

What is a Carbon Footprint?

Why does it Matter?

Whenever we use our phones, computers, switch on the lights & heat our homes we use **energy**. Most of the energy we use – electricity, gas and petrol- comes from **fossil fuels**, such as **coal and gas, that are mined from the ground**. When these are used to make energy, they release **greenhouse gases** that are harmful to our planet. The most common greenhouse gas is CO₂ though there are a set of other gases that also harm our environment.

A Carbon Footprint is a measure of the amount of greenhouse gases that we cause and is measured in units of tonnes of CO₂ (carbon dioxide).

Did You Know? The average carbon footprint of a person in the UK is **6.5 tonnes**. What's your family's? Try calculating at:
www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx

Why we Need to Reduce our Carbon Footprint...

Greenhouse gases trap heat into our planet's air making it hotter. This process is called **global warming**. But this doesn't mean we get nicer summers! When the air heats up it has more energy. When the air has more energy, **it causes more hurricanes, tornadoes and other extreme weather conditions**. It also causes **the loss of natural habitats for many species of animals and plants**, leading to loss of **biodiversity**. If we don't reduce the rate of global warming, our planet may never recover from this damage.

How you can Help?

Make a plan – follow our **EcoHero Actions Worksheet** and make the changes in your home – it's easy.