

CARBON FOOTPRINT CHALLENGE



WASTE

*How much of an impact does it have on our **carbon footprint**?*

GHG emissions from waste include both direct emissions as waste decomposes and produces methane (a particularly powerful GHG), and embodied emissions associated with energy use to acquire raw materials, and for manufacturing and transportation. Reduction is the key for this small but actionable source of GHG emissions, including a shift to thinking about waste as a potential resource.²

If the global population reaches 9.6 billion by 2050, the equivalent of almost **3 planets** will be required to sustain current lifestyles¹

It's time to shift our thinking about waste.



All that stuff also takes up space when it's disposed of. Did you know the Vancouver Landfill is in Delta, BC? You can visit during the [open house on June 6, 2020](#) to learn more!

The Vancouver Landfill **cannot take all of our stuff**, though. Until 2015, surplus trash was sent to Cache Creek, and is now sent to both Washington and Oregon.⁶

Transporting all that waste is costly, and causes greenhouse gas emissions which could be avoided. To reduce as much as possible, both UBC and the City of Vancouver have Zero Waste Strategies:

[Vancouver - Zero Waste 2040](#)

[UBC - Zero Waste Action Plan](#)

Do you know how to recycle properly at UBC? Test your knowledge with this [Sort It Out game!](#)

THE GOAL:

MAKE LESS WASTE

As of 2015, approximately 6300 Mt of plastic waste had been generated, around 9% of which had been recycled, 12% was incinerated, and 79% was accumulated in landfills or the natural environment.⁸

| PLANET OR PLASTIC? |

A whopping 91% of plastic isn't recycled

Billions of tons of plastic have been made over the past decades, and much of it is becoming trash and litter, finds the first analysis of the issue.

If current production and waste management trends continue, roughly 12,000 Mt of plastic waste will be in landfills or in the natural environment by 2050.⁸

The **circular economy** is an alternative to the predominant linear “take-make-dispose” economy of production and consumption. **Regenerative by design**, the circular economy keeps products, components and materials at their highest utility and value, at all times. In practice this translates into:

- preventing waste through new and innovative business models or through **improved design** – either for disassembly or for longevity;
- maximizing the continuation of a product’s life through **enhanced re-use, repair or remanufacture**; and
- improving end of life processing and resource recovery.⁷

Why Switch to a Circular Economy?

By 2030

Imagine an economy...

... That exacerbates climate change effects



... Is still stuck on fossil fuels...



... Adding to growing amounts of waste...



... Generated by 8.5 billion people living with growing inequality. [1]



Linear = Status Quo



Ignoring and working against nature

Imagine an economy...

... That restores the environment and minimizes negative impacts...



... Is powered by renewable energy...



... Where waste from one industry becomes resource for another...



... And new business models based on collaboration and sharing arise.

Circular = A New Way



Working with and learning from nature

UBC & WASTE

🔗 UBC FREE STORE 🔗

We are a volunteer run collective of students with one ultimate goal: we aim to reuse, reduce and recycle products, clothing and consumer goods within the UBC community. This is to not only help out our fellow broke students by keeping useful things circulating, but to also encourage the rethinking and remodeling of the disposable consumer culture that we are all too familiar with."

The idea behind the free store is simple - you take what you need and donate what you don't!



GET THRIFTY | UBC's Thrift-Store

At its very core, Get Thrifty is a campus thrift store, that will not only address the high volume of discarded items on campus and raise climate change awareness, but also encourage students and faculty members to adopt a more sustainable and affordable lifestyle.



WAYS TO WASTE LESS



SHOPPING

1. Buy quality 2. Buy in bulk 3. Buy minimal packaging

- Buy only good quality items whenever possible. Read online reviews and ask around when trying to determine the best option for whatever is needed.
- Buy things in bulk. It saves money, garbage and time.
- Buy all soaps and other things from the [Soap Dispensary](#). They do refills.

- Use a plastic bag dryer to help facilitate plastic bag reuse. They can also be purchased at the [Soap Dispensary](#)
- Craigslist is your friend! One person's trash in another person's treasure.⁵
- **Don't buy fast fashion.** Trendy, cheap items that go out of style quickly get dumped in landfills where they produce methane as they decompose. Currently, the average American discards about **80 pounds of clothing each year, 85 percent of which ends up in landfills.** In addition, most fast fashion comes from China and Bangladesh, so shipping internationally requires the use of fossil fuels.³
- Shop smart and purchase items with a comparatively low carbon footprint when possible. Some manufacturers have begun assessing and publishing their products' carbon footprints.
- Reduce what you send to a landfill by recycling, composting, and buying products with minimal packaging.⁴



HOME & CARE

1. Make it yourself
 2. Use reusable products
-

- Wash your clothing in cold water.³
- Use an old-school safety razor.
- Make household cleaners
- Make body care products
- Use rags instead of paper towels when possible. If purchasing paper towels, buy the unbleached stuff and compost it after
- Avoid using one-use menstrual items, there are products accessible to us now that are designed for long time use ([The Diva Cup](#))
- Reuse vacuum cleaner bags by emptying them and using for several fills, rather than putting them into the garbage after the first use.⁵



FOOD

1. Meal prep and make it from scratch
 2. Buy in bulk
 3. Buy minimal packaging
 4. Use reusable products
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- Buy foodstuffs in bulk when possible using your own reusable container.³
- Make more foods from scratch.
- Make a weekly meal plan rather than random grocery purchases.
- Use stainless steel or glass straws rather than throw-away ones.
- Use glass or plastic tupperware instead of saran wrap in the kitchen.
- Save jam, nut butter, mayo jars, etc to be used for storing food and other things.
- Buy beer via refillable growler. There is no shortage of breweries that offer growler fills in Vancouver.
- Do grocery shopping with tote bags and bring see-through mesh bags for produce.⁵

RECYCLING

A guide for Vancouverites

The City of Vancouver collects certain things in the blue box every week at curbside. This is **only a fraction** of the things that can be recycled in Vancouver, however. That said, consider developing an **extended recycling system**.

Check out this Google Doc that was created by a Vancouver couple with great tips on how to reduce and manage waste

Elizabeth and Oliver's Google Doc

Resources and extra sources:

- [The Story of Stuff Movies](#)
- [UBC Sustainable Purchasing Guide](#)
- [Love Food Hate Waste](#)

Citations

1. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-consumption-production/>
2. <http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/air-quality/climate-action/climate2050/regional-priorities/waste/Pages/default.aspx>
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General

4611 West 12th Ave

Vancouver, BC V6R 2R7

Canada

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