A World of Water

Nearly 75% of the earth is covered by water. There is water above ground called *surface water*, such as lakes, swamps, and rivers, and water that's under the ground called *groundwater*. Water even exists in the sky! That is called *water vapor*. There is water everywhere.

Although we have a lot of water, we can't drink most of it. Ninety-seven and a half percent of the earth's water is salt water, which humans can't drink. The rest is fresh water, which we can drink. However, we can't use most of our drinking water because 70% is frozen—like the Hubbard Glacier. Also, we can only reach 30% of our groundwater, and most of that is polluted. In fact, we can only drink about 1% of the world's fresh water.



We don't drink most of our fresh water. Only 5% goes to the faucets in our homes. About 95% is used to produce food, clothes, and energy. We don't see that water, but it is a big part of our "water footprint," or the total amount of water we use. For example, we don't see the water that was used to make a T-shirt. We only see the T-shirt. But 2,700 liters (713 gallons) of water were used to produce it!

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