

Lower Carbon Vacations

Why we care

With today's concern about global warming, a savvy traveler understands the impact of various modes of travel. Because flying is so common and it's easy to put on a lot of miles quickly, an understanding of air travel is particularly important. Aircraft emissions are the fastest growing transportation contributor to global warming. Scientists have pointed out that CO₂ emissions do more damage at high altitude than at ground level. Assume that you and your companion fly 5,000 miles on vacation during the year. The impact on climate would be equivalent to the two of you driving 11,724 miles in your car (assuming 23 mpg).

Simple, positive change

- Consider taking your trip by motor coach or train. By far, the most efficient mode of travel is the motor coach. Many of the new coaches are comfortable and modern. Motor coach: 800-231-2222, www.greyhound.com. Train: 1-800-872-7245, www.amtrak.com.
- On vacation, avoid driving alone or in an SUV. If driving is your only option, consider renting a high-mileage car.
- If you do travel by plane, forgo first class. The extra space doubles your carbon footprint. Non-stop flights are preferable since landing and take-off uses extra fuel.
- When you do fly, purchase carbon offsets from a highly reputable company:
 - Bonneville Environmental Foundation, <http://www.b-e-f.org/offsets/calculator/>
 - Sustainable Travel International's MyClimate program, www.my-climate.com/
 - Native Energy, www.nativeenergy.com/pages/travel_calculator/465.php
 - For corporate travel, First Climate, which offers Gold Standard offsets, www.firstclimate.com/de/climate-neutral/advisory-services/carbon-offsets.html

Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at info@earthleaders.org.