

Worksheet 2.7.3 Exploring how humans affect the carbon cycle

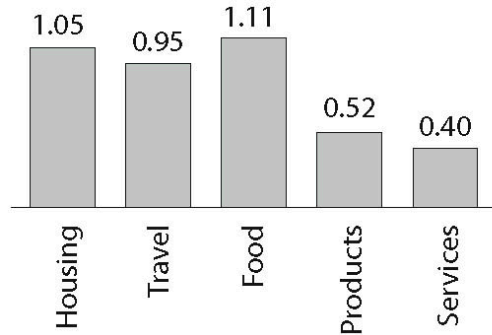
1 Carbon footprint



A common way of finding out our personal impact on the carbon cycle is to look at something called our carbon footprint. The bigger this is, the more we're adding to climate change.

It is worked out by seeing what we do in five different aspects of our lives. One of these is travel.

Average Personal Footprint: t CO₂e/cap (2001)



a) How do you get to school each day?

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b) Does this have an impact on carbon emissions?

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c) The carbon emissions from a bus are greater than those from a car. Why does bus travel affect a person's carbon footprint less than car travel?

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d) What aspects of our lives affect our carbon footprint?

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2 Housing



Housing also contributes to the carbon footprint.

a) What happens in the home that contributes to your carbon footprint?

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b) Why does house insulation reduce your carbon footprint?

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c) Why do people living on their own tend to have a larger carbon footprint?

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Food also makes a difference to your carbon footprint.

d) Why do people who are looking to reduce their carbon footprint often look to see which country their food came from?

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3 Products



The products we buy also affect our carbon footprint. When you buy clothes or footwear, these have been manufactured and transported. When you've finished with them, they need to be disposed of. It's harder to judge the contribution these make as manufacturers may not make it clear. However, there are still things we can do to reduce our negative impact on the environment.

a) How could you argue that charity shops reduce global warming?

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b) How does the material our shoes are made from affect our carbon footprint?

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