

Tap water versus bottled water

Water fact sheet

Sydney Water	Bottled Water
Where does it come from?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of Sydney’s drinking water comes from rainwater collected from natural catchment areas. • Water is stored in lakes that are surrounded by some of the most unspoilt native bushland in the region, including World Heritage national parks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottled water is from various sources and falls under the <i>Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code</i>. • The code doesn’t require manufacturers to state on the bottle what type of water it is or where the water is sourced from, apart from the country of origin².
What is the water quality?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every drop of your drinking water is filtered so it meets Australia’s health and quality guidelines¹ which are some of the strictest in the world. • As well as continuously monitoring drinking water quality in real time, Sydney Water does up to 70 laboratory tests on a weekly, monthly, quarterly or annual basis, from our water filtration plants to customer’s taps. • Our monitoring confirms Sydney’s drinking water is safe and great for drinking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to NSW Health, bottled water is not necessarily any safer to drink than tap water. • There are typically more tests to confirm safety and quality of public drinking water than bottled water.³
What are the impacts on the environment?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All water comes from nature, but, it’s how it gets to us that can have a big impact on the environment. So we take care by drawing water from local sources, so that we have a safe, reliable and sustainable water supply. • Sydney’s drinking water is the sustainable choice – sourced locally and has no packaging. • By choosing Sydney’s tap water rather than bottled you’re protecting the environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It takes 250 mL of oil and three litres of water to produce one litre of bottled water⁴. • Plastic bottles are among the 10 most common rubbish items picked up on Clean up Australia Day⁵. • Australia recycles only 36% of PET plastic drink bottles, so around 373 million plastic water bottles end up as waste each year⁶.

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- A plastic water bottle can take anywhere from 400-1,000 years to break down⁷.

What is the cost of water?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinking tap water is the most cost effective way to stay hydrated – especially compared to bottled water. • Sydney’s tap water costs less than one cent per litre. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottled water can cost up to 2000 times more than tap water! • If you’re drinking 8 glasses of water a day tap water will cost you less than \$1.50 a year compared to around \$2,600 for bottled water. • Australians spent more than \$600 million on bottled water last year⁸. |
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References

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- 1 Australian Drinking Water Guidelines, NHMRC, 2011
 - 2 Choice, August 2016
 - 3 Choice, March 2016
 - 4 Clean Up Australia Bottled Water Fact Sheet, May 2015
 - 5 Clean Up Australia Bottled Water Fact Sheet, May 2015
 - 6 University of Wollongong
 - 7 University of Queensland
 - 8 Choice, August 2016
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