



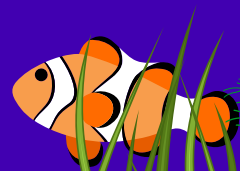
# How can I help CORAL REEFS



## Why are coral reefs important?

Coral reefs not only **support vast numbers of unique marine animals**, but also benefit us as well. They act as a **buffer during storm surges** and can **prevent coastal erosion** by lessening the power of waves. Coral reefs also **support local economies** by providing food, recreation, tourism, jobs, and much more. It is estimated that coral reefs provide at least \$30 billion per year to the economy!

Unfortunately, **coral reefs and their inhabitants are threatened** by both environmental and human factors such as pollution, overfishing, and various diseases.



# HERE ARE 7 GREAT WAYS TO HELP PROTECT AND CONSERVE CORAL REEFS!

- 1 Be mindful of water usage:** Using less water means less runoff and wastewater that can contain harmful chemicals.
- 2 Choose sustainable seafood:** Making sustainable seafood choices can help with harmful overfishing practices. To learn more about where to get sustainable seafood, visit [www.fishwatch.gov](http://www.fishwatch.gov) or download the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch app for your smartphone.
- 3 Volunteer:** Volunteering in local beach or reef cleanups can help lower the amount of trash that enters the ocean. If you can't get to the beach, you can also volunteer with groups that protect your local watershed systems. Support programs and facilities that are working towards the conservation and reconstruction of coral reefs.
- 4 Be mindful of your garbage:** You can create less waste by limiting plastic products and recycling whenever possible. You can also pick up loose trash that others have left behind.
- 5 Practice safe boating:** Anchor your boat in sandy areas away from coral and sea vegetation so that the anchor and chain do not damage or crush any corals.
- 6 Use safe diving practices:** When diving in coral reef areas, be respectful of the inhabitants. Good practices are to not touch, disturb, or remove animals from their habitat. Also try not to disturb the nearby sediment because it can smother corals.
- 7 Knowledge is key:** Educate yourself and others about coral reefs and their inhabitants.

