

HOW TO MEASURE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

As stated in our [Understanding Your Carbon Footprint guide](#), at the heart of the decarbonisation effort to combat climate change is the need to measure and track greenhouse gas emissions in an efficient way.

Calculating your business's carbon footprint is an important step towards understanding your business's contribution to global warming. By doing so, you will then be able to identify ways in which you can reduce it.

On top of this, consumers are more inclined towards a business that is transparent about its environmental impacts. A 2019 YouGov study of more than 9,000 consumers, found that a majority of consumers (66%) said that they would feel more positive about companies that can demonstrate they are making efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of their products.

But how can you measure your carbon footprint?

HOW TO MEASURE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Identify

Burning fossil fuels is the main source of human-produced carbon dioxide emissions. Think about how your business uses electricity and fuel. For example; powering your office / shop / premises, the running of vehicles, servers being used to host your website / app, etc.

Depending on the products or services your produce, what raw materials are used? By what process are these materials extracted, transported, etc.?

Collect Data

Once you've thought about all the key places your business uses energy, you need to quantify the amount of energy that was used. So, collect any electricity and gas bills, add up the miles your team and products have travelled (along with the modes of transport) and work out the total quantities and weights of products produced, broken down by key component materials. Organise all this information in a spreadsheet and make sure to carefully note the units of quantities.

Calculate

Now it's time to take all the data you've collected and convert it into carbon emissions. While a specialist might be required if you're looking for the most detailed breakdown, ballpark figures will usually be able to be understood by you and your team in house.

In the UK, you should use the [Government conversion factors for company reporting of greenhouse gas emissions](#).

For those who aren't comfortable with spreadsheets and data conversions there are thankfully many different online calculators available that can assist you here. More information on these can be found further on in this guide.

Opportunities

Once you have calculated your business's carbon footprint, look into the data and results to understand where there are opportunities for you to make savings and positive changes.

This will necessarily be unique to your business and how it's run but almost all businesses will be able to make a change in some way to help them reduce their carbon emissions in some way.

Offset

Some reductions aren't possible, for reasons of cost, practicality and more. While we hope these barriers will be removed for you and your business eventually, in the meantime one way in which you can continue to work towards net zero emissions is via offsets.

There are a variety of options available to businesses and individuals. We recommend [Ecologi!](#)

Repeat

The process that has been undertaken is a positive one, and one you should be proud of! However, this is a process that bears repeating on a regular basis to keep in line with changes that affect your company in the long term.

Opportunities that weren't available today may well be tomorrow.

We recommend measuring your carbon footprint as a business annually, or following any significant changes within your business.

It is also important to bear in mind the carbon footprint of suppliers, etc. when making decisions for your business moving forward.

CARBON FOOTPRINT CALCULATORS

While there are many options available for carbon footprint calculators online, it is important to ensure that you are using the right kind of calculator. Specifically, is the calculator designed for an individual or for a business?

We recommend [The Carbon Trust's SME Carbon Footprint Calculator](#) for small businesses.

The [carbonfootprint.com](#) website also helpfully provides two different calculators, one for personal use and one for businesses.

USEFUL LINKS

- Understanding Your Carbon Footprint:
<https://thebetterbusiness.network/app/uploads/2022/01/Understanding-Your-Carbon-Footprint.pdf>
- Understanding Scope 1, 2 and 3 Emissions:
<https://thebetterbusiness.network/app/uploads/2022/01/Understanding-Scope-1-2-and-3-Emissions.pdf>
- Government Conversion Factors For Company Reporting Of Greenhouse Gas Emissions:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-conversion-factors-for-company-reporting>
- The Carbon Trust - SME Carbon Footprint Calculator:
<https://www.carbontrust.com/resources/sme-carbon-footprint-calculator>
- Carbonfootprint.com Calculators: <https://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator1.html>
- Ecologi: <https://ecologi.com/>

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