

Climate Action Plan CHECKLIST



Created by [The Green Spotlight](#)

You can use this four-page checklist as a tool for developing your own customized Climate Action Plan (CAP).

Print the checklist out so you can write on it. Later this year, we will make it available as an electronic form, where the checkboxes can be filled out on your computer.

Two checkboxes are provided for each action item:

1. **“To Do” items:** The first box is meant to be used for selecting items To Do. You could simply enter a checkmark or X for any items you plan To Do—or you could write numbers (1, 2, or 3) in those boxes to assign a phase/priority level to them.
2. **Completed items:** The second checkbox can be used to check off any action items that you are already doing or that are done/completed. (Some actions will be ongoing over time and can’t be fully completed. For those, you could write an O or a symbol of your choice in the box.)

Before you start selecting items To Do, you might want to first go through the list and check off any action items that you’ve already been doing or already completed.

We suggest picking at least two actions To Do within each of the three main categories. Any steps you take are important, but keep in mind that actions taken in the Social/Community and Systemic/Civic categories are likely to have the biggest impacts.

In addition to choosing a phase/priority level for the actions you’ve selected, you might also want to assign yourself specific deadlines to start or complete each of them.

Feel free to cross out any items that aren’t applicable to you, and to add actions that are not included on this checklist. This is *not* a comprehensive list of climate actions.

More detailed suggestions on how to implement some of these actions are provided in our short guide: [Climate Actions for All of Us](#).

Thank you for using and sharing this checklist and taking climate actions!

Personal/Household Actions

- Avoid buying new, unnecessary stuff. (For things you need, get them used or borrow/share them, when possible. You could join a local "[Buy Nothing](#)" group or look for a "Tool Library.")
- If you're still in the planning phase, you could opt to have a small family (few or no kids).
- Fly less (and especially avoid flying in small/private planes and jets). Also avoid traveling on large cruise ships.
- Drive less (walk, ride a bike or e-bike or scooter, take mass transit, telecommute, carpool).
- Avoid using diesel vehicles and over-sized vehicles.
- Choose fuel-efficient (electric, hybrid, or high MPG) and ideally compact vehicles.
- If your utility has a renewable energy program/option, sign up for that.
- Avoid burning wood, charcoal (or coal).
- If/when you can, switch from "natural gas" equipment (e.g., stoves and furnaces) to electric (e.g., [induction stovetops](#)/electric ovens, "heat pump" heating/AC systems).
- When buying new appliances or equipment, choose highly efficient Energy Star certified, electric (non-gas) products.
- Weatherize/insulate your home.
- Adopt [energy-saving](#) and [water-saving](#) habits, e.g., _____.
- Avoid using unnecessary AI tools, and don't buy cryptocurrency/"bitcoin."
- If/when you can, get solar panels (or a residential wind turbine, where suitable).
- Replace gas-powered lawn equipment with battery/electric equipment.
- Avoid using synthetic/chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
- Replace some or all of your grass lawn with native groundcovers or a garden. (Mow less.)
- "Leave the leaves" or use them as mulch on your garden. (Don't use a gas leaf blower.)
- Reduce food waste: Pick some specific methods from [here](#): _____.
- Shift to a more plant-based diet (eat less meat, especially beef).
- Buy (or grow) organic food.
- Avoid buying products that contain palm oil.
- Get reusable rather than disposable/single-use products (incl. paper & plastic products).
- Avoid buying plastic products whenever possible; look for alternatives.
- Avoid buying products that have excessive packaging waste (especially plastic packaging).
- When buying paper products, choose 100% recycled or [FSC-certified](#) products.
- When buying wood products, choose FSC-certified, reclaimed, or used products.
- Recycle anything that is recyclable where you live.
- Identify specific [skills, strengths, interests, and resources](#) you have that you can apply to climate efforts.

Social/Community Actions

- Follow or subscribe to at least one news outlet (or newsletter or podcast) that consistently covers climate news and information. (See the Resources section at the end of [this post](#).)
- Follow at least two [climate organizations](#) (on social media, etc.).
- Join or donate to at least one climate organization.
- Also support [youth and girls' education initiatives](#), [family planning initiatives](#), and [women's rights groups](#).

- Share climate-related information from organizations and media with your friends and social networks (online or off), at least once a month (better yet, once a week).
- Share The Green Spotlight's [Climate Actions post](#) or this checklist with others.
- Talk about your climate concerns with others.
- Tell others about some of the climate actions you've taken / are taking.

- Join a Climate Action/Support Group community online; and/or use a climate app. (See the Climate Action Resources section at the end of [this post](#).)
- Look into whether climate (or environmental/climate) groups exist at your workplace, school, place of worship, or in your neighborhood or town. Consider joining one.
- If none exists, start a new climate group in your community (e.g., a Climate Action/Support group, a book group, etc.). You could use this checklist to plan group actions.
- Consider ways to incorporate climate criteria and actions into [your job or into the company/organization](#) that you work for.
- Ask your workplace to require that all non-essential lights and equipment be turned off after hours, and to stop buying single-use/disposable items (e.g. utensils), if applicable.

- Ask owners/managers of local grocery stores and restaurants (and cafeterias) what they do with their excess food, and ask them to donate their extra produce or other items nearing their expiration dates to local food pantries (or to sell them to overstock stores) and to compost any rotten food.
- Ask your local restaurants (and your school or workplace cafeteria program, if applicable) to offer more non-meat options (and to use more local and organic ingredients).
- When hosting a group or party, serve plant-based (vegetarian and vegan) foods and/or homegrown, locally grown, and organic foods (or request these for potlucks). Send leftovers home with guests so the extra food isn't wasted.

Systemic/Civic Actions

- Vote in every election. Vote for climate champions and pro-democracy candidates.
- Inform your friends about campaigns, candidates, and ballot issues. Encourage people (incl. young people and fellow enviros) to [register to vote, to check their registration status and their state's latest voter ID requirements](#), and to vote.
- Support or volunteer with a campaign or a [voting/election group](#) that helps with voter registration or Get Out the Vote efforts.
- Volunteer as a [poll worker](#) or as a [poll monitor](#) or observer.

- Move your money out of the big banks, and into more [socially and environmentally responsible banks](#) (e.g., local credit unions or “fossil free” banks).
- If you have a 401K, pension, or your own stock-based investment accounts, find out if they include fossil fuel co. stocks. Switch to fossil-free, [socially responsible investment funds](#).

- Regularly participate in actions organized by the climate [organizations](#) you follow. Actions could be [online](#) (e.g. signing on to petitions and letters to your representatives or others) or offline (e.g., calling your representatives, or boycotting certain companies) or in-person and direct actions (e.g., meeting with your representatives; or sit-ins, marches, protests).
- Directly contact (call or email) your [federal](#), state, and local representatives and officials to demand that they urgently support, create, and enforce policies that treat climate destabilization as the emergency that it is, through executive and legislative actions. Include specific calls to action, e.g.: End fossil fuel subsidies; stop permitting new fossil fuel infrastructure (incl. “natural gas”/methane and petrochemical/plastics infrastructure); commit to [>95% renewable energy goals](#) and the rapid phase-out of fossil fuel use; and develop (and incentivize) public and private renewable energy projects.
- Urge your county to create a [Community Choice Energy](#) program.
- Urge your electric utility company to rapidly make the transition to clean, renewable energy (e.g., solar, wind, small non-dam hydro).

- Send messages and comments to media/news outlets (national & local), asking them to [report more on climate change](#) and climate solutions, and asking reporters to regularly interview climate scientists and experts who can accurately connect the dots between worsening “natural” disasters or extreme weather events and our destabilized, rapidly changing climate.
- Submit Letters to the Editor to your newspapers, about the climate crisis and solutions.

- Contact federal and state representatives to ask them to pass a law that requires supermarkets, restaurants, and [farms](#) to donate all unused food products and crops (or use them as animal feed or industrial inputs, have them converted into energy by a methane digester, or have them composted).
- If your city/county doesn't have a compost collection program (for food scraps and yard waste), ask them to start one.
- Ask your state or city governments and school district to institute policies requiring the provision of non-meat options in their cafeterias and through their food vendors.

(Systemic/Civic Actions, continued)

- Tell federal and state government officials and agencies to stop allowing clear-cutting/deforestation of forests, and to ban logging in the few remaining old-growth and mature forests.
- Ask state, local, and/or federal government officials to amend their purchasing policies to specify [FSC-certified](#) wood products and 100% recycled-content and/or FSC-certified paper products.
- Ask lumber and home improvement stores to sell FSC-certified lumber/wood products.
- Ask retailers (e.g., office supply and grocery stores) to offer and promote 100% recycled (or FSC-certified) paper products.

- Tell your [federal](#) and state representatives: to require and *enforce* the plugging of all abandoned wells and methane leaks; to support laws and programs that drastically reduce farmers' use of nitrous-oxide-producing fertilizers and pesticides (and support/incentivize the transition to organic farming); and to incentivize the phase-out of heavy-duty/commercial diesel trucks in favor of electric or low-emissions trucks.
- Ask your city or state to [phase out](#) (or ban) the sale and/or use of gas-powered lawn equipment, at least (or beginning) on public properties.

- Ask your state (and federal) representatives: to require that businesses turn off all non-essential lights and equipment after hours, to push for high-efficiency energy requirements in your state building code, and to regulate the energy use of cryptocurrency/bitcoin "mining" and AI products.
- Ask your federal representatives to increase the tax for [private jet travel](#), and to institute stronger regulations against cruise ships' air and water pollution.
- Ask your state and city representatives to replace vehicles in their fleets (including school buses) with electric or fuel-efficient/low-emissions vehicles.
- Ask your City Council or County officials to add more bike paths/lanes and bike racks throughout your area.

- Tell your federal, state, and local representatives to support zero-waste programs and procurement specifications within their agencies, with an emphasis on source reduction (including plastics and packaging reduction), food waste reduction, and a rapid phase-out of single-use, disposable products, particularly plastic products.

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