

Family Climate Action Planning

A GUIDE CALCULATING AND REDUCING YOUR FAMILY'S CARBON FOOTPRINT

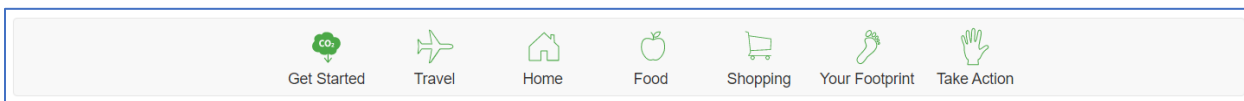
A carbon footprint is the total amount of greenhouse gases (including carbon dioxide and methane) that are generated by our actions.

The average carbon footprint for a person in the United States is 16 tons, one of the highest rates in the world. Globally, the average is closer to 4 tons. To have the best chance of avoiding a catastrophic rise in global temperatures, the average global carbon footprint per year needs to drop to under 2 tons by 2050.

While the challenge appears daunting, we know that what's measurable becomes manageable. That's why The Nature Conservancy has developed a [Carbon Footprint Calculator](#) that will help your household identify its footprint and take steps to reduce it.

Let's get started!

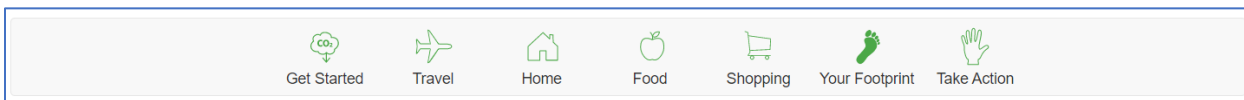
Step One



To make calculating your footprint easier, we suggest that you collect the following information before sitting down with the calculator:

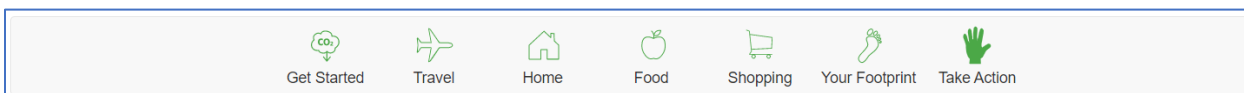
- Travel: where do you travel and how do you get there?
- Utilities: how much does your family spend each month in water, gas, and electric (for each property)?
- Food: what and how much food does your family consume?
- Shopping: about how much does your family spend each month, by category (i.e. clothing, entertainment, electronics, etc.)?

Step Two



Run the calculator to determine your family's carbon footprint. Compare that with similar households: How did you do? Were you surprised by the results? Record your family's current carbon footprint on the attached worksheet.

Step Three



Here comes the fun part. Now that you know how much carbon your household emits in a typical year, you can choose to lower those emissions by taking specific, measurable steps.



Take Action

REDUCE YOUR IMPACT

Transportation

Housing

Shopping

Using the ideas on the calculator (See: *Take Action*), choose which steps your family will take and a timeframe in which you'll do it. Consider assigning a point person to take primary responsibility for each action.

Make a plan to lower emissions in each of the three main categories: Transportation, Housing, and Shopping.

Note: The calculator's critical assumptions can be updated to reflect your current situation as in the example below:

Purchase green electricity

Pledge ☒

6.5	\$0	\$130
Tons saved	Dollars saved	Upfront cost

My yearly electricity household amounts to 11000 kilowatt hours
which per year produces 6.49 metric tons of CO₂

I will switch to a green energy provider a proportion of

at a cost of \$ per metric ton of CO₂e.

Assumptions:
cost of electricity cents per kWh

Green Power Facts Source: National Renewable Energy Laboratory Report - Voluntary Green Power Market Forecast through 2015. May 2010

Voluntary buy-in to EPA-certified green power has soared with 41% annual growth rates since 2004, and one in four utilities now offering the green power upgrade option. If you haven't joined yet, it's a simple and effective way to green your home's power.

[Find rebates and incentives for this action](#)

By “pledging” to take action (checking the box), the calculator will update your pledged emissions reductions (scroll down the page to see updated totals). This will help you identify the right steps to meet your desired emissions target.

Step Four

Set a date to check in on your progress. Complete the [Family Climate Action Plan](#) worksheet and hang it somewhere in the house where your commitments to the earth and to each other will be seen and honored.

6.5 tons saved

\$0 dollars saved

\$130 upfront cost

While it can feel daunting to calculate your family's carbon footprint, it is important to set a baseline against which you can measure your progress. The climate crisis needs all of us working to reduce our impact on the planet, and this is a great first step.

Thank you for doing your part to ensure a livable future for all species.

The _____ Family Climate Action Plan

On _____, 2021, the _____ family calculated its carbon footprint to be _____ tons of CO₂/year. Our goal is to reduce emissions by _____ (% or tonnage) by _____.

We commit to taking the following steps to reduce our carbon footprint:

TRAVEL/TRANSPORTATION

Action: Carpool to work

By when: Immediately

Family lead: Thomas

Emission savings: .85 tons CO₂

Action:

By when:

Family lead:

Emission savings:

HOUSING

Action: Lower winter thermostat by 4 degrees F

By when: Immediately

Family lead: Julie

Emission savings: .23 tons CO₂

Action:

By when:

Family lead:

Emission savings:

SHOPPING

Action: Reduce daily meat consumption to average 250 calories of meat per family member

By when: March 31

Family lead: Everyone

Emission savings: 2 tons CO₂

Action:

By when:

Family lead:

Emission savings:

Next family check-in date: _____, 2022

Goal for next calculation: _____ tons CO₂/year