



Gustavson's Sustainability Tip Sheet

Sustainability and social responsibility is a key Gustavson pillar and one of the charges of Gustavson's Carbon Neutrality+ Committee is to promote education and behaviour change by promoting potential adoption of behaviors to help us reduce our carbon footprint. This tip sheet provides a flexible, evidence-based way of helping us to live more sustainably for the good of our school, our communities and the planet.

The United Nations Committee on Climate Change reported that staying within the UN limit of 1.5°C temperature rise would require rapid, far-reaching, and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society within 10 years to avoid "catastrophic global warming." But we have the power to make a real difference; small changes can have a big impact if we all work towards the same goal and some of the changes we think have big impacts are actually smaller than expected. We encourage you to help make Gustavson, and our world a more sustainable place by acting on one or more of the sustainability tips below. (While the COVID-19 pandemic is currently forcing people into a number of more sustainable behaviors, this effect may be short-lived and even with self-isolation and social distancing, there are still other behavior changes that may be easier to make now for longer term benefit).

Research on the positive empirical results of goal-setting theory continues to be very strong.ⁱ Thus, we encourage you to set your own S.M.A.R.T goals related to viable sustainability tips below – goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely given where you are now and what you want to achieve. We also encourage you to keep track of your sustainability efforts, celebrate your successes, and help us create an even more sustainable community at the University of Victoria and beyond.

Understanding your own carbon footprint is a key first step. In addition, for ease of use, potential ways to help reduce your footprint listed below have been divided into the four categories highlighted in the Ecological Footprint Calculator (<https://www.footprintcalculator.org/>)! We have also included a bonus solution at the bottom.

For the sustainability tips listed below, after evaluating several alternatives, we ranked each solution from high to low based on a ranking system created by Seth Wynes and Kimberly Nicholas in their 2017 paper "The climate mitigation gap: education and government recommendations miss the most effective individual actions."ⁱⁱ Solutions ranked as high have the potential to reduce emissions by more than 0.8 tCO₂e a year, those ranked as medium have the potential to reduce emissions by 0.2 to 0.8 tCO₂e a year, and those ranked as low have the potential to reduce emissions by less than 0.2 tCO₂e a year.ⁱⁱⁱ

In using this tip sheet, we encourage you to choose a very doable list of 1 to 3 goals for the coming year for which you will set a S.M.A.R.T. goal that you can monitor and take pride in achieving.

Mobility

- Live vehicle free – S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: high
 - Solely utilizing alternative transportation methods will significantly reduce travel related emissions! Consider biking, walking, using public transport, and car-pooling for all your day-to-day transport needs.

- Video/voice conference to minimize travel - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: high
 - Is there a conference or meeting you are hoping to attend in another province or country? Leveraging video or voice conferencing to avoid unnecessary travel can greatly reduce your mobility footprint, all the while making sure you are still present!

- Start/participate in a car-pool - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: medium
 - Car-pooling can help reduce commute related emissions and add a social element to your morning. Organize one with your co-workers or check out [Poparide Victoria](#) for more options.
 - UVic will pay the \$500 fee for a Modo car-sharing membership for full-time continuing employees and some students. Visit the [UVic Sustainability webpages](#) for the details.

- Bus to work - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: medium
 - Using public transport can help reduce transportation related emissions. Checking bus times has never been easier than it is right now with real time tracking. Check the Transit app on [Android](#) or [IOS](#).

- Bike to work - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: medium
 - Biking to work does more than just reduce your transportation footprint, it is also a great opportunity to add exercise into your routine. UVic has numerous resources to help make cycling accessible and secure. This includes showers, storage, and equipment. Look [here](#) for more information.

- Switch from gas to hybrid/electric vehicle - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: medium
 - Hybrid and electric vehicles are significantly more efficient than cars that run off gasoline. Switching to one can help reduce your gasoline consumption when driving. Also, check out the [BC Government's page](#) for information about subsidies!
 - Have an electric car? UVic has seven Level 2 (240 v), 60-amp electric vehicle charging stations. These EV chargers are available for the campus community and guest.
 - Check your car's travel emissions by clicking on this [page](#) and think about offsetting for long car trips.

- Batch errands - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Performing your weekly errands in one trip can help cut back on transportation-related emissions and save you time! Many urban centers like University Heights or Uptown can serve as excellent areas to tackle multiple errands at once.

- Take a non-stop flight - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Layovers can greatly increase the carbon footprint of a given flight as they often increase the total time spent flying. If possible, get to your destination faster and fly non-stop.

- Take a more emission-friendly flight - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - All routes are not equal! Compare flights and opt for a more sustainable one to help reduce your mobility footprint. Check out the different options [here](#) or book with [flygreen](#).

- Rigorously maintain your vehicle - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Performing the recommended maintenance on your vehicle can help it run more efficiently and make it last longer! Follow the maintenance schedule included in your owner's manual or check with the manufacturer for more information.

Shelter

- Increase use of shared housing - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: high
 - Living with an increased number of roommates/housemates can help reduce your carbon footprint by increasing economies of scale for heating, lighting, etc. Shared housing is a great option to reduce your cost of living as well. Many rental options in Victoria have multiple bedrooms available!

- Upgrade your home's energy efficiency - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: medium
 - Making your home more energy efficient can reduce your shelter footprint and help you save on your hydro bill. Upgrades like new insulation, efficient hot water tanks, replacing single pane windows, and sealing doors can all have a large impact. The provincial government also offers numerous incentives to make this more affordable! Check [here](#) for more information.

- Use a smart thermostat - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: medium
 - Smart thermostats can be used to ensure your home is always the right temperature. This means that when you are not home your thermostat can turn off or lower the heat, saving power and money. Many smart thermostats can be purchased online or in-store and installed hassle free.

- Install solar panels for your home - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Not only can installing solar planners help reduce your carbon footprint, but it can also save you money in the long run. The provincial government offers incentives to help make the transition more affordable. Check [here](#) for more information.

- Use natural daylight as much as possible - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Using natural light instead of electrical lights when possible helps keep your electrical and carbon emissions low and increase your vitamin D production.

- Proactively address maintenance issues - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Not only do leaky taps, drafty windows, and poorly sealed doors cause discomfort, they are also a waste of energy. Addressing these issues right away can help save energy and create a more comfortable environment. If at UVic, contact facilities [here](#).

- Choose the stairs - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Elevators and escalators all consume a great deal of energy to run. Choosing the stairs is a power efficient and healthy alternative!

- Turn off lights - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Turning off lights when leaving your office, a conference room or any shared spaces when unneeded is a great way to reduce electricity consumption!

- Switch to cold water clothes washing - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Switching from a hot to a cold wash cycle is an excellent way to decrease your energy consumption and reduce your carbon footprint. Not to mention that it can also help you cut down on your electricity bill. Most washing machines have this setting built right in!

- Hang dry clothes - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - No better way to follow up cold-water clothes wash than by hang drying! This solution will help further reduce your carbon footprint and help make your clothes last longer. Win win!

- Switch to energy efficient light bulbs - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Upgrading to energy efficient light bulbs is great for three reasons: it reduces your energy consumption, saves on your power bill, and reduces waste since most energy efficient lightbulbs have longer lives.

- Turn off your tap - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Turning off the tap or only using it intermittently when brushing your teeth, shaving, and/or using hair products is a great way to save water and cut down on your electricity bill.

- Take shorter showers - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Taking a shorter shower will not only help save water and reduce your energy consumption, it will also give you precious time back in the morning! Using a timer is a great way to know when it's time to get out.

- Only run dishwasher when full - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Fewer dishwasher cycles with more dishes can help reduce your water usage and energy consumption. Waiting one to two days between loads for the dishwasher to fill up is a great way to run this appliance more efficiently.

Goods and Services

- Avoid heavy packaging/Go zero waste - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: medium
 - Avoiding heavily packaged goods is a great way to cut back on waste. As well, shopping at places like the [Zero Waste Emporium](#) and [West Coast Refill](#) can help you go completely zero waste!

- When buying new goods, go durable - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: medium
 - If you have to buy a new good, consider purchasing high quality items that will last longer. This can reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill and the emissions associated with producing more goods.

- Use a capsule wardrobe - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: medium
 - A capsule wardrobe contains a few, high quality items that can all be worn together. This is a great way to reduce your spending on clothing and waste you are sending to the landfill. Mixing in thrifted items is also a great way to add some personality at a low environmental cost. For more information about creating a capsule wardrobe, look [here](#).

- Leverage B Corps to purchase goods/services - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: medium
 - Companies that have received the B Corporation certification strive to be more sustainable and eco-friendly than many of their rivals. Looking for the B Corp label or consulting their website [here](#) can help you make more informed decisions when purchasing goods and services.

- Utilize Energy Star Ratings for new goods - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: medium

- Need a new appliance or another good? Look for the Energy Star Rating to help inform your purchase. Goods with the Energy Star Rating generally are more efficient, reducing your carbon footprint and saving you money. For more information check [here](#).

Enable energy save features for electronics - S.M.A.R.T. goal:_____.

Potential impact: low

- Many different pieces of electronic equipment have energy intensive features that run in the background. Enabling energy saving settings can help reduce energy use as well as helping your battery to last longer!

Turn off your electronics when not in use - S.M.A.R.T. goal:_____.

Potential impact: low

- Many electronics draw power even when switched off. Unplugging them or turning off power strips when not in use can prevent this. Take extra care when leaving for a vacation or other extended period of time as this is a great way to save power!

Think before you print - S.M.A.R.T. goal:_____.

Potential impact: low

- Avoid printing whenever possible. Utilizing applications like OneNote can be a great way to keep track of things you want to remember—it is almost as good as a traditional notebook! If you do have to print, consider printing double sided and using black and white ink only.

Reduce/eliminate personal office equipment - S.M.A.R.T. goal:_____.

Potential impact: low

- When practical, sharing office equipment like printers and staplers can help cut down on the resources needed to produce, ship, and maintain these products. If these goods need replenishing, reach out to whoever is responsible for maintaining the space to procure more shared goods.

Use re-usable utensils, cups, plates, etc. - S.M.A.R.T. goal:_____.

Potential impact: low

- Disposable items can take decades to decompose. Using reusable alternatives is an effective way to reduce this unnecessary waste. Keeping these items in your office is a convenient way to always have access!

Shop vintage - S.M.A.R.T. goal:_____.

Potential impact: low

- By shopping at thrift stores, you can help keep clothes out of the landfill and extend the life of many quality and fashionable pieces. Consider shopping at thrift stores and other used clothing outlets the next time you need a new garment.

Use public libraries - S.M.A.R.T. goal:_____.

Potential impact: low

- Instead of buying a new book, consider using the library to help cut back on production related emissions. Libraries are also a great place to find lots of other content like music and art gallery

passes. Many residents of Greater Victoria are eligible for a free card that gives you access to all of the network's branches.

- (Re)use your own mug - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Reusable mugs are excellent eco-friendly alternatives to paper cups. Not only are they better for the planet but they will also save you \$0.25 on each cup of coffee at UVic (N/A during COVID-19).

- (Re)use your own water bottle - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Bringing a reusable water bottle can help you use less plastic. Many water fountains around UVic are now equipped with water bottle fillers as well!

- Better recycle at Gustavson and beyond - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Gustavson and UVic are equipped with numerous recycling stations across campus. Using them correctly is a great way to reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill! Please be diligent about sorting your recycling properly. Click [here](#) to learn more about how to sort correctly on campus.

- Use e-texts and UVic course reserves - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - When sourcing readings, e-texts and electronic coursepacks can be a great alternative. Using UVic Course Reserves maximizes use of freely available readings as well. Using a combination of these options is almost always cheaper for students as well!

- Use reusable shopping bags - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Reducing your usage of single-use plastic bags (during non-COVID times) reduces waste going to the landfill. Using eco-friendly alternatives like reusable bags is a great way to do this. Consider keeping some in your backpack or by your front door so they are always there when you need them.

- Recycle old electronics - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Do you have electronics you need to get rid of? Instead of throwing them away consider recycling them! This can help keep dangerous waste out of the landfill and put valuable materials back into the supply chain. For more information on where to do this click [here](#).

- Invest in rechargeable batteries - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
Potential impact: low
 - Many goods require batteries to operate. Switching from disposable to rechargeable batteries is an excellent way to reduce the amount of waste being created and save you money in the long

run. Please consider recycling your reusable batteries when they reach the end of their lifecycle to help further reduce their environmental impact.

- Leverage cloth diapers - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
- Potential impact: low*
- Switching from disposable to reusable diapers is a great way to help minimize waste being created in your home. This alternative is also a great cost saving measure!

Food

- Adopt a vegetarian or vegan diet - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
- Potential impact: high*
- Adopting a vegetarian or vegan diet can make a significant impact on your carbon footprint. Meat and animal product production is a very carbon intensive industry, and any reductions in our consumption of these products can have a big impact.

- Try flexitarian options - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
- Potential impact: medium*
- Going vegetarian or vegan is not for everyone. An effective alternative to help reduce your carbon footprint is by incorporating activities into your routine like Meatless Mondays. Another option to consider is trying flexitarian options like only eating meat on special occasions.

- Eat local and seasonal - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
- Potential impact: medium*
- Eating foods grown locally that are in season is a great way to eat sustainably. Look for these options at local farmers markets or other distribution methods like [Community Supported Agriculture](#) (CSAs).

- Decrease food waste via leftovers - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
- Potential impact: low*
- Instead of throwing out leftover food, consider bringing it for lunch! This will help cut down on food waste and save you from having to buy a lunch.

- Compost more - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
- Potential impact: low*
- Instead of throwing out food scraps, consider composting them. This helps keep waste out of the landfill and reduces your carbon footprint. If composting at home and not through a city program remember to mix your compost once every two weeks to reduce methane emissions.

- Add organic diet options - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.
- Potential impact: low*
- Organic options can be a great way to reduce the environmental impact of your diet as they are grown without energy intensive fertilizers and chemicals. Look for the Organic label when grocery shopping or when at your local farmers market.

- Purchase bulk food staples - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.

Potential impact: low

- Many staples such as rice, flour, and other shelf-stable foods can be purchased in bulk! Due to the nature of these goods, buying them in bulk can reduce the emissions related to transportation and the production of packaging. It can also make your regular grocery shops lighter!

- Shop at farmers markets - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.

Potential impact: low

- Shopping at local farmers markets is a great way for you to find local and healthy foods at great prices. The foods at farmers markets typically have lower transportation emissions and significantly less packaging. Also, by shopping at farmers markets you can help support your local community!

- Avoid excess food packaging/processing - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.

Potential impact: low

- When purchasing food, avoiding heavily processed and packaged food can help you reduce your carbon footprint. This is because these foods require a high level of energy to produce and to create the packaging. Additionally, by avoiding these foods you can help prevent the packaging from ending up in the landfill. Making snacks from scratch or buying them from the bulk section is good way to do this!

Other

- Purchase carbon offsets - S.M.A.R.T. goal:**_____.

Potential impact: low

- Purchasing carbon offsets can be an effective tool to further reduce your carbon footprint. While reducing your footprint through behaviours and lifestyle changes is critical, this can be a great way to go the last mile. For more information click [here](#).

ⁱ Kleingeld, A., van Mierlo, H., & Arends, L. (2011). The effect of goal setting on group performance: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 96*(6), 1289-1304.

Tubbs, M. E. (1986). Goal setting: A meta-analytic examination of the empirical evidence. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 71*(3), 474-483.

ⁱⁱ Wynes, S., & Nicholas, K. A. (2017). The climate mitigation gap: education and government recommendations miss the most effective individual actions. *Environmental Research Letters, 12*(7), 074024: 1-9.

Additional sources consulted throughout the process include:

Byerly, H., Balmford, A., Ferraro, P. J., Hammond Wagner, C., Palchak, E., Polasky, S., ... & Fisher, B. (2018). Nudging pro-environmental behavior: evidence and opportunities. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment, 16*(3), 159-168.

Lacroix, K. (2018). Comparing the relative mitigation potential of individual pro-environmental behaviors. *Journal of Cleaner Production, 195*, 1398-1407; and Nicholas, K. (2017). Calling individual climate leaders. *Association for Women in Science Magazine, 49*(03), 8-47.

ⁱⁱⁱ If a solution provided on this sheet is a subset of a larger solution provided by Wynes and Nicholas (2017), we accordingly assessed it as a low impact ranking. An example of this is “Turn off your electronic equipment when not in use” which is a subset of “Reduce energy consumption”. However, if a solution was directly comparable to a solution provided in Wynes and Nicholas (2017), we left it at the same ranking. An example of this is “Video or voice conference to minimize travel” which is directly comparable to “Avoid one transatlantic flight” from the paper.