

How to reduce your impact on the environment by

REDUCING (1 / 3)

at school, on the move, and at home

***Always remember the order of the 3-R's:
first, "Reduce" how much you use (energy or materials),
then make sure you "Reuse" whatever you start using,
finally, "Recycle" what you need to discard.***

Reducing at school !!!

- Make sure you **walk, bike or carpool** to go to school.
- With your parents, check that your lunch is the right size for you before you pack it: **don't waste the food** they took time to prepare.
- When using paper to write or draw, **use both sides** of the page. This way, you reduce the number of pages you need to use.
- **Take care of things** like school supplies, they will last you much longer.
- In your lunch, try **avoiding unnecessary packaging**. (If you have to use packaging, look at the "REUSING and RECYLING "tip-sheets").

Reducing on the move !!!

- Remember that walking and getting exercise is important. Take your parents on a walk to your favorite place. If it is too far to walk, **go for a bike ride**.
 - Try to reduce your car-use –especially for things you do everyday.
 - Try to use a car only when it is full of people. (Tip: carpooling is a great way to spend time with a friend on your way to and from school).
 - When you must travel far, remember what's best: use a train over a bus over a hybrid car over a standard car over an SUV over a plane over a space rocket!

DID YOU KNOW ? Sharing a ride with a classmate just 2 days a week will reduce your CO2 emissions by 1,590 pounds a year (out of the 15,000 lbs/year the average American emits)

Reducing at home !!!

- Remember that California doesn't have very much **water: don't waste it**.
 - Take shorter showers.
 - Plug the sink when you do the dishes.
 - Reduce the amount of water used when you flush (lower the floater).
 - In the garden, remember that native plants use less water than exotic species.
 - Ask your parents to add flow-regulators at the end of water faucets and showers, and to check for leaks.

DID YOU KNOW ? A 4 to 5 minute shower uses 8 to 20 gallons of water, while a bath uses 35 to 60 gallons. To know more about how to save water at home, check: <http://www.wateruseitwisely.com/>

- **Electricity** most often comes from non-renewable energies: **use less of it.**
 - Only turn on the lights in the rooms you are staying in.
 - Also turn off the computers and other electronics you are not using.
 - Ask your parents what they think about energy efficient light bulbs.
- **Heating** a house takes a lot of energy: **don't throw heat out** the window!
 - Don't heat more than you really need. Wear something warm in winter.
 - Lower the heat when you're not home.
 - Make sure all the windows are closed when you are heating
 - Cooling down also uses energy: when it is too hot, open the window instead of air conditioning.
- If your parents are **constructing or changing the house**, ask them to use sustainable materials and to think about installing renewable sources of energy: <http://www.builditgreen.org/>

What about food ???

- It takes a lot of **energy and resources to grow, treat, and transport the food** you eat: remember not to throw these efforts in the garbage.
 - First, reduce the amount of food you throw away.
 - Then, try reducing the distance your food comes from: buy locally grown food. (Tip: seasonal crops are usually local.)
 - Next, you can reduce the amount of packaging coming with your food.
 - If you want to reduce your impact even more, talk to your parents about eating meat less frequently (Wondering why? Check: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_vegetarianism)

DID YOU KNOW ? On average, food has to travel 1,200 miles before reaching your plate! All of this travel requires a lot of energy. To buy food more locally, check: <http://www.localharvest.org/>

- Reduce the distance your water comes from: **drink water from the tap.**
 - Bottled water is 50 to 1000 times more expensive than tap water, it comes from far away, and uses lots of plastic.
 - We are lucky to live in a place where tap water is safe: let's enjoy and drink it! (Tip: tap water can be filtered to remove the taste of chlorine.)

IT'S EASY TO REDUCE, JUST TAKE IT ONE STEP AT A TIME...

Information compiled by Emmanuel Cappellin
Environmental Coordinator / Coordinateur en environnement
International High School / Lycée International