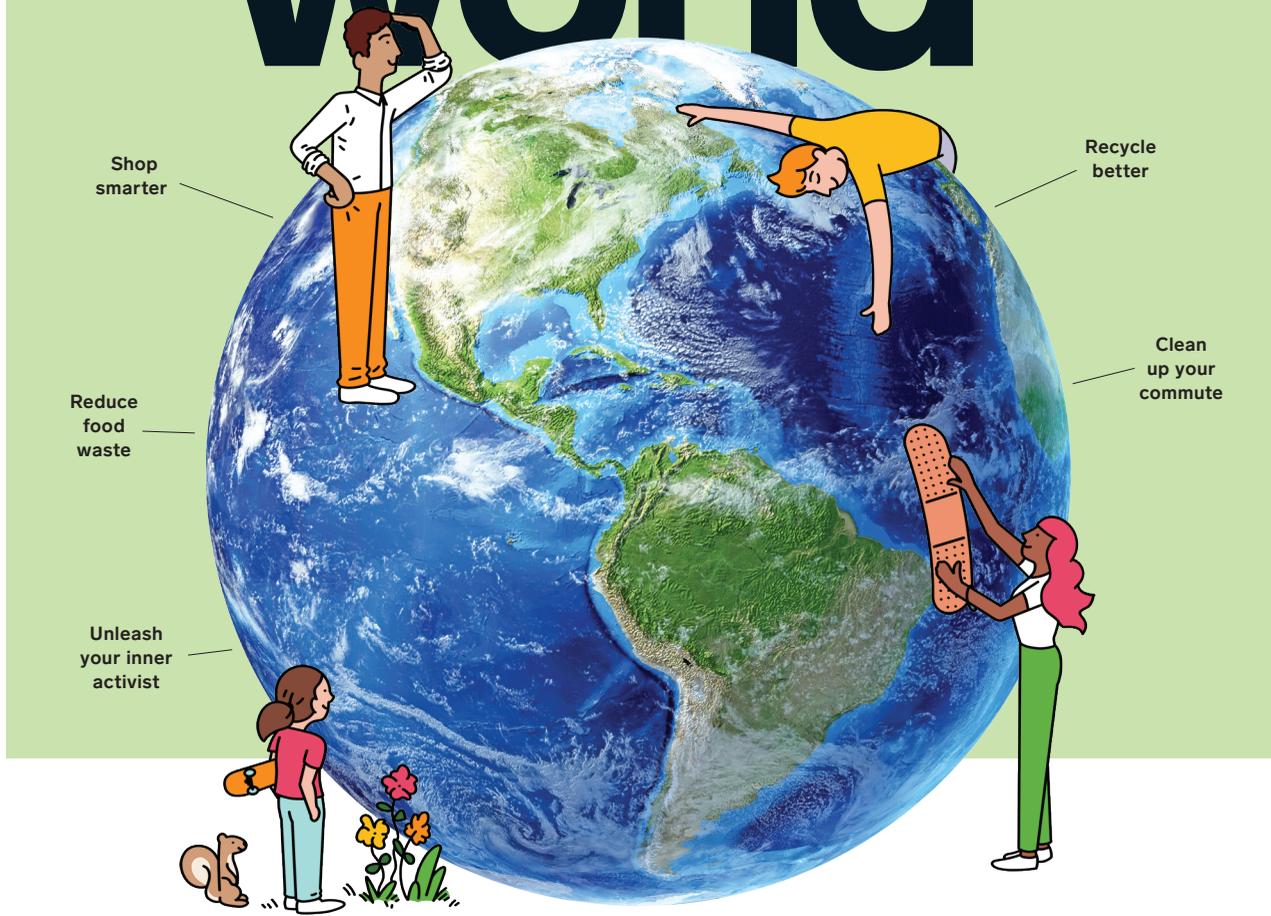


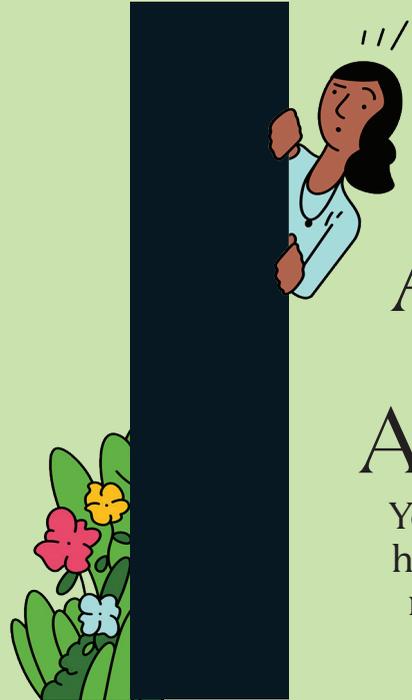
Save the world*



From the wilder weather to the long list of species at risk, there's no denying we have a climate change problem. You might think, "It's too big!" "It's too scary!" "It's too late!" Not true. Small changes lead to big changes, and the more people make them, the greater the impact. Here are some easy, actionable expert strategies to help you get started



GLOBE, ISTOCKPHOTO.



ARE YOU ECO-ANXIOUS?

You're not alone. Here's how to feel better while making things better

By SYDNEY LONEY

IT'S TOUGH. You've got deadlines to meet, bills to pay, appointments to book and healthy lunches to pack (and you forgot to call your mom back yesterday). There are enough angst-inducing things to keep your brain fully occupied from morning to night—the last thing you need is another source of stress. But you may already be affected by one without realizing it: a vague, dark, niggling worry about the state of the planet. It's called eco-anxiety, and it's a thing.

The threat of climate change was once like the distant rumble of thunder on a sunny afternoon. But now those bright skies are hazy with smog and wildfire smoke. (Tuning in to the Weather Network these days is like watching a horror movie in which the killer is suddenly *inside the house*.) In 2017, the American Psychological Association reported that climate change is affecting our mental health and causing “a number of different emotions, including fear, anger, powerlessness and exhaustion.” And that, says Ashlee Cunsolo, a social science professor at Memorial University, is eco-anxiety.

“Eco-anxiety is anxiety or stress specifically related to changes in the environment,” Cunsolo says. “People have trouble pinpointing a specific trigger or one thing to work on to relieve it—it's huge. It's climate change writ large, so it's an anxiety without end.”

Eco-anxiety affects us all

Cunsolo first saw the impact of eco-anxiety while working in Labrador with Inuit who have witnessed and mourned the alarming effects of our warming planet for years. But, Cunsolo says, it's only recently that experts have started to pay attention to the mental effects of climate change. “It can be disabling,” she says, “and it can affect people of all ages in all countries.”

Eco-anxiety can be hard to talk about, Cunsolo says, because we don't have words in our language to adequately express feelings of grief related to climate change. But there is power in

talking about it. “People tell me that they feel alone and didn't know others felt the same way,” she says. “We only grieve what we love, and we feel this anxiety because we care. Coming together and talking about it is a huge step, and it can spark change.”

Harness your anxiety for good

Nancy Prober, a Vancouver psychologist, sees eco-anxiety as a normal response to a real threat and says worry about climate change can be “a precursor to action,” motivating us to make changes.

True, climate change is not a small problem, Prober says. But you can reduce your impact and mitigate future damage, which is also the best way to “treat” eco-anxiety. “There is hope in action,” she says, “and it gives our anxious energy a place to go.”

First, identify the actions you can take. “Focus on your interests,” Prober says. If you like to campaign, join an advocacy group. If you like to grow things, preserve some of your bounty so that you rely less on industrial agriculture. If you're worried about plastic waste, decrease what goes to the landfill. “There are lots of options, which means there are lots of opportunities.”

Prober recommends breaking down your planet-protecting goals, and taking one step at a time. And talk to someone if you continue to feel overwhelmed. “It's okay to feel anxious about climate change,” she says. “By recognizing our anxiety about the future, we can take steps to make that future less likely.”



[PRO TIPS]

Shop smarter

Environmental journalist Candice Batista shares how she shops sustainably—and how she gets reluctant family members on board

How did you become so passionate about reducing waste? I've always been an environmentalist. I grew up in a home where nothing was wasted, and I learned early on about the importance of being a steward of the earth.

What was the first thing you changed about your own shopping habits? I started in my kitchen with plastic bags when I realized just how wasteful they are. (You bag your bananas, apples and oranges, bring them home, take them out and then toss the bags in the garbage—those bags have about an eight-minute lifespan, and the thin ones can't be recycled. That was a real aha moment for me, and now I never use them.)

What's the biggest misconception people have about reducing waste? People think going green is expensive, but making your own cleaning products saves a lot of money. So does switching paper napkins for cloth napkins. Same goes for paper towels—you can save more than \$400 a year with reusable cloths. (Paper towels are normally made with paper that comes from old-growth forests.) I keep at least a dozen cloths in key areas of my home that I can access easily.

Do you have any strategies for getting reluctant family members on board? People don't want to be told their actions are bad. I've learned that telling people why I'm doing something comes across much better than telling them they should be doing something. I might say something like, “I don't use paper towels because I'm worried about our forests. And if I do use them, I try to find ones that are made from post-recycled consumer materials.” Another great way is to gift someone a green product, like beeswax wrap to use in place of plastic wrap. You could say something like, “Did you see the news about the whale with all that plastic in its belly? I'm trying these new beeswax wraps instead, and I thought you might like to try them too.” —Sydney Loney

How does Candice Batista get her favourite shops involved?

“Speak up. Tell the store owner you'd like to bring your own bags and containers. Tell them why. Email them; reach out on social media. Retailers want to please customers, and I've found that just asking goes a long way. I've taken Mason jars to the deli section and asked them to weigh and fill them—and they do it. It's a great opportunity for me to explain why I'm doing it and ask if it's something they'd consider doing more of.”



Everyday eco-swaps



By now, you probably have a stash of reusable totes, water bottles and coffee mugs. Here's a list of bonus waste-reducing swaps to help you add more green to your routine

Instead of:
A plastic toothbrush



Try: A bamboo toothbrush
Organic and USDA Certified Biobased, they can be tossed in your compost (sans bristles). \$36/pack of 4, brushwithbamboo.com.

Instead of:
Bagged tea



Try: Pluck loose leaf
Sold in recyclable bags, the Southbrook Berry Blend amps up the “reusing” ante with grape skins from Niagara vineyards. \$8, pluckteas.com.

Instead of:
Zip-top bags



Try: Stasher bags
Made from sturdy silicone, Stasher bags are reusable and microwave-, freezer- and dishwasher-safe. From \$12, mec.ca.

Instead of:
Disposable razors



Try: A safety razor
With proper TLC, it can last a lifetime, and companies like Albatross Designs offer a blade return program. \$40, albatrossdesigns.it.

Instead of:
Paper towels



Try: A sponge cloth
These cotton and cellulose cloths leave a streak-free finish, can be tossed in your dishwasher and are fully biodegradable. \$6, tenandco.ca.

Instead of:
Menstrual pads



Try: Knix Leakproof Underwear
They are available in a variety of cuts and colours, and hold two tampons' worth of liquid. \$30, knix.ca.

Instead of:
Nylon dental floss



Try: Compostable dental floss KMH Touches Pure Silk Dental Floss breaks down in 45 days and comes in a refillable glass container. \$12, well.ca.

TEXT: ALEXANDRA WARD, SHOPPING PHOTO: CARMEN CHEUNG





Seal the deal

How do you shop for quality products that won't take a toll on the planet? Look for third-party certifications (a.k.a. seal programs), and you'll know you're headed in the right direction



Leaping Bunny
To earn this certification, a company must prove that it (and its ingredient suppliers) doesn't take part in animal testing.



EWG Verified
Products that wear this badge have fully transparent ingredient lists and top-notch manufacturing practices, and don't contain chemicals linked to health concerns.



Certified Vegan
If you like your purchases to be free of animal products, animal by-products and animal testing, look no further than this trademark.



Marine Stewardship Council
This seal celebrates fisheries that have a minimal environmental impact on the ocean and fish with sustainable methods.



Fair for Life
This six-step certification process ensures fair-trade practices are present, course corrected when necessary and constantly monitored.



Green Seal
Covering more than 500 product categories, this seal promotes products that are on the cutting edge of sustainability and meet strict performance criteria.



USDA
This logo can appear on anything from a toothbrush to an industrial lubricant and indicates that the product is made from biodegradable, renewable resources, such as bamboo.

Go, go, go green!

How to travel for the good of the planet (not to mention your wallet, your time and your sanity)

By SARAH STEINBERG

You've stopped idling, keep your tires inflated and are getting regular engine tune-ups—three things that can help reduce fuel consumption and cut down on carbon emissions. But did you know that choosing an alternative to your gas-powered car comes with many other major benefits, besides the whole “saving the earth” thing?

ENERGY TO BURN

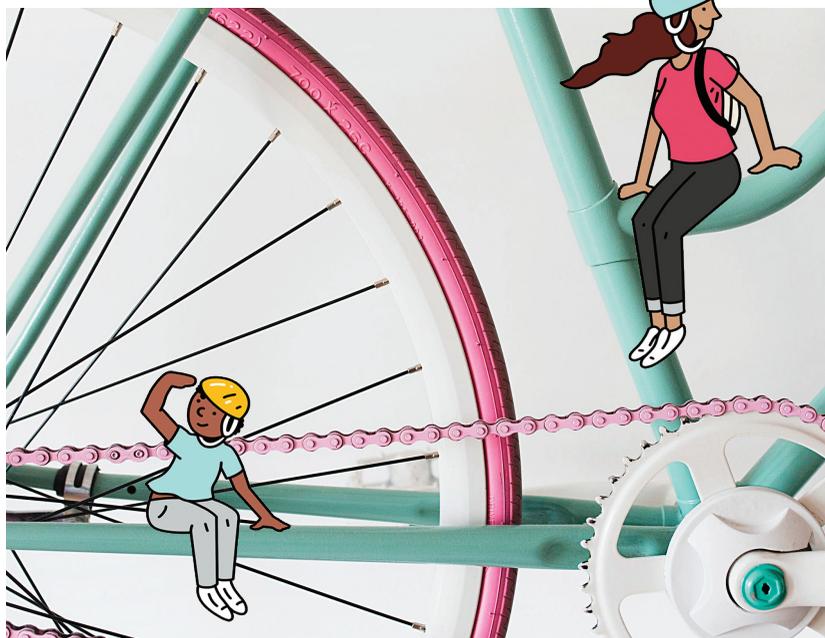
Gideon Forman, a climate change and transportation policy analyst at the David Suzuki Foundation, knows ditching the car altogether simply isn't realistic for everyone. In that case, he suggests purchasing an eco-friendly electric vehicle, which saves time and hassle in maintenance. “There's just not a lot to break down on them,” says Forman. “The joke is that the only thing you ever need to change is the windshield wipers.”

COMMUTE CLEAN FOR THE GREEN

Car sharing is an excellent (and highly sociable!) way to reduce your carbon footprint. For even lower emissions and more cost savings, taking public transit and biking are the way to go. Forman says the average cost to own a compact car in Canada is about \$8,600 a year, including depreciation, which means your annual savings could be in the thousands.

FUEL YOUR MIND

Besides being an inexpensive way to travel and providing much-needed exercise, active transit—like walking or biking—is good for the mind too. In fact, a 2017 study from McGill University found that people who bike to the office are more likely to get to work on time, feeling energized. Research also shows that walking is the most stress-free way to commute.



SEAL THE DEAL TEXT, ALEXANDRA WARD. BIKE, STOCKSY PHOTO.



Five recycling mistakes you make every day



While there are no national standards around recycling (a blue-bin faux pas in Montreal might be okey-dokey in Vancouver), here's how to avoid the most common recycling blunders

1. You forgot to rinse When you neglect to wash out a peanut butter tub or crush a greasy pizza box with pepperoni still clinging to the lid into the recycling bin, it gets redirected to a landfill. If any of those contents spread, the rest of your recyclables are also considered contaminated, and all your good recycling intentions were for nothing.

2. You thought there was a safety net at the other end Imagine a recycling centre with “hundreds of thousands of tons a day being thrown onto a conveyor belt going probably 10 kilometres an hour.” That's how Jo-Anne St. Godard, executive director of the Recycling Council of Ontario, describes a big-city recycling facility. The chances that somebody has time to grab your soiled pizza box and rip off just the unsullied parts? Slim to none.



DYK? It takes 500 years for the average single-use plastic water bottle to break down.

3. You haven't read the fine print That recycling symbol with the three arrows doesn't always mean an item can go in the blue bin. Matt Keliher, general manager of waste services for the City of Toronto, says sometimes it just indicates the packaging is made from recycled content.

4. Your data is outdated “People still don't know what can be recycled, and that stuff ends up in the garbage,” Keliher says. Recycling technology has changed, and some things (like sandwich bags) are now widely accepted. Also, textiles should never go in the trash—take them to the nearest H&M store, and they'll recycle them for you!

5. Your purchases don't come in recyclable packaging To divert waste from landfills, shop to maximize the number of items coming into your home that can go back out via the blue box. “You're sending a signal back to producers,” says St. Godard. “You're voting with your wallet.” —Sarah Steinberg



You can recycle these!

These items won't get picked up curbside, but they can still be recycled



Batteries and old cellphones
According to not-for-profit Call2Recycle Canada, 90 percent of Canadians live within 15 kilometres of one of their drop-off zones.



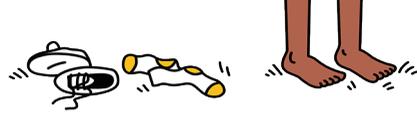
Eyeglasses
The Canadian Lions Eyeglass Recycling Centre collects used eyeglasses and hearing aids.



Cork
ReCork, a bottle cork recycling program, runs about 3,000 drop-off locations across Canada and the U.S.



Tires
Most provinces have programs that divert your old wheels and reuse the materials for playground resurfacing, athletic tracks and flooring. (In fact, when you buy a set of new tires, you pay a one-time fee that helps these programs run.)



The problem with plastic (and how to use less of it)

By SUSAN NERBERG

BY THE YEAR 2050, there will be more plastic in the oceans than fish. That's because every year, we manage to funnel an estimated eight million tons of petrochemical waste in the shape of shopping bags, water bottles, food wrappers and more into our waterways. Bits of plastic have been found in the deepest ocean trenches and in both polar regions. But the offending polymer is also hiding in products we don't immediately think of as plastic. "Clothing made of synthetic fibres, such as polyester, nylon and polypropylene, is actually made of plastic," says Vito Buonsante, plastics program manager for Environmental Defence in Toronto.

Other places plastics lurk include paper coffee cups, which are lined with polymer to withstand liquids; chewing gum; microbeads in cosmetics; tea bags; and slow-release fertilizer capsules. "Even disposable diapers and sanitary pads, which are in contact with skin, are made of plastic and contain chemicals that could be toxic," says Buonsante, adding that they pose a double threat when they end up in landfills after use.

Why plastic is bad

When plastic was invented in the early 20th century, it was hailed as a miracle material: waterproof, shatter-resistant

and durable. In fact, it's so durable that extraterrestrials making a stopover here 1,000 years from now may read it as archaeological evidence of our fossil-fuelled era. "The problem with plastic is that it doesn't biodegrade," says Buonsante. In the oceans, it kills whales, turtles, seabirds and other wildlife that mistake plastic bags and bottles for food, and plastic debris drowns animals that get entangled. Depending on the type of plastic, it will break into smaller pieces that can leach chemicals into the ground and water. And the microbeads and microfibres shed from synthetic clothing are absorbed by the lowest rungs in the food chain, eventually working their way upward, from krill to molluscs to fish to humans.

How to wean yourself off plastic

A reduction in plastic use and pollution will only come when its production is limited or stopped. That, argue organizations like Environmental Defence and Ecojustice (Canada's largest environmental law charity) will only happen when governments enact and enforce laws that

hold corporations accountable for the plastic pollution they produce.

"Stopping plastic pollution is important for protecting the environment, wildlife and human health, and we all have a part to play," says James Gunvaldsen Klaassen, a lawyer at Ecojustice. "Individual actions matter, but if we want real, lasting change, we also need to push for laws and policies that will make that happen." Buonsante agrees. "As consumers, we buy the pop or water that's inside the plastic bottle, not the bottle itself, so the company that made the bottle should be responsible for ensuring it doesn't end up in the environment," he says. (That's why his organization is campaigning for a plastic-bottle deposit system in Ontario.)

In the meantime, individuals can reduce or refuse plastics, especially single-use packaging. "About 40 percent of the plastics made today are for disposable products," says Buonsante. The first step to reducing plastic pollution is to cut single-use plastics, such as shopping and produce bags, and disposable bottles and coffee cups. Bring your own cloth bags for groceries and produce, keep a reusable mug and bottle with you, and shop at bulk and zero-waste stores if they exist in your community. "Switch back to bar soaps," adds Buonsante. "They're cheaper than liquid soap in plastic containers, and they last longer. And powdered laundry detergent works as well as its liquid counterpart, but it's packaged in paper boxes."

Meanwhile, Klaassen advocates for cutting down on how much we buy and consume, and says it can make a big difference. "Challenge your friends to a 30-day zero-waste period," he says. "It's a great way to take action yourself while encouraging others to do the same."

“About 40 percent of the plastics made today are for disposable products.”



[PRO TIPS]

Reduce food waste

More than half of the food produced in Canada goes to waste. Here are six ways to ensure your groceries end up in your stomach, not in the garbage, according to the Queen of Green, Lindsay Coulter (a.k.a. the community engagement specialist at the David Suzuki Foundation)

- ▶ In your fridge, separate fruits and veggies that emit ethylene, a gas that stimulates ripening, from those that don't. In one crisper drawer, keep ethylene-emitting apples, figs, apricots, cantaloupes and honeydew melons. Fruits and veggies like broccoli, brussels sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, cucumbers, peppers and watermelon go in the other crisper.
- ▶ Rather than throwing away overly ripe items, shred, chop and freeze them. The same goes for leftover cooked rice and pasta—they freeze well and are handy for making soups.
- ▶ Grab a bin and slap a sticker on it that reads "Eat me first." Place it so it's the first thing you see when you open the fridge, and put shrivelled peppers, softening broccoli and expired cheese in it. If you don't know what to do with those items, Google them together for recipes and you'll discover new dishes.
- ▶ Best-before dates are more of a suggestion than a rule. Yogurt, for instance, is generally good for 10 days past its date, which has more to do with texture, presentation, nutritional value and flavour.
- ▶ Choose the milk cartons from the front row on the dairy shelf, not the back. (If we all pick from the front row, stores will throw away fewer items as a result.) The same goes for the single banana—pick it, and other brown or overripe fruit, and make banana bread or pineapple turnovers, or cut it up and freeze for smoothies. (Often, these fruits and veggies are cheaper!)
- ▶ Don't wash produce until you're going to use it. Wrappings and moisture encourage decomposition. —Susan Nerberg

ECO APP TEXT, STACY LEE KONG; BREAD, STOCKSY PHOTO

Our favourite eco-apps

If you want to...
reduce food waste



Try: **Friggely**

This app sends you a notification when your groceries are about to expire so you can use them first. It even recommends recipes to make your fridge cleanout easier.

If you want to...
track your carbon footprint



Try: **Oroeco**

If you want to know how every single aspect of your life—from how you heat your home to how you spend your free time—impacts the environment, this app will tell you. It tracks your spending to calculate your carbon footprint and suggests ways you can reduce it.

If you want to...
up your recycling game



Try: **Recycle Coach**

Not sure what's recyclable in your municipality? Or maybe you tend to forget recycling day entirely? This app will remind you to take out your blue box the day before, and you can search by material to make sure you're including the right stuff.

If you want to...
change your habits



Try: **Joulebug**

This app turns sustainability into a game, buzzing every time you do something good for the planet. It also suggests easy changes, like turning the lights off when you leave a room, and reveals the impact of each action.

If you want to...
save water



Try: **Fill It Forward**

Tell this app whenever you opt for a reusable cup, mug or bottle, and it'll tell you how much pollution you've prevented. It also helps you track your hydration and funds water-based projects around the world.

If you want to...
shop smarter



Try: **Ethical Barcode**

Scan product barcodes as you shop to see how each item rates in terms of environmental friendliness, animal testing, labour issues and LGBTQ rights.



[PRO TIPS]

Unleash your inner activist



The magnitude of climate change can feel discouraging, but if we all take inspiration from Swedish teen activist Greta Thunberg and raise our voices, we can take a step toward improving the health of our

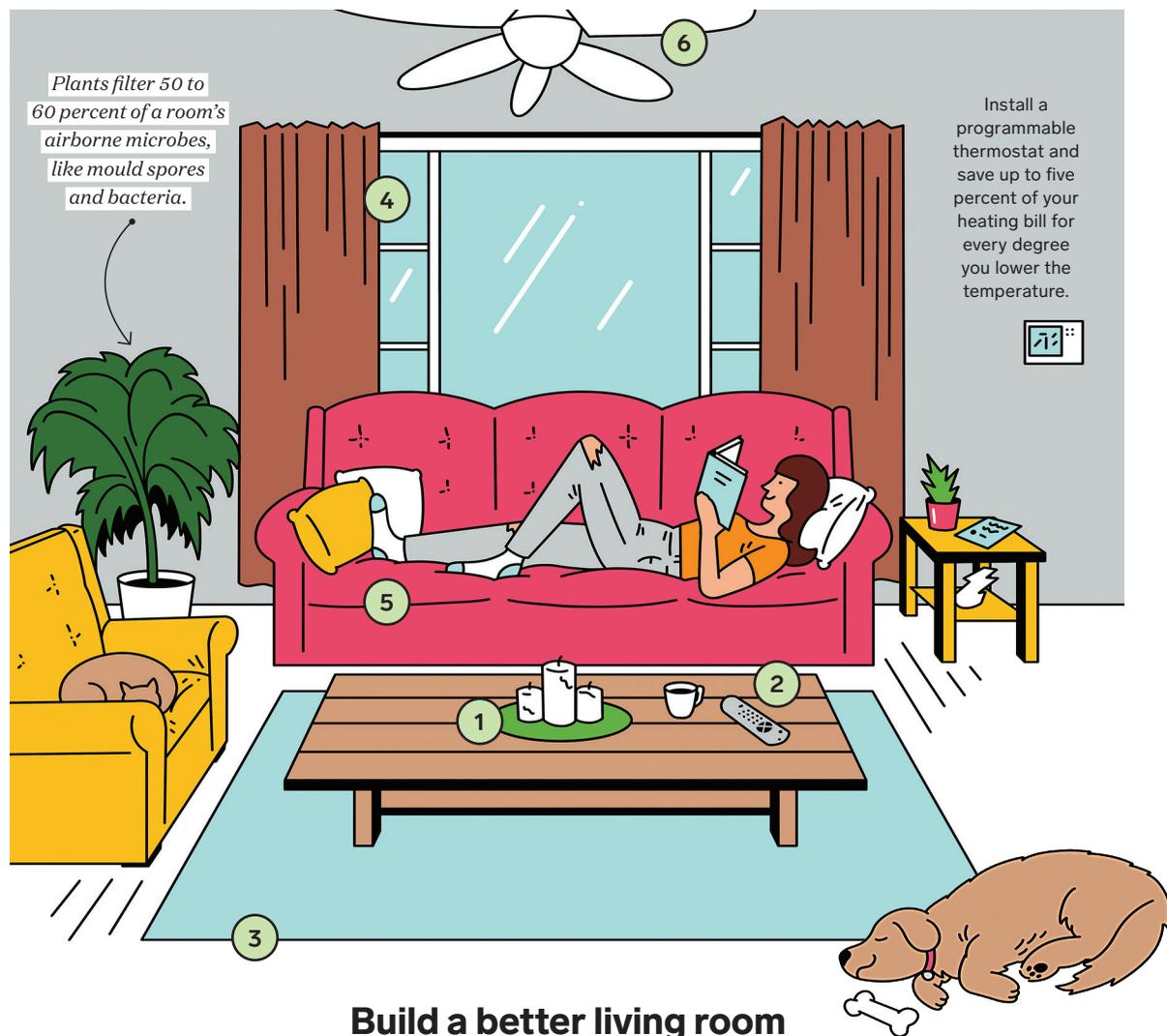
planet. "At Ecojustice, we use the power of the law to combat these complex problems," says James Gunvaldsen Klaassen, a lawyer at Ecojustice. But we need strong laws that protect the environment

in the first place. "That's why it's so important to let politicians know what kind of planet you want to see," he urges. "Send letters or make calls to your municipal, provincial and federal representatives, and

vote for candidates who make the environment a priority." In addition to voicing your concerns, Lindsay Coulter of the David Suzuki Foundation suggests smaller, local actions that together

can affect bigger change. Create a clean-street program in your community, gather neighbours to plant bee-friendly flowers and sign up for a shoreline or river cleanup. You can also join a group that

works with your city or province to encourage climate action or one that connects other environmental changemakers (like GoodWork.ca). It takes a village to protect the planet. —Susan Nerberg



Plants filter 50 to 60 percent of a room's airborne microbes, like mould spores and bacteria.

Install a programmable thermostat and save up to five percent of your heating bill for every degree you lower the temperature.

Build a better living room

Six surprisingly easy ways to make your home more eco-friendly

By STACY LEE KONG

- 1 Smell better**
Skip the scented candles. "Most commercially produced candles contain substances that, when burned, emit small amounts of toxins, such as acetone, benzene, lead and mercury, polluting the air in your home," says Lindsay Coulter of the David Suzuki Foundation. Instead, opt for beeswax or soy wax candles.
- 2 Ditch e-waste**
It's time to deal with your old DVD player or those extra remotes that are just lying around. "A lot of e-waste is sent to landfills when it needs to be properly disposed of," Coulter says. Use Earth 911 or Recycle My Cell to find an e-waste drop-off location close to home.
- 3 Add texture**
"Heat can be lost through floors, especially if you have wood flooring with gaps," Coulter says. Add a layer of warmth with a new rug, but look for options made of natural fibres (like jute, seagrass, sisal, organic wool and cotton) that won't off-gas harmful VOCs.
- 4 Save energy**
"Canada is one of the top energy consumers in the world," Coulter says. "By becoming more energy efficient, you'll pollute less and save money." One easy fix? Hanging heavy curtains to prevent drafts. And unplug computers and appliances, all of which suck energy from outlets even when they're shut off.
- 5 Go antiques**
Antiquing is in, and it's a good thing. Buying vintage helps avoid the environmental costs of manufacturing and shipping. If you must buy new, look for furnishings made of certified sustainable wood or reclaimed materials, or with a Cradle to Cradle (C2C) designation, which means they can be taken apart and recycled.
- 6 Flip on a fan**
Central air conditioners use far more electricity than ceiling fans. Just make sure your fan is rotating counter-clockwise—it helps air circulate downward, which will keep things cooler. If your fan comes with a light fixture, use an LED bulb—just one saves 400 pounds of greenhouse gases.



Confessions of an eco-failure

By LEAH RUMACK

THE EARTH IS GOING TO HELL, and it's pretty much all my fault. I've paved the planet with a flaming pile of garbage dripping with last-season's Zara clothes, the desiccated carcasses of thousands of methane-producing, grass-gobbling cows and a lifetime's worth of newspapers and magazines that were supposedly recycled (but, honestly, were they?). I don't compost. I crank the air-con (I've been having hot flashes since I was seven). And sometimes I even take plastic bags at the grocery store (I know, I know).

My name is Leah, and I'm an eco-failure. I used to just be a person—a painfully average person who lives in a big city, eats animals and drives a hatchback on the weekends. But as the alarm over climate change grows louder, even a lazy polluter like me has started to wonder if I should be doing things differently.

I care about the planet—I do!—I mean, in the way I care about anything I think is nice but don't feel I ultimately have any control over. I've been recycling since they started nattering on about the ozone layer in the late '80s, but I've never truly believed anything an individual person does can make a significant difference in our slow march to an inevitable apocalyptic future. So, while I half-heartedly buy eco-cleaners and reuse those contraband plastic bags for scooping cat litter, I've never made a real effort to live in any sort of sustainable way.

But now I'm actually getting scared about the world my eight-year-old kid is going to grow up in—if he doesn't get washed away by rising ocean levels first. And all of those eco- and carbon footprint calculators (I did one that told me we'd need 4.7 Earths if everybody lived like me) say the cumulative effect of millions of people making small changes actually does make a difference. So what will I, Planet Destroyer, do?

I've decided to take stock. I already don't use water bottles or straws. I rarely fly, and I produced only one resource-gobbling small human. I use the library, I usually bike or take public transit, and I turn down the heat whenever I leave the house, so I'm doing an okay job in all of those potentially environment-damaging departments, even if it's more by accident than by design. Several of my friends have become late-in-life vegetarians due to climate concerns, but although I'm careful about what I eat, I'm not there yet.

Instead, I hereby vow to keep the car better maintained. And to buy compostable litter and garbage bags for the endless cat-poop scooping. And I'll invest in more sustainable food storage containers instead of occasionally—okay, sue me!—still using zip-top bags. It's baby steps, and I'm well aware of it, but I have to start somewhere. And you never know, the next generation may have even more ideas on how to save the planet. The other day, my kid talked me into getting him a cone instead of a cup for his ice cream: "A cone is better for the earth because you eat the container!" I know he just wants the extra sugar fix, but, hey, I'll take it. You're welcome, Earth. **C**

The changes you make...

Drive calmly and lower your fuel consumption by **33%** (hard acceleration and braking wastes fuel).

76%
How much you can reduce emissions if you take public transit.

Save **500 pounds** of carbon dioxide every year by running your washing machine just twice a week on a cold wash.

Recycle one glass bottle and save enough energy to run a 100-watt bulb for **four hours**.

Having Meatless Monday every week for one year reduces your carbon footprint by **416 pounds**.

7%
How much you can increase the fuel efficiency of your car by maintaining it properly and keeping the tires inflated.

...do make a difference!