

What can individuals do to reduce their carbon footprint?

Here's a great 7-minute Katharine Hayhoe video: "I'm just one person, what can I do?"

<https://youtu.be/Q48BvprCFr0>

What are actions I can take that meaningfully address climate change?


1. Use your voice

- Make your voice heard by those in power – regularly engage your elected officials
- Engage family and friends in the topic: In the U.S., only 35% of people say they ever talk about climate change
 - Read Katharine Hayhoe's book, "**Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World**" - Katharine tells us how to have productive conversations to raise awareness and spur climate change action
 - Watch her [Katharine's Ted Talk](#) (4M views)
 - Listen to one of Katharine's many podcasts or interviews ([here's an excellent one](#) with a Pacific NW focus)

2. Calculate your carbon footprint

- Use [TNC's carbon footprint calculator](#) to discover the biggest sources of our footprint
- 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 carbon footprint is closer to **4 tons**.
- To have the best chance of avoiding a 2°C rise in global temperatures, the average global carbon footprint per year **needs to drop to under 2 tons** by 2050.

3. Reduce fossil fuel-powered travel

- Transportation is the largest source of carbon emissions in the U.S.
- One roundtrip flight from San Francisco to Washington DC creates 1.7 tons of CO2 emissions – over 10% of the average U.S. footprint
- Walk or cycle instead of driving and enjoy the physical and mental health benefits in addition to money saved
- Use public transportation more frequently
- Shift to an electric or hybrid vehicle
- See TNC's Sustainable Business Travel guide (on  [CONNECT](#), on [a public site](#))

4. Eat less meat and dairy

- Eat fewer or smaller portions of meat and reduce dairy products or switch to non-dairy alternatives
- A high-fiber, plant-based diet is also better for your health

5. Cut energy use

- Make sure your home is energy efficient with adequate insulation and weather stripping
- Replace light bulbs with LEDs
- Install a programmable thermostat
- Add an extra layer and turn down the thermostat one or two degrees
- Turn off lights and appliances when you aren't using them
- Wash clothes in cold water (works just as well as hot water and uses 5 times less energy)
- By EnergyStar appliances

6. Reduce consumption and waste

- Avoid single-use items
- Repair and reuse
- Recycle everything you can