



Carbon footprint: Waste

The problem with waste is simple: we create too much of it. We all buy and consume over-packaged disposable products which end up getting binned. Our waste ends up in landfill sites for thousands of years, or gets burnt up in incinerators.

Both these processes generate powerful greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. This means lots of valuable energy is used up in making new products which are later thrown away, keeping the waste cycle going. Each year the UK generates about 100 million tonnes of waste, there just isn't enough room on the planet to go on filling it up with this much rubbish forever.

Luckily, the solution to the waste problem is just as simple: we need to consume less and reuse or recycle any waste we do create.

Schools and colleges produce a huge amount of rubbish. Last year, secondary schools across the UK created a massive 71,800 tonnes of waste! Most of this was things that can be recycled like paper and card, food waste, metal, glass and fabric. So there's plenty of room for improvement. Read on for great ideas on how to get your school or college to tackle the climate challenge by reducing, reusing and recycling waste.



if you use your imagination you can reuse lots of things!

these students tell us the three most important principles of reducing waste!



Did you know?

- Recycling a can uses just 5% of the energy that it would take to produce a new can.
- We use over 6 billion glass bottles and jars each year.

- Every tonne of paper recycled saves 17 trees.
- It would take you over 3 and a half thousand years to sing "6 Billion Green Bottles"!



What can we do about it? There are loads of creative ways to cut waste, here a few to get you started:

1. Set up a Waste Action group

First you need a group of people who will take on the challenge to reduce waste. Include students, teaching staff and non-teaching staff, such as the caretaker. Get the local council involved, they will have ideas, resources and recycling schemes that you could join. Aim to meet at least once a term to plan activities and monitor the impact. Need help setting up an action group?

Check out our website: peopleandplanet.org/sixthforms/startagroup/

2. Waste survey

Next, you need to find out what's being wasted. This easy step-by-step survey and carbon calculator will help you work out what and how much waste goes to landfill rather than getting recycled. This will help you choose what to focus on.

You'll also be able to measure what impact your projects have on your school or college's waste carbon footprint <http://bit.ly/S8DsY>.

3. Reduce, reuse & recycle

Get your waste team together to plan your project, check out the great ideas below. You might want to hold a 'Zero Waste Week' or try out loads of different events throughout the year.

For help planning your events visit: peopleandplanet.org/gogreen/zerowaste

♻️ A recycling scheme

Sounds basic but without visible recycling bins and regular collections people won't do it. Check out the website for details of how to get a recycling scheme up and running in your school.

♻️ A 'trash to treasure' stall

You can make some amazing things out of rubbish. Tetra packs, cans and plastic bags can be transformed into cards, jewellery, wallets and bags. Why not get creative and have a recycled treasure stall to raise money for People & Planet?

For more crafty ideas, check out: peopleandplanet.org/gogreen/zerowaste

Giant Bottle Art Attack!



♻️ Swap shop

Revamp your wardrobe, music or book collection with a swap-shop. Ask students and teachers to bring unloved clothes, books or games and swap them for things they do want. Everyone pays £2 to take part, raising vital money for the Go Green campaign.

♻️ Recycled artwork

Ask art and technology teachers to give you their left over materials and use them to make recycled artwork. You could involve the whole school or college in a massive 'art attack'.



♻️ Mobile phone recycling points

Set up a collection for old mobile phones. Not only will you be saving valuable resources from the bin you can raise money for People & Planet - check out the link to find out more:

<http://bit.ly/3YZ9lB>

♻️ Get competitive

Run competitions between tutor groups with prizes for whichever one can recycle the most or find the most weird and wonderful use for their rubbish.

♻️ Get inspired

Watch a video of these ideas in action <http://bit.ly/RsdJt>

Maximise Your Impact!

Hold one of these events during national Go Green Week in February, when schools, colleges and unis across the country will be taking action together

peopleandplanet.org/gogreenweek

4. Raise awareness

Let everyone in your school or college know why waste is important, and what they can do to help. You could:

- Design and get posters up everywhere
- Hold an assembly or event to get people thinking about waste and climate change - you could show your Go Green film.
- Put up signs about how and what to recycle
- Set up a Go Green notice board to give ideas and tips on reducing, reusing and recycling

It's really important that you keep track of everything you do so make sure you take loads of photos for the Go Green photo competition and send them to your office contact or gogreen@peopleandplanet.org.

Repeat your waste survey to find out how much waste you're actually reducing.

Let everybody in your school or college know what an impact their actions are having. Write an article for the People & Planet website, your school or college newsletter or local press.

They did it!

Loughborough College

Loughborough College People & Planet group ran a creative 'Green Love' workshop where staff and students were invited to have a go at customising old clothes. The group revamped old tee-shirts and shoes with spray paint and fabric dye and taught participants to make wallets out of old tetra packs. It was so popular they were forced to finish early because they ran out of supplies!



Next steps:

5. Get a Zero Waste policy

Make sure you have a lasting impact on your school or college's carbon footprint. Ask them to publish a Zero Waste policy, your waste action group should feed into this and suggest strong targets which will have a lasting impact, such as:

- Recycle 50% of all classroom waste by 2012
- Set up a permanent Waste Action Group to monitor progress towards targets
- Hold an annual Go Green Zero Waste week
- For advice on producing a Zero Waste policy and preparing for a meeting with the Head/Principal check out peopleandplanet.org/gogreen/zerowaste

Who can help you reduce waste?

Our website has loads of practical projects to reduce carbon footprints peopleandplanet.org/gogreen/zerowaste

Sustainable schools

Great tips and lots of links to organisations who can help with raising awareness, funding and practical projects: <http://bit.ly/426P2K>

Recycle Now!

Special section for schools and colleges, and some great downloadable posters and stickers to remind people to recycle: <http://bit.ly/gSHJA>

Direct Gov

Guidance on community recycling services and how to contact your local council: <http://bit.ly/LylZh>

Each One Counts

Recycle old mobile phones and raise cash for People & Planet through Each One Counts: <http://bit.ly/3YZ9IB>



Last year secondary schools, alone, produced 71,800 tonnes of waste!

You can help to reduce this!

people & planet

student action on world poverty and the environment

Help us to work for positive change and support your campaigning by putting on fundraising events, joining our FAN Club or making a donation: peopleandplanet.org/supportus
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