

45 Ways to Reduce Your Personal Carbon Footprint



THESE TIPS AND TRICKS FOR REDUCING YOUR PERSONAL CARBON FOOTPRINT WERE COMPILED BY OUR [ACTION 2030](#) GROUP. THIS BROCHURE IS INTENDED TO PROVIDE IDEAS AND SIGNPOST TO EXISTING GUIDANCE AND IS NOT LINKED TO PROFESSIONAL GUIDANCE.



1. Reduce consumption of items to those you really need including clothes, books etc.
2. Minimise use of water by using dual flush toilets, showers instead of baths, short showers, and turning taps off when not immediately using them (e.g. during teeth cleaning).
3. Have water barrels collecting rainwater for garden and indoor plants to avoid the use of tap water. Use this for car washing etc. too!
4. Avoid using hose pipes in the garden – irrigate with waste water from indoors.
5. Insulate buildings as much as possible, even using home-made solutions, secondary double glazing, thick curtains etc.
6. Replace lights with LEDs.
7. Car share as much as possible where no alternatives are available.
8. Have at least one compost bin for the office and home, and use the compost for growing things or adding to pots/ your garden.
9. Maintain a wildflower meadow instead of a lawn – keep some areas cut for access and have others as meadows – cut in April to keep shorter, then in Sept/Oct to tidy up. Compost material of course. Add more flowers to it as you go. Make sure all flower beds are full of plants, minimise pruning, compost all material, chip woody material and compost instead of burning.
10. Repair, re-use, recycle. Use both sides of the paper before throwing it away. Use close lines for formatting to reduce waste. Use small margins etc. and print double sided where possible.
11. Avoid buying plastic bags for specimens etc. and re-use all plastic that comes in the post.
12. If possible use an electric car to get to public transport (many of us live miles from a bus or train). Power it with renewable electricity wherever possible.
13. Rent electric cars where possible rather than use petrol/diesel.
14. If possible, use PVs for electricity production – it works even in higher altitude and cloudy places!
15. Similarly, using solar panels to heat water.
16. Consider supporting staff who walk/cycle or use car sharing with incentives or encourage your employer to take up schemes.
17. Add two days of holiday to those travelling by train for holidays.
18. Grow vegetables, herbs, fruit as much as possible, even in tubs etc.
19. Cycle more! Walk/cycle to work or to see friends.
20. Use peat free compost for all plants/trees etc you buy for projects or home.
21. Go plastic free as far as possible and avoid single-use items.



22. Eat less meat, and wherever possible consume organic, local produce.
23. Look for palm-oil free alternatives to everyday items.
24. Look for soya free alternatives.
25. Buy presents like an acre of rainforest, or excursions like meals out or theatre, instead of material items that people may not really need.
26. Avoid cheap goods where possible – it can pay off to opt for better quality products.
27. Avoid poor quality toys, especially those made of plastic.
28. Use re-useable items such as nappies.
29. Use organic soaps, shampoos, beauty products etc. without microplastics.
30. Use recycled goods such as loo rolls and kitchen paper.
31. Use organic cotton hankies and wash as normal to reuse.
32. Ensure all outdoor clothing is not the sort that sheds microplastics when washed.
33. Use microfibre capture wash bags in the washing machine.
34. Use wooden handled toothbrushes etc. and anything else with plastic handles.
35. Use recycled material wherever possible.
36. Put pressure on the shops/hotels/other places you use to avoid plastics, use recycled materials or goods, to recycle, and to provide organic products.
37. Put pressure on all those you deal with in the best possible way to encourage them to follow your lead (clients, colleagues, partner organisations, schools, surgeries, dentists, shops and holiday firms).
38. Join action groups, press policy-makers, contact your MP, Local Council representatives, Parish Council etc. to ask how they are addressing the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis.
39. Add pots, hanging baskets, window boxes, climbers etc. on your walls and offices to reduce temperature, look good and trap carbon. Using them indoors will improve office air quality.
40. Source all your habitat creation scheme plants and materials etc. locally, make sure they are native and not grown in peat at any time. Find a tree nursery that grows without fertilisers so your specimens are already adapted with mycorrhizal associations that they don't get with fertile soils.
41. Avoid the use of artificial fertilisers as far as possible which have high carbon embedded.
42. Be creative in discouraging people from driving all the time. Stop people leaving engines running whilst doing things.
43. Switch off the lights – computers, plugs, washing machine - everything seems to have them. Don't automatically put lights on in a room unless needed.
44. Check your investments. Check with your pension provider to see if they offer low carbon options, or put pressure on them to invest in an environmentally sensitive way across the board. CIEEM has published a [template letter](#) for contacting your pension provider.
45. And last, but certainly not least: keep going! It may feel like a huge task when you first set out to reduce your own carbon footprint, but every step counts and your action will inspire others to do the same!