Owner: Randi

Link to specs: 📄 Ways to Reduce Your Carbon Footprint

Link to photos:
https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1GpA2eufaU_biQpp6buTKW2loXpSysy8-

Title (in search results): Guilt-Free Travel: 22 Ways to Reduce Your Carbon Footprint

How to reduce your carbon footprint while traveling

Reusing your floss, are you? Well, you do you, but if you want to reduce your carbon footprint and save the planet, there are better ways.

And believe it or not, there are a lot of easy (and hygienic!) ways to be eco-friendly even when you're traveling.

https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/toothy-african-man-flossing-cleaning-teeth-1845132589
Alt: Man flossing his teeth in the mirror
Caption: *Saving the planet, one 7-day streak at a time!*

The sad truth is, tourism is responsible for about **8% of global emissions** contributing to climate change. Much of that is from transportation, especially from cars and planes. But that doesn't mean you have to give up travel altogether.

Below you'll find concrete things you can do throughout your trip to make a difference!

While planning a trip

https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/woman-hiker-takes-picture-cordillera-paine-1398115751
Alt: Hiker taking a picture of the Cordillera Paine mountains in Chile
Caption: *Generate that, AI*

Look for ecotourism destinations. Consider countries like [Costa Rica](#) and [Kenya](#), which have worked to balance the needs of travelers, local communities, and environmental stewardship. When in doubt, look for national parks and nature reserves doing excellent conservation work. If you're charged a fee (as at national parks in the US), you'll know that it's going to a good cause!

Consider a staycation or domestic vacation. Why go far away this time? It's fun – and often way more affordable – to see your own stomping grounds through a fresh set of eyes. Go camping, or look for a cute local B&B you'd normally have no reason to visit. You may find some real gems close to home.

When choosing transportation

Choose options with a lower footprint. Trains produce far fewer emissions than planes, and buses and public transport have a lower footprint per person than cars. You won't always have a real choice, but when you do, put Mother Earth first!

https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/traveler-woman-sleeping-train-travel-beside-270756743
Alt: Woman sleeping on a train
Caption: *Can't do THAT when you're driving*

Fly direct when you can. It's more efficient in terms of carbon emissions as well as time.

Look for walking and bike tours. Get some exercise while reducing fuel and energy usage! For you and the planet, that's a win-win.

Carpool on road trips instead of driving separately. Gas prices are sky-high anyway, so driving with buddies is going to be much easier on your wallet… and way more fun.

Choose airlines with "green travel" programs. Some airlines explore alternative fuels or fund biofuel research, while others source their food from organic farms, recycle their waste, or aim for higher fuel efficiency. Before booking that ticket, check up on your airline's sustainable scorecard. Some companies that have made recent lists include:

- KLM Royal Dutch
- Alaska
- Xiamen
- Cathay Pacific
- Virgin Atlantic
- JetBlue
- United
- Delta
- American

Donate your WayAway cashback to carbon offsets. If you're a WayAway Plus user, you already know you get cashback for booking flights and hotels through the app. You could put that money toward another trip, OR you could [donate it to Sustainable Travel International's offset program directly through the app](#)!

While packing

https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/colorful-round-solid-shampoo-bars-zero-1646007838
Alt: Colorful shampoo bars
Caption: *Babe. BABE. Those aren't candy.*

Ditch disposable travel-size toiletries. Sure, the tiny bottles and tubes in the supermarket travel section are ADORABLE, but they also mean more [gas-emitting plastic waste](#) and more resources spent to make that plastic.

Instead, use **refillable bottles** – either the kind sold in that same aisle, or some fancier, more durable ones you can purchase online. There are also convenient non-liquid options like shampoo and conditioner bars, toothpaste tablets, and makeup remover towels.

These products (and other eco-friendly ones) are available through brands like Eco Roots, Package Free, and Grove Collaborative.

Invest in reusable bags. Instead of throwing your carry-on liquids into a disposable plastic baggie, get yourself a reusable bag (still transparent, we must follow rules) in quart size. For your road snacks, you can also find a variety of reusable snack and sandwich bags, some of them very sturdy and stylish.

Where you're staying

https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/glamping-wooden-pods-woods-1999759916
Alt: Wooden pods for glamping in the woods
Caption: *Eco-holes for today's discerning hobbit*

Look for eco-friendly accommodations. Wield your Google-fu to check whether the hotel or B&B you're considering is LEED-certified. Alternatively, look for a green filter on your hotel search platform: some, like Booking, mark certain digs as "travel sustainable." Be sure to read up on these labels first to understand exactly what they mean.

Turn off the AC or lower the thermostat when possible. You won't always have control over the temperature in your room, but when you do, make like a dad and guard that

thermostat! What you're not paying for on the electric bill, you're paying for in carbon footprint. Though air conditioning and heating are sometimes necessary (hello, Arizona and Alaska), there's always clothing to put on – or take off. 😏

Take shorter showers… or fewer showers. Okay, it sounds hypocritical after the floss-reusing joke, but taking less frequent showers is healthier for your skin and hair. If you're worried about grease and stank, a small jar of dry shampoo and a washcloth for a "sponge bath" could do the trick.

Whatever you do, the goal is to reduce your use of resources, especially in places where fresh water is less plentiful.

While exploring
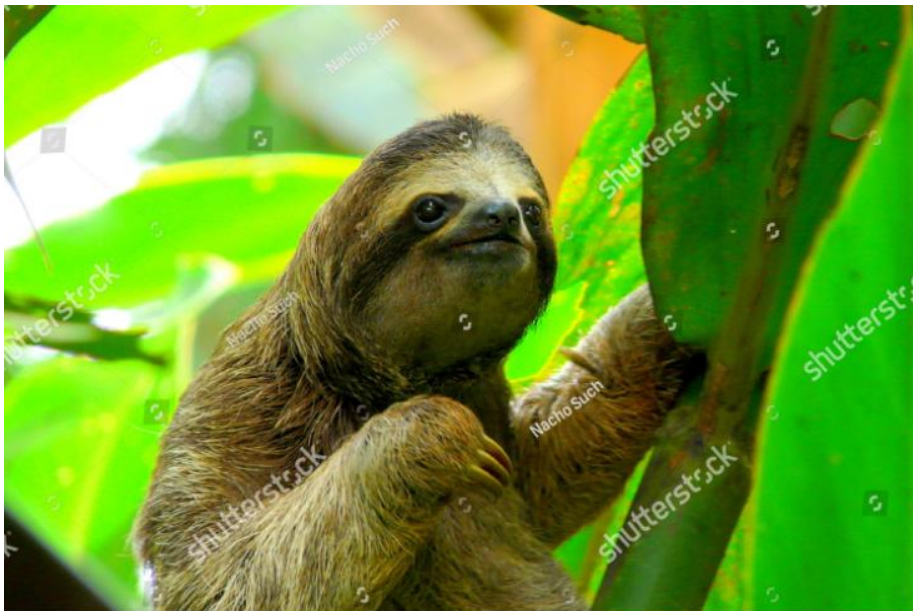
https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/sloth-puerto-viejo-costa-rica-125014706
Alt: A sloth sitting in a tree and looking intently at something
Caption: *Did that hiker just drop a granola bar wrapper?!*

Leave no trace. Whether you're hiking in the wilderness or just strolling around a city park, try to lessen your impact on the local environment in order to keep the ecosystems strong and resilient. Follow the usual signs – don't feed the animals, don't litter – and stick to marked paths.

Before hiking or camping, learn more about the principles of Leave No Trace: actions that feel like no big deal may be causing more harm than you'd expect.

Unplug! Travelers survived in the days before smartphones and laptops, and you can, too… at least for a while. Use less electricity, leave a smaller footprint, and be more present in the place you've paid to be!

When eating

Eat local. Seek out restaurants in the area that make it a point to cook with locally sourced ingredients. That means fresher food and a lower footprint.

Eat your veggies. Have a vegan meal here and there! You don't have to drop meat or animal products entirely, but cutting down will help reduce the carbon footprint of your trip. Not only that, but you may discover some delicious new plant-based foods.

https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/portrait-happy-playful-girl-eating-fresh-766093174
Alt: Woman eating a salad and winking playfully
Caption: *Mmm mm, looking forward to some gas emissions tonight*

Beware of portion sizes. To avoid wasting food (and therefore resources), order only what you'll eat – or make sure you can take the leftovers with you. If the portions are huge and doggie bags aren't allowed, find a friend to share.

Shop local. At the grocery store or market, shop for domestic and in-season products instead of familiar imports. You'll spend less, and you can have a mini adventure experimenting with new-to-you foods. Have Pepto at the ready, just in case!

When shopping

Buy locally made souvenirs. Not only is a gift handcrafted by locals more authentic, but you're also supporting local artisans while avoiding the environmental issue of cheap trinkets mass-produced in far-away factories.

https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/old-vintage-objects-furniture-sale-flea-413227996
Alt: Fake black and white dog in a vintage women's hat at a flea market
Caption: *Cruella will never find me here…*

Shop secondhand. Visiting thrift stores and flea markets isn't just a more eco-friendly way to shop, but also a fun travel activity in itself. Find cool new threads and unique souvenirs for less than you'd pay at a touristy gift shop, all while shunning the industrial machines of Big Tourism.

Back home

Calculate and buy offsets for your trip if you haven't already – and don't forget to donate your WayAway+ cashback!

After that, the only thing left to do is find a tree friend and tell it all about the environmentally friendly adventures you've had.

Alt: Man embracing and kissing a tree in the forest
Caption: *Yeah umm, not like that*