

# Actions You Can Take

It's not up to you alone to stop climate change, but your actions do matter. Working together, many people can make a big difference!



## Speak up!

- Advocate for changes to our energy system.
- Contact your elected representatives and tell them you support climate action.
- Tell companies that if they want you to buy their products, they need to be energy efficient, use renewable energy, and minimize waste.
- Normalize caring about climate change and the environment—talk about the things you do to mitigate climate change. Your voice could have more power and influence than you think.



## Conserve energy

In a fossil-fuel based society, using energy leads to greenhouse gas emissions. And even low-carbon, clean energy sources cause some environmental degradation. It's critical that we find ways to use less energy.

- Influence businesses and industry by letting them know you want them to be energy efficient.
- When it's time to replace appliances, buy the most energy-efficient ones you can afford.
- Switch to LED light bulbs and change your transportation



## Use renewable energy

- The most direct and long-term cost-savings approach is to install solar panels at your home. If you can't do that, you can take part in community solar by purchasing a panel at or subscribing to a solar farm.
- Sign up for an electricity supplier that uses wind energy and other renewables.
- Advocate for your community to install more renewable energy infrastructure.

## Electrify your home and transportation

If our utility companies switch to low-carbon sources for generating electricity, then we all can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by running various systems with electricity instead of fossil fuels.

- Switch to a heat pump for heating and cooling your home. Heat pumps run on electricity instead of burning fossil fuels, and they are highly energy efficient. The upfront installation costs can be high, but heat pumps can save you a lot of money in the long run.
- If you can, drive an electric car. In addition to avoiding emissions, you'll be using a vehicle that is much more energy efficient. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, at least 77% of the energy used by an electric car goes into power at the wheels, whereas only 12%-30% of the energy used by a gasoline-powered car goes into power at the wheels.



The number of things you can control may be small, but the number of things you can influence is very large!



## Conserve water

We have lots of good reasons not to waste water, and conserving energy is one of them. It takes a lot of energy to clean water, pump it out to buildings, and pump the wastewater back to be cleaned again. That energy use leads to greenhouse gas emissions.

- Check for leaks and fix them quickly.
- Avoid watering your lawn and use only the minimum water you need for your garden.
- Use a low flow shower head and faucet aerators.
- Replacing a toilet? Choose a dual flush or low flow one.
- Monitor your water use—check your water bill.



## Help conserve and restore forests

Forests excel at taking in and storing carbon. They also provide habitat for our non-human relatives, clean our water and air, prevent flooding and soil erosion, and much more.

- Advocate for stopping deforestation.
- Get involved in forest restoration projects.
- Use fabric replacements for paper towels, and use recycled toilet paper.



## Change your transportation

- Reduce driving by walking and biking instead, and using shared transportation, public or private.
- Fly less. Travel has tremendous benefits, and the cultural exchanges that come from international travel are important for building good will and cooperation. We need those things to solve the climate crisis. But we can be thoughtful about our air travel and try to minimize it.

## Practice climate-friendly gardening

- Stop using gasoline-powered power tools.
- Minimize use of synthetic fertilizers. They can lead to emissions of nitrous oxide, a powerful greenhouse gas.
- Buy locally-grown plants and garden products to minimize transportation emissions.
- Grow plants that shade your house, to reduce your air conditioning use.
- Use cover crops over the winter to keep carbon in the soil.



## Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through your food choices

- Eat less meat and more plant-based foods.
- Reduce food waste. Bring your own take-home container to a restaurant to take home leftovers and avoid using a disposable container. One-time-use containers waste resources and energy, leading to greenhouse gas emissions.
- Compost uneaten food instead of sending it to a landfill where it releases methane when it decomposes.

## Consume less

It's not about deprivation, it's about living in a way that will sustain our lives and other life on this planet.

- Reduce the amount of stuff you buy. Slow down and think about your purchasing decisions instead of acting impulsively.
- Reuse items.
- Buy secondhand clothing and goods.

