

What about washing my car with all this green?

With the rising price of gas, new car sales are falling. Many people are finding that their finances force them to drive cars that are not as flashy and new as they would want them to be. For now, all we can do is cross our fingers in the hopes that water-fueled engines are just over the horizon... and keep our older-than-desired cars as clean as we can. And that means plenty of hours spent at the car wash.

But a car wash sucks up a lot of water. If you want to be environmentally friendly while keeping your car clean, it can be hard. And for those of us whose math skills do not allow us to instantly calculate how many gallons of water are gushing out of a hose, it can be hard to know what kind of car wash is easiest on the environment. The truth is... all, and none. Read on to learn the environmental pros and cons of each car wash method.

Home Car Wash: When you wash your car at home, you have total control over what products you use and how much water you need. Some soaps and products used in washing cars can really harm the earth. With a home car wash, however, you can control what you use, and use soaps and cleaners that don't do as much harm to the environment. As a bonus, a home car wash gives you a bit of exercise, the warm sun on your back, and who knows? Maybe a fun summer water fight with your kids in the front yard. However, washing your car at home is also the option that uses up the most water. On average, a person washing his or her car at home uses at least 50 gallons of water. That said, it's important to keep in mind that, if you'd like to limit the amount of water you use, you can... you have total control.

Self-Serve Car Wash: The good thing about a self-serve car wash is that it uses quite a bit less water than washing your car at home. For an average sized, not-too-dirty car, a self-serve car wash uses up only 12 to 14 gallons of water. Plus, if you're using a self-serve wash with your own products, you can choose what to use. You lose the ease of a full-service car wash and the convenience of washing up at home, however.

Full Service Car Wash: There are a lot of great things about using a professional car wash. For one, it's super easy and convenient, of course. A professional car wash also requires less water than using the hose at home; 11 gallons or so for a small car, and 20 gallons or so for a truck or sport utility vehicle. However, some full-service car washes can be unfriendly on the environment. More than a few of them use products that drain hazardous chemicals into the oceans and ground water. Others, however, are more environmentally friendly... you just have to choose wisely. See more [car washing supplies](#) --

About the Author

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