

So You Think You're "Green"?

How Do You Score on This Checklist?

Minimize Your Carbon Footprint

- For starters, understand your carbon footprint. It's not just about your energy-use habits or how much of your energy originates from fossil fuels. It's also about your food and material consumption patterns and how much waste you contribute to the local landfill, and landfills in all the parts of the world where things you buy are manufactured. It's also about water and fertilizer and how you spend your weekends.
- Turn out lights when you leave your apartment or your room, even for only a few minutes' absence. This one, consistent habit can do more to reduce your carbon footprint than anything on this list.
- If you're the last one to leave *any* room, you don't need anyone's "permission" to turn off the lights. Just do it, as a global citizen.
- Don't illuminate your entire room if task lighting will do the job. Get a 15-watt desk lamp and cut your lighting emissions to practically nothing.
- In labs, always close a fume hood when you're not using it. An open fume hood adds CO₂ to the atmosphere at the rate of 50,000 lbs/year.
- Turn off TV when you're not watching. Don't fall asleep with the TV on; use the sleep feature. Watch TV with friends. Being social is green.
- Activate the "sleep" features on your computer. (BTW, screensavers are not "green.")
- Minimize your use of a single-occupant car. Carpool whenever possible. Better yet, walk, bike, take a shuttle, or even take a public bus. You will be healthier, and so will the earth.
- When you run errands, consolidate your trips to minimize travel, whatever the mode.

- ❑ Try web-based grocery shopping. Yes, they deliver to campus apartments.
- ❑ If you live on campus, consider whether you can live happily without a car. The savings really add up and can pay for quite a few taxi trips, weekend rental cars, or by-the-hour Carshare rentals when you need them.
- ❑ If you need motorized transportation, consider an electric scooter -- legal to drive on all campus bike paths.
- ❑ If you have a car, follow the service schedule in the owner's manual to keep it running cleanly and efficiently; inflate tires to the upper limit of the recommended inflation range, adding a few PSI since the tires are no longer cold by the time you drive to the service station; use the manufacturer's recommended octane, since the wrong octane degrades fuel-efficiency; use the "economy" setting on the air-conditioner or avoid its use altogether; and drive smoothly, as though you have an uncooked egg under your accelerator foot.
- ❑ Avoid beef, which is a major contributor of atmospheric methane -- a greenhouse gas that is 21 times as degrading as carbon dioxide. Eat seafood or lower-emissions types of meat, or go vegetarian for the sake of global warming.
- ❑ Buy locally grown produce. Irvine has one of the best farmers' markets in California, right across the street from the campus on Saturday mornings.
- ❑ Food requires energy to produce and creates greenhouse gas when it rots. Don't put more on your plate than you intend to eat. Resourcefulness is the first principle of green living.
- ❑ Get used to drinking your fountain drinks without ice. Ice-making consumes a lot of energy, and throwing away ice wastes both water *and* energy.
- ❑ Minimize the use of heating at home and in the office. Dress warmly rather than crank up the thermostat.
- ❑ Minimize the use of air-conditioning at home and in the office. Open your windows at home, and dress for comfort at the office so you can keep the thermostat at 78 degrees on hot days.

- ❑ Take the stairs. You will stay healthier, and so will the earth's stratosphere.
- ❑ Think about the little things that can add up. If you use an automatic door opener five times per day, you will create three pounds of CO₂ by the end of a year. If this doesn't seem like much, multiply time the campus' population.
- ❑ Consider the carbon impacts of your travel and recreation. There are low-impact and high-impact forms of travel and recreation.
- ❑ Help start a community garden. Gardening skills will prove as useful in your post-college life as many of the skills you learn in the classroom.
- ❑ Kick the hot water habit. Most of your clothes don't require hot water laundering, and neither does hand-washing. Soap and rubbing kill germs. If you depended on water temperature, your hands would be scalded long before they get sanitized!
- ❑ Swear off bottled water, which consumes a lot of energy in its transportation and packaging (and also creates plastic waste). Irvine water is high quality; in fact, it exceeds the purity of most bottled water.

Water Use and Quality

- ❑ Don't let it run -- when shaving, brushing your teeth, rinsing the dishes, etc.
- ❑ Don't throw away ice (see above).
- ❑ Learn to take a 3-minute shower.
- ❑ Don't let the water run to stabilize the temperature before jumping into the shower. Getting right in will wake you up and help you complete your shower in three minutes!
- ❑ Don't shave in the shower.
- ❑ Use the shutoff-valve on the shower head while lathering your hair. That's what it's for.

- ❑ If you have a car, don't wash it in the parking lot. Take it to a carwash that recycles its water.
- ❑ When washing clothing, do a full load or -- at least -- select a partial-fill setting. And use about half the "normal" amount of detergent, which is usually sufficient to get your clothes clean unless you've been spelunking.
- ❑ Don't confuse your toilet with the wastebasket. The toilet is the receptacle your dog would drink from.
- ❑ When available, use the water-conserving fixtures (urinals and dual-flush toilets) being installed in many restrooms around campus.
- ❑ Report broken irrigation heads, which create a "geyser" that shoots into the air about 20 feet. Call Facilities Management at ext. 5444. It's reclaimed water, but we still don't want to waste it.

Recycling and Solid Waste Reduction

- ❑ Avoid fast foods. If you must eat fast foods, patronize food outlets that minimize the amount of waste and use biodegradable packaging instead of plastic.
- ❑ To *really* shrink your carbon footprint, take a cooking class and kick the fast food habit.
- ❑ Avoid vending machine snacks with all their packaging waste.
- ❑ Get a reusable grocery bag -- a bargain at Albertson's or Trader Joe's.
- ❑ Recycle practically everything. Housing is setting up special collection points for recyclables besides paper, aluminum, and plastic, such as batteries, printer cartridges, electronic waste, cardboard, fluorescent lamps, and hazardous waste (*never* throw it out or flush it).
- ❑ Go paperless, as much as you can. When you must print or copy, do it double-sided.

- ❑ Carry a cup. Fountain beverages on campus can be bought at a discount with your own cup.
- ❑ Don't take two paper towels or three napkins when one will do the job. Take only what you need.
- ❑ Use hand driers in restrooms where they are installed. They use less energy than paper towels and create zero solid waste.
- ❑ Think about the entire life-cycle of your clothing. Recycle clothing by donating it to Goodwill and buy natural fibers that are ultimately recyclable, rather than synthetics that will not biodegrade in a landfill.

Get Involved!

- ❑ Join a student group that has an environmental focus and help make the campus greener and the atmosphere healthier.
- ❑ Don't just make an appearance at Earth Day, Focus the Nation, or a volunteer tree-planting. Get involved in planning, organizing, promoting, and running these events.
- ❑ Take advantage of the many classes offered by the campus in such areas as energy, earth system science, natural systems and habitat restoration, water quality, economics, and policy studies.
- ❑ Tackle one of the green topics that have been suggested for independent study or as a thesis topic. Dig deeper.
- ❑ Support on-campus student life programming, particularly as the new Student Center ramps up. Keeping your social and recreational life on campus is far greener than driving to Spectrum.
- ❑ *Talk* to retailers, restaurants, grocery stores, and dry cleaners about their packaging materials. Most packaging is designed for "customer convenience." You can help redefine retailers' understanding of customer expectations by speaking up.

- ❑ Help organize a volunteer tree-planting event in your housing community.
- ❑ Support reasonable fee increases that help to leverage desirable green measures (especially, on-site renewable power) that are not quite finance-able without a subsidy.
- ❑ Make certain you're scoring at least 95 percent on this checklist before criticizing anyone *else's* lack of greenness. How you live speaks volumes.
- ❑ Finally, keep in mind that the first principle of green living is resourcefulness. Help identify and improve upon any inefficiencies of energy, water, food, or waste management that warrant change.

Scoring Key:

> 50	Emerald green
40-49	Getting greener
30-39	Unconcerned and not much inconvenienced
< 30	Getting warmer, not greener -- <i>much warmer!</i>