

Sheffield U3A Sustainability Project

The following suggestions are to help people reduce their environmental footprint and so help to reduce their impact on global warming. In many cases they do not involve financial cost and will even save money.

1. My Home

Install:

- Loft insulation
 - Jacket on hot water cylinder
 - Cavity wall insulation
 - Micro wind turbine after checking your location characteristics
 - Photovoltaic cells
 - Draught excluders - windows, doors, floors, but allow for some ventilation
 - Solar water heating panels / gas condensing boiler
 - Thermostats on central heating equipment
 - Double glazing
 - Lag exposed pipes
- Fit low energy light bulbs
- Vary times on central heating system
- Reduce temperature by 1 C on central heating
- Draw curtains to keep heat in
- Put out the lights when you leave a room
- Do not leave equipment on stand by - computer, TV, VCR etc.
- Buy Green Energy electricity
- Defrost fridge/freezer regularly
- Put a box in empty fridge/freezer free spaces - reduce amount of air being frozen
- Cook with lids on pans
- Check energy efficiency when buying electrical and gas equipment
- Use mains electricity or rechargeable batteries rather than ordinary batteries
- Use non-VOC paint, solvents, preservation finishes
- Stop junk mail through Mail Preference Service

2. My water use

- Fix leaking taps
- Turn taps fully off
- Have a shower rather than a bath
- Use plugs in basins and sinks
- Put a water hippo in water cistern
- Turn taps off when cleaning teeth
- Use washing machines and dishwashers only on full loads
- Fill kettle with only the water you need
- Install water butts to collect water from roofs.
- Think before using water; energy is needed to purify and water and transport it to your home.
- Use lowest temperature when washing clothes
- Install low flush/double flush in toilet system

5. My recycling

- Check whether what you buy can be recycled
- Keep and reuse envelopes
- Use blank side of paper you receive for rough work
- Recycle newspapers, magazines, bills, junk mail, wrapping paper.

Recycle plastic packaging from goods bought
Recycle glass
Charity shops allow you to recycle clothes.
Cans and silver paper can be recycled
Take books to charity shops or send to "Feed the Minds"
Opticians will recycle glasses
Dispose of waste oil, paint, solvents, and batteries safely.

4. My shopping

Use bags for life and avoid plastic bags
Use local shops or farmers' markets to reduce travel emissions
Cut travel emissions by not buying imported goods where possible
Choose goods with minimal packaging
Reduce car use by getting shops to deliver
Shop on the internet to reduce your journeys to shops
Buy recycled paper and other recycled goods
Buy Fair Trade products
Only buy what you need and reduce waste.

5. My garden

Install water butts to collect rain water
Water plants in evening to reduce evaporation
Mulch water loving plants to reduce need to water
Have a compost bin for garden and kitchen waste
Develop eco-friendly habitats and plants for frogs, birds, hedgehogs
Have a pond to help wild life: also a base for a range of different plants
Grow vegetables and fruit in your garden
Try to keep to native plants
Use pesticides and chemical sprays as little as possible.
Avoid products with peat in them
Compost egg boxes
Compost garden clippings and twigs
Collect fallen leaves and store for a year to make compost

6. My Travel

Reduce car use; use a bicycle, walk or use public transport
Ensure car tyre pressures are correct
Accelerate slowly
Avoid sharp breaking
Consider whether you need holidays involving long flights
Consider having holidays in Britain
Check destination weather condition before travelling
Travel with minimum luggage as a result

7. Some Challenges

Shop locally - but not at supermarkets
Buy locally produce food and goods - not imported
Reduce car use - cope with public transport
Become vegetarian - meat production consumes many resources
Holiday in the UK - no flights to the sun, snow or 'far away places'
Live a simple lifestyle - reduce your environmental footprint