



Australian Government



Teacher's Notes

WATER VOLUMES HOW MUCH WATER?

CONVERSIONS

Volume	Abbreviation	Example	Conversion in litres
Millilitre	ml	One drop of water	1/1,000L
Litre	L	Carton of milk	1 litre
Kilolitre	KL	Standard car trailer	1000 litres
Megalitre	ML	Half an Olympic pool	1,000,000
Gigalitre	GL	Approx 500 Olympic pools	1,000,000,000 litres

Approximately how many litres of water does it take to flush a toilet?
Try using cartons of milk (1 Litre) to work it out.

Up until 1982, all toilets in Australia were single flush models. The average flush volume of these toilets was about 11 litres. Dual flush toilets were initially introduced with an 11/5L configuration. In 1989 the 9/4.5L model was introduced. This was only after extensive trials including retrofitting a number of whole communities. Now there are models with as low as 4.5/3L configurations.



How many litres of water do you think an average shower uses?

This depends on the length of the shower taken and the type of head on the shower.

The average shower duration is approximately 7 minutes and the average shower volume is approximately 55 litres. In households with a high-flow shower head the average water consumption per shower is 64.2 litres. This compares with 47.7 litres per shower for households with a low-flow shower head.



Where is water used in and around the house? How much do you think is used at each place? For example, what percentage of a house's water do you think is used in the shower, laundry or garden?

This depends on the number of occupants in a household and the type of equipment and appliances used, such as toilet type, washing machine. However, on average the breakdown is as follows:

INDOORS

Shower % approx. 120 L

Toilet % approx. 210 L

Washing machine % -

Top loader 170 L / front loader 80 L

Dishwasher % 10 L/min

OUTDOORS

Sprinkler or handheld hose % 1000 L/hr

Drip system % 4 L/hr

Washing car 10-20 L/min

