WITH ENERGY - SUPPORT PACKAGE



## Classroom Checks

When forming a new Earth-friendly habit, it helps to follow the 3 Rs- but this time we are not talking about Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. Try these 3 Rs: Reminder, Routine, and Reward!

When establishing smart energy habits, create a Reminder or cue that initiates the behavior. Then, establish the Routine of repeatedly doing the behavior, and lastly, initiate a Reward or benefit from doing the behavior. When you have all 3 Rs, a habit is more likely to stick. If you have introduced school-wide behavioural changes, such as Lights Off Monday, Reminders and Routines are usually the focus. However, the Reward for Earth-friendly habits is often invisible, indirect, and not instant, so the habit formation is incomplete and the habit may not stick for good. Try adding a Reward to close the loop and celebrate success!

Here is one way to add a Reward for smart energy habits: Use a classroom checklist to track the habits of each class in the school. A Green Team or keen class can use the checklist to do regular classroom checks to see which classes are on the path to being green. Students can make a Green Classroom Award or poster that will be placed on the door of the Green Classroom of the Month, which could be presented by the principal or at an assembly. The Green Classroom Award becomes the Reward to complete make the habit stay for good!

## Action Plan

**Step 1-** Name the team of students participating in classroom checks so it suits your school. Here are some sample names: WasteLess Warriors, Green Spies, Earth Champions. Maybe you can create a team logo, cheer, or handshake, too!

**Step 2-** Decide what you are going to include in the checklist for your school. Consider what Earth-friendly habits are already happening in your school such as Lights Off Monday, WasteLess Wednesday, or Phantom Friday. If you plan to add something new to the checklist, remember to teach everyone why it is important to work on this new green habit. A list of possible habits is below to help you get started. Remember to start small because a huge list may be overwhelming for those who are still learning.

	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Garbage, compost and recycling are done correctly										
Only double sided paper in recycling										
Lights are off when room is empty										
Computers and smartboards are turned off when not being used										
Blinds are open to use natural sunlight										
Windows closed when the heat is turned on										

**Step 3-** Make a schedule of who will do the classroom checks. The frequency of classroom checks is up to you. You may have a large Green Team or a keen group of students who want to do classroom checks daily. It's also

possible that less frequent classroom checks may work better for your school. Once week or once a day, the schedule is totally up to you.

**Step 4-** Create a Green Classroom Award. Get creative! It can be a poster, trophy, or any special object. Remember to keep your impact on the Earth small, so try and upcycle or repurpose something.

**Step 5-** Assign student leaders to perform regular classroom checks for all classes. Have the clipboards, pens, and a checklist ready for your team of Warriors or Spies. Remember to double-side your paper.

**Step 6-** Before the monthly school assembly, tabulate all the checks to see which classroom will earn the Green Classroom Award. You could have a big celebration that highlights how the winner improved, or what more can be done in to help classes improve. Remind the whole school why Earth-friendly habits matter. Remember to keep it positive, energetic and fun!



## Resources

The [Energy Navigators Activity](#) and [Classroom Energy Checklist](#) are great free resources to get started with learning about energy efficiency. Both are on the Green Schools NS [website](#), found on the [Resources](#) page. You can find many fun, educational energy related activities, such as [Energy Jeopardy](#), [Energy Bingo](#), and the [Energy Saving Game](#) as well as slideshows on energy and energy efficiency.

### **Green Habits to add to your checklist:**

- Energy
  - Turn off unnecessary lights
  - Turn off lights when leaving room
  - Open blinds to use natural light
  - Turn off smart board & computer when not in use
  - Unplug computers & devices at end of day
  - Keep windows closed if heat is on
- Food & Water
  - Eat naturally packaged food, such as whole fruit
  - Pack food in reusable containers
  - Use reusable spoons and forks
  - Use cloth napkins
  - Use a reusable water bottle
- Waste
  - Use both sides of the paper
  - Use recycled materials for arts and crafts
  - Sort waste & recyclables properly
  - Compost organic waste
  - Clean up litter indoors & outdoors
  - Use fewer paper towels when drying hands
- Other
  - Compost paper towels in bathrooms
  - Care for a class plant or pet
  - Take the class outside once a week