

Climate Guide

Knowing more about the big issues facing the climate, nature, food and fashion gives you more power to make the right decisions for you and the future of our planet.

What is climate change and why is it happening?

Our 'climate' is the **long-term weather** that our planet normally experiences.

Humans, animals, plants, and other living beings need a very specific climate in order to live.

Since the Industrial Revolution in the 1800s, our planet has been **heating up at a much quicker rate** than ever before – with damaging consequences.

We've been **burning fossil fuels** such as coal and gas to provide electricity, heating and transport, but this **releases carbon dioxide, methane and other gases** into the atmosphere. They hang in the air like an invisible blanket, trapping the heat from the sun and stopping it from returning to space, **warming up the Earth's surface temperature**.

As a result, we're seeing **extreme weather**, from floods to droughts, across the globe. It's also causing glaciers and ice caps to melt, making **sea levels rise**.

While we can't reverse the damage, we can make changes to slow things down, reduce our impact here on Earth and **create a more sustainable future**.



Climate and nature

DID YOU KNOW...

Living 'sustainably' means living in a way that can continue beyond our lifetime. A lot of the behaviour that has contributed to climate change – such as burning fossil fuels and cutting down trees – is unsustainable. It's happened because we've only been thinking the needs of our own generation, instead of thinking about the long-term future and the people who will live on the planet after us.

What can we do?



GET PLANTING

Plants absorb and store CO₂ – they're nature's air filters.

Planting flowers, shrubs or trees (inside or outdoors) will provide food and homes for wildlife while also cleansing the air. Start small in your own home, garden or balcony, or start a community group to create green zones in your local area.



GO ON A DATE WITH NATURE

As well as being good for our mental and physical health, building a relationship with the natural world makes us more likely to want to protect it.

Spend time outdoors every week or bring nature inside by growing and caring for a plant.



WALK OR CYCLE TO SCHOOL OR WORK

Choosing to walk or cycle instead of using the car reduces CO₂ emissions from petrol or diesel. It's also good for your overall health and wellbeing.

DID YOU KNOW...

Spending two hours in nature every week can reduce your blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension and the production of stress hormones ^[1]. Connecting with nature also makes us more likely to want to protect it.

^[1] <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-44097-3>



Climate and food

DID YOU KNOW...

The food industry is responsible for producing about a quarter of the greenhouse gases generated by humans every year – with meat and dairy contributing to 14.5% of global emissions ^[1].

What can we do?



FREEZE FOOD BEFORE IT GOES OUT OF DATE

There are lots of foods that can be frozen (including milk, bread, meat and many vegetables), which means you can store them past their 'use-by' date instead of throwing them away. This simple step can reduce the amount of food going to landfill and, in turn, methane levels.



EAT MORE PLANT-BASED MEALS

Halving your meat consumption could cut your personal carbon emissions by as much as 20-30% ^[2].

There are now more delicious plant-based alternatives on offer than ever before.



MAKE MEALS FROM YOUR LEFTOVERS

One way of preventing food ending up in landfill is getting creative with leftovers, instead of throwing them away.

It's better for the planet because it stops food waste from generating methane, plus it's a fun challenge!

DID YOU KNOW...

30% of all food bought by UK households ends up in the bin ^[3]. When wasted food gets put into landfill, it breaks down without oxygen. This releases methane – a potent greenhouse gas.

^[1] <https://www.futurelearn.com/info/blog/eating-meat-bad-for-environment>

^[2] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0306919217303627?casa_token=ONiqgubFjzAAAAA:-38kXhvVd1dPDzllWJmfGPlaOFGvp4_AtUXcH2mDFBis7kcgE9WsE0518AylLKrtiU7aHLMUYWQU

^[3] <https://wrap.org.uk/taking-action/food-drink/actions/action-on-food-waste>

Climate and fashion

DID YOU KNOW...

300,000 tons of clothing ends up in landfill each year ^[1]. When clothes end up in landfill, they break down without oxygen. This releases methane, a greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change.

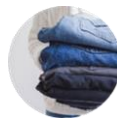
What can we do?



PARTICIPATE IN THE '30 WEAR CHALLENGE'

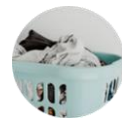
Good quality clothing with plenty of life left in it still ends up in landfill.

By buying clothes that we know we'll wear at least 30 times, we become less likely to make impulse purchases that end up going to waste.



RECYCLE, SHWOP OR PASS ON YOUR UNWANTED CLOTHING

By recycling or passing clothes on – through schemes such as shwopping at M&S, donating to charity shops or using second-hand-clothing apps – you can keep them out of landfill for longer. This also decreases the demand for new clothes, helping save resources and energy that would be used to create them.



WASH YOUR CLOTHES LESS FREQUENTLY AND AT 30 DEGREES

By only washing our clothes when they're dirty, and waiting until you have a full load, you'll save large amounts of water and energy. Plus, you'll be reducing the amount of microplastics that end up in our waterways – washing clothes can release man-made fibres into the water.

DID YOU KNOW...

Fast fashion – the mass production of cheap, poor-quality clothing – contributes to 10% of CO² emissions and 20% of water waste ^[2].

^[1] <https://www.marksandspencer.com/c/style-and-living/five-ways-to-make-your-style-more-sustainable>
^[2] <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200310-sustainable-fashion-how-to-buy-clothes-good-for-the-climate>

Start your conversation

Print and cut out the questions below, and use them to reboot your conversations with your family and friends. Simply fold them up, place them in an empty jar or container, and take it in turns to pick them out and answer them.

1. CLIMATE AND NATURE

Where do you like to spend time outside? How often do you spend time there?	Are we responsible for looking after the natural world for future generations?
Do you think all generations need to work together to tackle climate change?	How do you feel when you see the news about climate change?

2. CLIMATE AND FOOD

Who grew, produced and prepared the last meal you ate? See if you can count how many people took part in your meal, and how many countries it passed through.	How do you think your food choices affect the planet?
Did you know... UK households throw nearly a third of the food that we buy in the bin. How does that make you feel?	Do you think climate change will affect the food you eat in the future? In what way?

3. CLIMATE AND FASHION

How do you think the clothes we wear impact the planet?	Have you ever bought an item of clothing and then never worn it? What did you do with it? Where is it now?
What are your views on fast fashion and how do you think that affects the planet?	What would you like the world to look like in five years' time? What change would you like to see?

More resources

Reboot the Future host an online education platform called [Global Dimension](#). There you can find many useful resources to learn more about climate action.



HOW WILL YOU REBOOT THE FUTURE? REBOOT THE FUTURE

A series of 5 **short films**, an **e-book** written by Jonathon Porritt, and accompanying discussion resources.

www.globaldimension.org.uk/rebootthefuture



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www.aimhi.earth/climate-course