

Lighten your Carbon Footprint

Scouts look at their own carbon footprint, and come up with a few ways to reduce it further.

Section: All
Time: 1 hour
Where: Home, Den



PLAN

As many scouts already know, the carbon footprint is a way of measuring the impact of our activities on the climate, through the emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses. If we were flying around the world, buying clothes to wear once, eating meat at every meal and driving everywhere in an inefficient polluting car, then that footprint would be quite deep. Discuss these ideas with the scouts, and verify that they have a fair understanding.

Set them the task of, individually, reviewing their own carbon footprint and coming up with some ways to reduce it further. Younger sections might aim for just one change, while others might go for a higher number or more challenging targets.

DO

Draw a footprint on a page and write in the ideas around it. Have a think about the various ways to reduce their carbon footprint. Don't pick things for when they are older, but things that they could do tomorrow or even today. Here are some areas that they could look at:-

- Transport - reducing car journeys by walking, car-pooling or cycling
- Food - eating local produce, cutting down on meat, reducing food waste, being aware of Food Miles
- Energy - reducing energy use at home by hanging out clothes instead of running the drier, switching off lights when not in use, and not leaving heaters running more than needed (a warm fleece might do instead)
- Waste - cutting down on single-use plastics, avoiding other disposable items, recycling and reusing rather than dumping
- Consumption - avoiding buying lots of poor quality clothing (fast fashion), choosing natural rather than synthetic (made from fossil-fuel) products, buying durable items rather than short life

After identifying a number of possible improvements, the scouts should pick a few that they can definitely do, and write them in on their footprint. Put this up on the wall at home as a reminder.

REVIEW

Did the scouts find that there were lots of improvements that they could make? What did they choose to act on and why? Were there some solutions which they came up with which they needed other people to help with, such as family members? Were there any solutions which surprised them, or they had not thought of before? After this review, there might be a need to come back to it again a few weeks later to check how the scouts got on. Did they manage to achieve the targets which they set?



In a nutshell...

- Discuss the idea of peoples' carbon footprint
- Each scout reviews the good things that they already do, and picks out a range of new steps which they can take to reduce their carbon footprint
- The scouts prioritise a few of these steps and make the necessary changes



Follow-on

Scouts could go into more detail by checking their carbon footprint using an online calculator. This might give them an indication of further steps that they could take. Another option is to have them look at the carbon footprint of their household, their class or school or their scout group or section.



SDG 13 Climate Action

SDG 13 aims to improve education and raise awareness on climate change mitigation. Climate Change is too big and too urgent a problem to be left to government and business to solve. Every scout can play their part in solving this, and every improvement which they make is another step in the right direction.



Find out more!

Visit - www.betterworld.ie

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Produced by the Scouting Ireland Sustainable Scouting Team