

# WHAT YOU CAN DO TO REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT



Live your life believing that  
***What I do Matters!!***



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## WHERE TO START

**Let's say you want to reduce your emissions by 50%—**

What would your life be like?

What would you need to change?

**Calculate your approximate carbon footprint for the last year.**

Visit: [www.conservation.org>carbon-footprint-calculator](http://www.conservation.org>carbon-footprint-calculator)  
[www.carbonfootprint.com>calculator](http://www.carbonfootprint.com>calculator)

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# AT HOME

## *Think about installing solar panels.*

Consider replacing an electric hot water service with a solar one. Look for government supported programs to reduce the cost and seek advice from government installers.

## *Use the council green bin for organic waste, prunings and kitchen scraps if you have this service.*

You can have your own compost bin and produce nutritious soil for your garden. This produces far fewer greenhouse gases than putting into landfill.

## *Use your Council's recycling bins well.*

By knowing what you can put in that will not contaminate the contents, making it unusable for recycling.

## *Grow your own fruit and vegetables or join a community garden.*

Past generations grew some of their own produce, now food is a global industry. It takes just ten square metres of space to grown a year's supply of vegetables for one person.

## *Swap all the light globes to efficient LED.*

Turn off all lights and standby switches when not in use.

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### ***Reconsider and reduce your use of electrical appliances.***

Try to buy energy efficient appliances and check online for the durability of products—will paying a little more give you a more serviceable product?

### ***If the household temperature is a little uncomfortable don't turn on the heater or cooler immediately.***

Put on more clothes, take off some clothes (100% cotton clothes are cool, wool rather than synthetic clothes are warmer).

### ***Plants pull carbon dioxide into the soil.***

Any planting you do will assist this *draw down*, as it is called.

### ***Consider your use of bottled water.***

This industry is valued at \$35,000,000,000 and the direct water cost is estimated to be \$17,500. The rest goes into carbon polluting bottling and transportation. When you pay \$1.60 for a litre of bottled water you could have filled 2000 litres by tap into your permanent water bottle.

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### ***When visiting the supermarket—***

Avoid products that have excessive packaging as this all goes to land fill.

Try to buy locally grown and seasonal food (food that hasn't travelled long distances to get to you).

Take your own net bags (you can make them or purchase them online) to put your produce in thus avoiding the packaging that is increasingly used in supermarkets.

### ***Try reducing your meat intake.***

Cows produce methane gas—a powerful greenhouse contributor.

Doctors and nutritionists now consider that two meat free meals each week is a healthier way to live.

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# TRANSPORT

## *Attempt to reduce your transport emissions by—*

- car-pooling
- cycling
- walking
- using public transport

## *Family car—*

Make sure the family car is serviced regularly so it runs efficiently.

When upgrading your car consider fuel efficiency or an electric model.

## *Going to the shops—*

If you need to drive to the shops, try to do all shopping in one visit rather than shopping daily.

A good way to shop for food is to plan the menu for a week so you know exactly what to purchase. This also limits wastage of food that was bought for a 'may be' meal that never eventuated.

## *Reconsider and reduce you plane flights—*

Technology has not advanced to a stage where a low carbon option is available for air travel but carbon offsets can be purchased from reliable and reputable companies.



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# FOOD WASTE

*Food waste is a huge problem in the developed world.*

In Australia we throw out one fifth of the food we buy each week! See 'A good way to shop' on the previous page for a tip on how to reduce your household food waste.

*If vegetables are looking a little tired in your fridge.*

Vegetables can be chopped, frozen and used later for soups or in stir fries.

*Understand the difference between a 'use by' and 'best before' date.*

The 'use by' date is a conservative estimate of the time it takes for food to go off. The 'best before' dates are recommendations from the manufacturer for when the product tastes its best.

*Needless rotting food in landfill produces greenhouse gas.*

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# GENERAL LIFE PRACTICES

*Deal with banks, superannuation funds and insurance companies that are climate friendly.*

Visit: [www.tinyurl.com/y47laq6v](http://www.tinyurl.com/y47laq6v)

Climate Action 100+ is worth googling. There is a huge group of investment managers that pressure greenhouse gas emitters to reform.

*Where possible, donate things to op shops and charities.*

*Use recycling sites—*

- electronics to an e-waste collection site (check your local council for dates and locations).
- batteries can be recycled at supermarkets and electronics stores
- some libraries have light bulb, battery and phone recycling collections

*Planting trees.*

Carefully chosen trees for your property keeps the atmosphere cooler and draws carbon down into the soil.

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### ***Consider your purchases.***

Consider buying less stuff of which so much ends up in landfill.

***We have adapted to the ban on single use plastic bags. Perhaps we can look at making other sensible choices to avoid using plastics.***

Bin liners—supermarkets stock a corn starch product that will break down in sunlight.

Multix Greener products (cling film, garbage bags, recycled foil) either break down when exposed to the environment or have considered recycling as part of the manufacturing of the product.

### ***Shopping and purchasing from habit of choice.***

Looking at products with an environmental lens can trigger a switch to greener items.

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## DID YOU KNOW?

*The world now consumes a staggering 80 billion pieces of clothing each year.*

This is a 400% increase on two decades ago.

On average a garment is worn just four times.

Considering the resources used to make an article of clothing, fashion is the second most polluting industry on the planet after fossil fuels.

It takes 2720 litres of water to make a t-shirt—that's how much one person would normally drink over a 3 year period!

### *What you can do?*

Consider not being a slave to the clothes industry by being mindful of what/how much you purchase.

The 'make do and mend' attitude can be applied to clothes but also to other areas of our life. An attitudinal shift can make a huge difference in your carbon footprint.

Talk with friends/colleagues about such matters as climate warming; waste to landfill; our small changes that collectively can mean a lot for the planet.

Remember that individual actions matter and that their ripple effect is more expansive than we can imagine.

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# **SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH**

to the UK Parliament 9 July 2019

***‘We cannot have infinite growth.’***

***‘The facts are incontrovertible now that human activity is damaging the planet in a way not seen 50 years ago.’***

***‘We need to make lifestyle changes.’***

***‘We cannot be too radical in our efforts to reduce, re-use, recycle.’***

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# SOME REFERENCES FOR ASSISTING YOUR TRANSITION

## ***How to Change Things When Change is Hard***

Health, C & Health, D. (2011) Switch: Random House

## ***A Zero Waste Life in Thirty Days***

Anita Vandyke - [www.anitavandyke.com](http://www.anitavandyke.com)  
Penguin Random House Australia (2018)

## ***Climate Change***

[www.climaterealityproject.org](http://www.climaterealityproject.org)

## ***Food Waste***

[www.abc.net.au/news/2013-10-08/food-waste-value-australia/4993930](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-10-08/food-waste-value-australia/4993930)

## ***Plastic Pollution***

[www.plasticpollutioncoalition.org](http://www.plasticpollutioncoalition.org)

## ***Quitting Plastic***

Clara Williams Roldan  
Angus & Robertson 2019





**WELLINGTON CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK**



***What you do Matters!!***