

# What Is Your Carbon Footprint?



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# Curriculum Aim

- Describe and understand key aspects of: human geography, including: types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water.



Many of your daily activities require energy



The energy needed for these simple routines produces a gas called carbon dioxide.

This is known as a 'greenhouse' gas because it traps heat, causing the Earth to warm up. The more carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere, the worse it is for the environment.



The amount of carbon you produce as a result of your daily activities is known as your **carbon footprint**.

Everything we do has an impact on the environment.



Can you suggest why melting ice caps might be a problem?

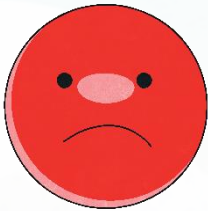


How would deforestation affect the environment?

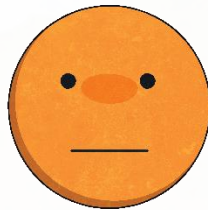
Answer these questions to determine your carbon footprint.

Read the question and consider the options.

Which option is the **best** fit?



This response shows that your carbon footprint would be high. Your choice here requires a lot of energy and would emit larger amounts of carbon dioxide.



This response shows that your carbon footprint would be regular. Carbon dioxide is still created as a result of your activity but you are making choices that could reduce the amounts released into the atmosphere.



This response shows that your carbon footprint would be relatively low. Your routine requires less energy than the other options so your carbon footprint is lower. Well done!

# Food

Q1. Which of the following best describes your diet?

**meat/fish in most meals**



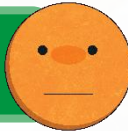
Oh no! Eating meat produces the most carbon dioxide. Animals need more land and trees are often cut down to clear land for them.

**meat/fish in some meals**



Not bad. It's better to eat more vegetables. Less energy is needed to grow them.

**vegetarian**



Better! Farming vegetables produces less carbon dioxide. They can be grown locally too.

**vegan**



Yes! Vegans do not eat any animal products so this would be the best option to improve your carbon footprint.

Did You Know?

The largest carbon dioxide emissions come from food production.





# Food

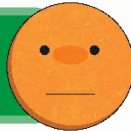
Q2. How much food do you throw away?

**none**



Wow! You're an eco warrior! With no food waste, your carbon footprint is much smaller. Can you make a poster to encourage others to follow your example?

**Less than 30%**



Good effort. You're trying hard to consider what you use. To improve more, try composting your leftovers.

**More than 30%**



Oh no! That's a lot of food waste. How could you reduce the amount you throw away? Try to buy less food or compost any leftovers.

## Did You Know?

Wasted food in the United Kingdom produces 14 million tonnes of carbon dioxide. That's the same amount of carbon dioxide produced by 7 million cars each year!



# Food

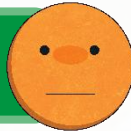
Q3. Where is your food from?

**All locally sourced**



Great effort! Have you tried growing your own fruit or vegetables?

**Some locally sourced**



Nice try. If you buy your food locally, you reduce the need to transport food. This uses less fuel and so reduces your carbon footprint.

**It's not a concern for me**



Hmmm. If you buy food that is local, it will be fresher and less energy will have been used to transport it. Try buying food that is in season as it will be tastier. For example British strawberries in summer, yum!

## Did You Know?

Some of the food you buy has travelled hundreds of miles. A banana grown in Costa Rica travels 5282 miles to get to the United Kingdom!





# Travel

Q4. Which of the following **best** describes how you travel?

**I only use a car**



Oh no! Many forms of transport use fossil fuels. These are non-renewable and will eventually run out.

**I sometimes use the bus or train**



Good effort. By sharing transport, you can use less fuel and reduce the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere.

**I walk/scoot/cycle for short journeys**



Yes! Provide your own energy for short journeys. You'll have a lower carbon footprint and get healthy too!

## Did You Know?

Fossil fuels were formed millions of years ago from the remains of plants and animals?



# Home

Q5. Do you/could you follow these energy efficient routines at home?

- ✓ regularly switch off lights and appliances
- ✓ use energy-saving lightbulbs
- ✓ turn off the tap when brushing your teeth
- ✓ choose a cool wash on the washing machine

## Did You Know?

90% of the energy used in a washing machine goes towards heating the water.



**None**



Oh dear! The energy we use in our homes makes up a quarter of carbon dioxide emissions in the UK. Which one of the routines do you think you could try?

**2 or less**



OK. You're making some good choices. Did you know, by turning appliances off you could save 15% on your electricity bill? That's saving money as well as protecting the environment!

**3 or more**



Nice one! Those simple routines make your carbon footprint lower. Because you're using less energy you're saving money too!

# Recycling

Q6. Which of the following items can be recycled?

☐ paper

Yes, paper can be recycled. Are there recycling bins in your classroom?

☐ crisp packet

No, not all packaging can be recycled.

☐ mobile phones

Yes, mobile phones can be recycled. They have to be collected separately and some places even buy your old phone.

☐ glass

Yes, glass can be recycled. Make sure you wash it out first.

☐ clothes

Yes, clothes can be recycled. Take them to the charity shop. Someone else can buy them and raise money for the charity.

☐ mirrors

No, mirrors cannot be recycled everywhere. As long as its not broken, you could donate it to a charity shop.

☐ foil

No, foil cannot be recycled everywhere yet. Think carefully about using it so that it is not wasted.

☐ food waste

Yes, you can compost food. There are guidelines as to what you can add to your composter. Can you find out which food are safe to compost?

☐ magazines

Yes, magazines can be recycled.

☐ disposable drink cups

No, not all disposable cups are recyclable. Some companies are trying to use compostable cups - look out for these instead.

## Did You Know?

One recycled tin can could power a television for three hours.







There are lots of Carbon Footprint Calculators available on the Internet. Perhaps you could try one at home?

Remember, your daily routines produce carbon dioxide which makes up your carbon footprint.

The choices you make affect the environment and the Earth we live on. What choices will you make?

The future is in your hands!



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