

# 5 ways

to significantly reduce your carbon footprint

Despite the misguided ramblings of one overweight orange politician, climate change is real, and unless we get a wiggle on, our planet's surface temperature is set to increase by 2°C - a rise of 2°C is considered the most the Earth could tolerate without risking catastrophic changes to food production, sea levels, fishing, wildlife & deserts.



In one year the world emits 33 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> and it is estimated by 2030, our emissions could rise to 40 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. But what can we as individuals do in a world governed by environmentally passive politicians backed by giant corporations whose profits are as big as their pollutants? Well, fortunately it is the individual actions of everyday people (there's 6 billion of us) that are really crucial to radically reducing carbon emissions.

**So here are 5 simple yet effective solutions to help individuals significantly lower their carbon footprint.**



# 1. Shun Fast Fashion

The clothing sector generates 10% of all global carbon emissions and remains the second biggest industrial polluter, second only to the oil industry. Ironically, approximately 70 million barrels of oil are used each year to make polyester fibre, which is the most common fibre in fast fashion – Inexpensive throw-away clothing produced rapidly by mass-market retailers in response to the latest trends.



Fast fashion garments, which on average are worn less than 5 times and kept for just 35 days, produce over 400% more carbon emissions per item than garments worn 50 times and kept for 1 year. In addition to the CO2 emissions associated to production and transportation, fast fashion also facilitates deforestation on a grand scale. Over 70 million trees are cut each year to produce cheaper fabrics such as rayon, viscose, modal and lyocell. Not to mention water pollution from plastic microfibers, pesticides for cotton crops and toxic colouring dyes.

So by shunning fast fashion, by means of buying sustainable and environmentally friendly apparel, or better still purchasing or sourcing second hand clothing, you'll be significantly reducing your carbon footprint, while also looking rather dapper in ecological or retro threads.

For more information, [Patagonia](#), an innovator in sustainable fashion and a leader in the [slow fashion movement](#), has created an awesome [The Cleanest Line blog](#) for consumers to learn more about their clothing decisions and their impact on the environment.

## 2. Go vegan or vegetarian

**or at least meat free if you can't kick the habit**

Livestock and their by-products account for at least 32,000 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year, or 51% of all worldwide greenhouse gas emissions, which is significantly more than the combined exhaust fumes from all modes of transportation. And these emissions for animal agriculture are projected to increase 80% by 2050!

The meat and dairy industry is also responsible for up to 91% of Amazon deforestation (grazing land and feed crops), which results in the extinction of over 130 plant, insect and animal species everyday. This alarming list of statistics goes on, but it needn't be like this, and with the ever-increasing range of exceptional vegan and veggie options in supermarkets and eateries, there really is no excuse!



Each day, a person who eats a vegan diet saves 1,100 gallons of water, 20kgs of grain, 30 sq ft of forested land, 9kgs of CO<sub>2</sub> and one animal's life. But if going vegan really isn't an option at the moment, going vegetarian or meat free once or twice a week will also have a great impact on reducing your carbon footprint.

# 3. Refuse single use plastic

(not reuse, recycle)

Gone are the days when reusing and recycling jam jars and tin cans was enough to save the planet. To make real environmental change and really minimise our carbon footprint, it's high time we all start refusing single use plastic.

[300 million tons of plastic](#) is produced globally each year. The carbon footprint of plastic (LDPE or PET, polyethylene) is **about 6 kg CO2 per kg of plastic**. So to produce 300 million tons of plastic, **180,000 kg of CO2** is emitted into the atmosphere every year.



By refusing single use plastic, we as individuals can make a significant dent in these figures. Here are several ways to refuse single use plastic on a daily basis.

- Take your own reusable shopping bag to the supermarket
- Carry your own food containers, cup and utensils to avoid unnecessary throw-away plastic crockery and cutlery
- Carry a reusable water bottle
- Say no to disposable straws and stirrers
- Avoid heavily and/or unnecessarily packaged foods
- Purchase from grocery stores and local markets that sell their cereals, grains, vegetables, legumes, nuts etc loose and free of packaging

If you are travelling in countries where the tap water is not drinkable we recommend getting a carbon active filtering system that will allow you to drink water from any source thus avoiding the plastic bottles,

# 4. Transportation

especially flying!

Second to the meat industry, transportation releases a devastating percentage of CO<sub>2</sub> into our atmosphere - 13% of all greenhouse gas emissions!

Unfortunately, as much as we'd like it, it's not as easy to completely abandon transportation like it is to go veggie or refuse single use plastic. In fact for many of us, we're likely to be reliant on fossil fuelled transportation, generating unavoidable carbon emissions, for at least the next decade or so.



So in the meantime, a reduction and rethink on how you travel is the next step in lowering your carbon footprint.

- If it's just five minutes by car, could you walk, run or cycle instead?
- Switch off ignition when at traffic lights, in a traffic jam or waiting for someone
- Is public transport an option? You'll be surprised how comfortable and economical it is to travel on public transport nowadays
- Could you be car sharing on the school run or commute to work?
- Could you reduce the number of flights you take? Is there an alternative, cleaner means of transport e.g. train?
- If you can't avoid it, offset it. Try to carbon offset unavoidable flights or long road trips\*

**\*At Mossy Earth we are actively working on learning how to travel slower, take fewer flights, and have made a pledge to offset all unavoidable future flights or road trips we take. To showcase our commitment our co-founder Matt will stop flying altogether in 2019.**

# 5. Purchase “green electricity”

The future of household energy lies in renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and wave power. Regardless of climate change, there are limitations on the availability of fossil fuels such as oil, natural gas and coal, while “green electricity” is becoming cheaper and more readily available.



Nowadays most energy suppliers offer “green electricity” tariffs, which seek to champion renewable energy. However, we recommend sourcing one that ensures your electricity supply is 100% renewable and nuclear free (Some companies purchase a mix of renewable, including nuclear power, and non-renewable electricity).

A 100% green, nuclear free supply means all the electricity you buy is 'matched' by purchases of renewable energy such as wind farms and hydroelectric power stations. As more people sign up to such schemes, it will drive up investment in these technologies and subsequently drive down renewable energy prices. It's a feedback and you can be the catalyst of change.

It's no coincidence that with the ever-growing demand for green electricity 12 U.S. states, representing 97 million people, created the US Climate Alliance and committed to upholding the Paris agreement, and source cheaper cleaner energy for their people. All the while their president blindly attempts to re-open inefficient coalmines that were closed 20 years ago for being financially unviable.

**By adopting 1 or all of the 5 steps above will significantly reduce your carbon footprint and be a positive step in fighting climate change. Thank you from all at Mossy Earth, and keep fighting!**