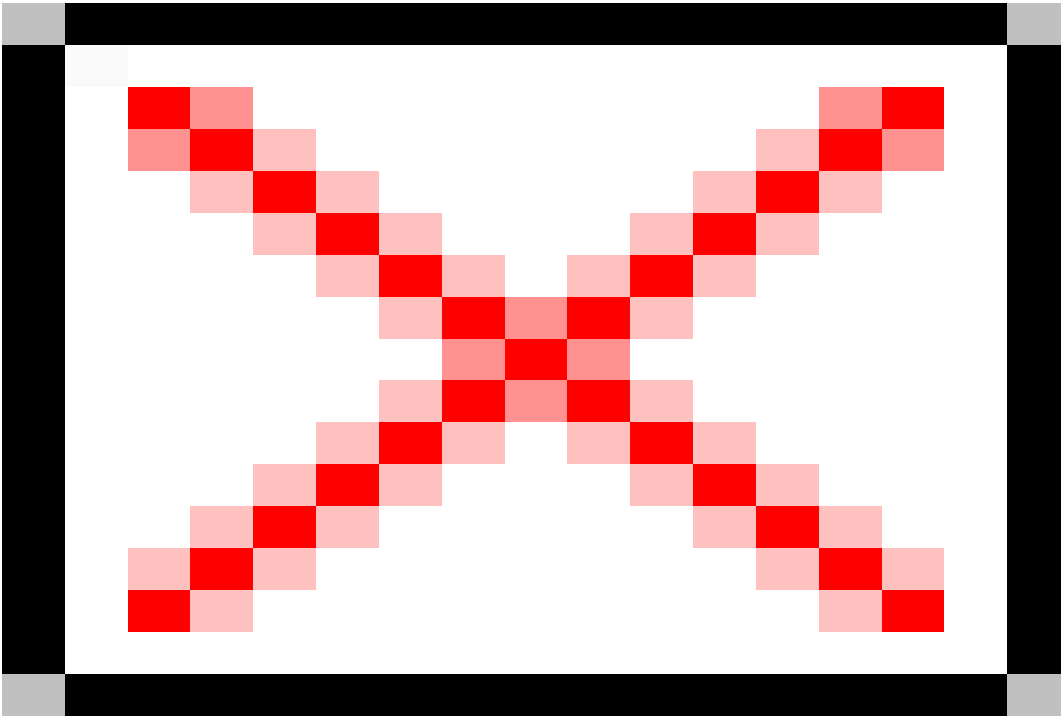




Environment - how can you help protect it?



Our planet is changing. We need to help it change for the better and we're asking for your help to do that! There are a lot of things that affect our planet in a bad way but the good news is that everyone can help to reduce them and do their bit for the environment.

Here's a list of important topics and with them a list of big ways that you can help. So read on and start protecting the environment today.

[Electricity \(Energy\)](#)

[Pollution](#)

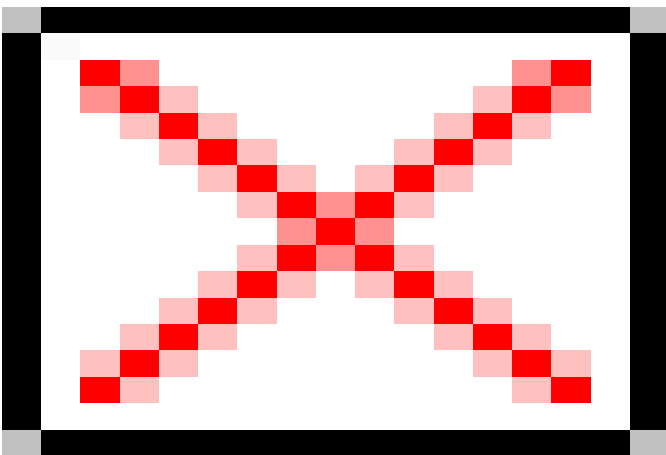
[Food](#)

[Water](#)

[Rubbish](#)

[Rainforests \(deforestation\)](#)

Electricity



Energy is everywhere. We use energy to move the mouse for a computer, to jump and shout and walk and run. It takes energy to power a light bulb, and the light that the bulb gives off is also a form of energy called radiant energy. Radiant energy from the sun enables vegetables, plants, trees and us to live and grow! Other forms of energy include heat, chemical energy, kinetic (motion) energy, gravitational energy and nuclear power.

Electricity is a form of energy and this is what powers the TV, the kettle, dishwasher, hairdryer, toaster, remote control, mobile phone, fridge, stereo, electric toothbrush, mp3 player and more!

Detectives

- Can you guess how many things need electricity in your house? Take a guess, then go on a detective mission and write down all the things you find. Set up a competition in your family and see w

ho's guess is the closest!

Our growing need for energy is one of the problems facing the world today, because producing electricity also produces our next topic -

[pollution](#)

. We also have some cool downloads, here's two -

[Energy](#)

and

[Alternative Energy](#)

.

How to help

When you're using electricity think about where it comes from and how you can use less to take the strain off of the environment - here are some simple ways to make a big difference:

-

On or Off?

Leaving televisions, stereos and computers on standby with the little red light showing still uses up electricity, even though they might look like they're turned off. To stop this you can turn them off at the wall. Simple!

-

Lights out!

Turning lights off when you're not in the room (make sure no-one else is too!) can save a lot of energy.

-

Putting the kettle on

Britons drink an amazing 60.2 billion cups of tea a day according to The Tea Council. That's a lot of tea, and a lot of electricity too! That's why it's important to only boil as much water as you need in your kettle. It's best to boil enough water for one cup, not three or five - plus you won't have to wait as long, which is a bonus!

-

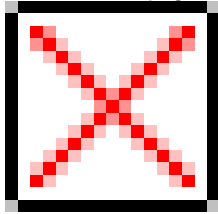
Brrrr

The fridge is an important part of the kitchen, it keeps food fresh, cool and healthy! But it takes a lot of energy to keep cool, so help it by not leaving the fridge door open or putting hot things inside.

-

Shopping

Many products are now helping you to reduce your energy use and your parents' energy bills! Check new products for their efficiency grade and rating and keep an eye out for the Energy Efficiency



Recommended logo.

Harness the sun's energy

- An increasing number of people are fitting solar panels to their houses. Photovoltaic (PV) solar panels create electricity from sunlight, which can then be used to power their homes. Solar heating panels make hot water, reducing the need for electricity or gas to heat water or run the central heating system.

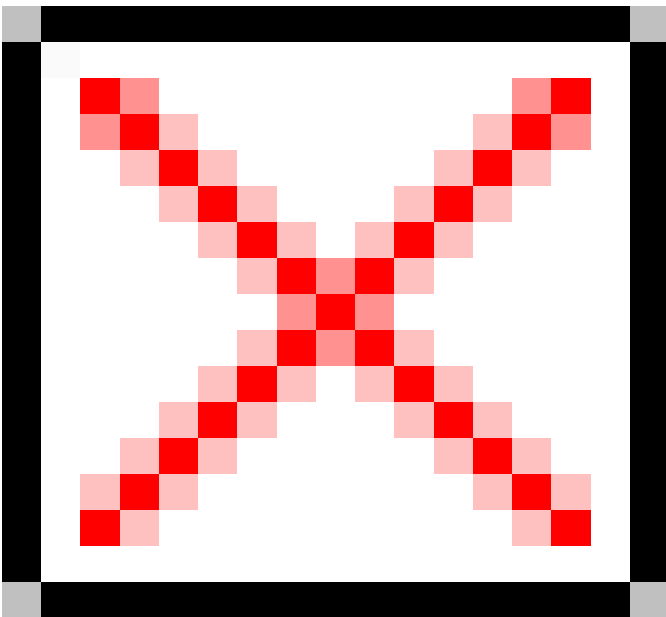
Helpful websites -

[Energy kids](#)

and

[Energy World](#)

Pollution

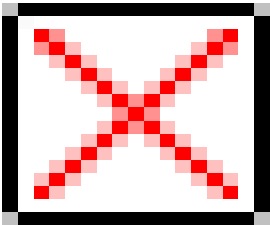


Pollution is caused when harmful or poisonous substances are released or found in the air, rivers, seas, animals, plants or even our bodies. Now, we live on a strong planet with robust plants and hardy animals and humans - but there's only so much we can take.

Did you know?

Pollution is one of the main causes of asthma, which affects a whopping 1.1million children in the UK

Unless we are using renewable energy sources such as solar panels or wind turbines, producing the electricity that powers our homes and gadgets causes pollution. Some of the petrol or diesel that we put into our cars turns into pollution, which is contained in exhaust fumes. Diesel fumes contain particulates - a fine dust, which is not good for asthmatics, for example.



?What about cow farts?? I hear you ask. Actually, I didn?t hear and you probably weren?t asking that but yep, that ?s right - we can?t leave out the massive impact of farming. The livestock we rear for meat emit more greenhouse gas than all the world?s transport! The greenhouse gas that livestock produce is called methane. Methane, together with other greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide contribute to global warming by acting like a blanket surrounding the whole planet, trapping the sun?s heat within the atmosphere and causing global temperatures to rise.

Chemical waste from factories and sewage works can also cause pollution that can get into our rivers and seas, which soon carry the harmful particles for miles. Litter is considered pollution as it can cause harm to wildlife and disrupt rivers, streams, seas and other habitats. Harmful chemicals can also be found in many household and garden items, from plastics to cleaning products, weedkillers and sprays.

But all is not lost. We can all learn a few little tips to help protect the environment and its future:

How to help:

-

Don?t drop litter

Birds and animals can mistake litter for food. Litter can end up in rivers and block drains, or in the se

a and be eaten by fish. Also, some litter will stay around for thousands of years!



Save it!

All of the electricity saving tips in the above section will also help reduce pollution.



On your bike

Instead of taking the car get your bicycle out or take the 'shoelace express' - also known as walking.



Pleasing products

Many household cleaning products contain harmful chemicals which are washed down the drain. Encourage your parents to buy eco-friendly products or even make your own from natural substances like vinegar and lemon juice.



Detectives

If you spot pollution, such as oil on the beach, report it to the local council. If you suspect a stream is polluted, report it to the Environment Agency.

There's a lot more to know about pollution and knowing more will help you do more to protect the environment. For more information see these factsheets -

[Pollution](#)

,

[Sea Pollution](#)

,

[River Pollution](#)

,

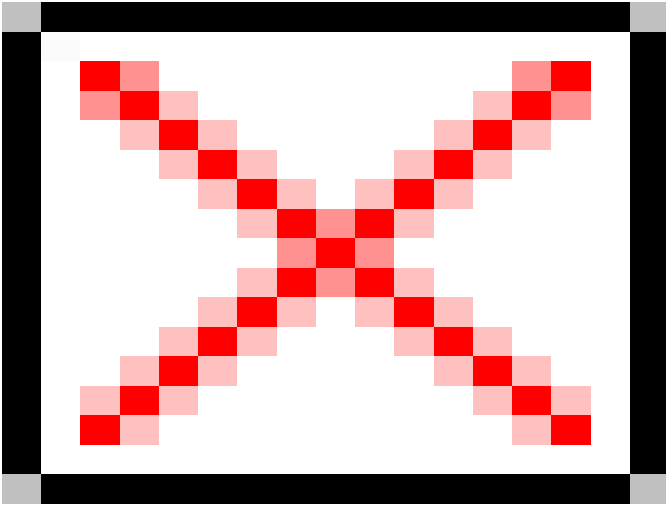
[Ozone Layer](#)

,

[Global Warming](#)

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Food



We can't live without it! With more than 7 billion people on earth the demand for food has never been bigger. In the UK alone we spend about £182 billion pounds a year keeping fed and watered. That's a lot of food!

The first question is - where is all this food coming from? Our food comes from all over the world - your green beans might come from Egypt, coffee maybe from Africa, perhaps your bananas have travelled from Ecuador and apples flew across the Pacific Ocean from New Zealand. All of these 'food miles' amounts to a lot of transport and transport means fuel and fuel means pollution.

What else does food need to grow? Water and good soil! Plants and trees that give us fruit need to eat too you know. Some countries and farms add pesticides and insecticides to food to keep away pests and insects. These chemicals can sometimes be harmful to wildlife and their habitats and sometimes to humans too. Look at? How to help? to find out more.

Here in the west we eat 7 times more than people in poorer countries. And one thing we eat a lot of is meat and dairy food. What do these foods have in common? Meat and dairy food both come from animals, and animals also need food and water. And as we saw above, they also fart a lot! Livestock farts produce a greenhouse gas called methane and all this amounts to 20% of the world's climate-changing gases. Phwoar! A suggested alternative to meat is insects -

[Insect Burger](#)

anyone?

How to Help:

-

Reduce your mileage

eating food and drinking drinks produced in the UK reduces the carbon footprint of your diet. This means that you are helping to reduce pollution! Look at the for little red tractor on products in your supermarket.

-

Meat Free Mondays

are an easy and effective way to cut down on meat. Make one or even two of your days meat-free.

-

Eat organic

organic foods have had no insecticides and pesticides added to them which makes them that bit more natural and healthy. Eating organic food reduces how many chemicals are made and spread across the countryside.

-

Get worms!

Food waste is an important issue as 7 billion of us munch our way through millions of tonnes of food. Give your leftovers to worms in your very own wormery and they'll turn it into rich and healthy compost for your vegetable garden and flowers!

-

Washing

Always wash your hands before eating to prevent the spread of invisible bad stuff like bacteria and chemicals. It's also good to wash fruit and vegetables before eating or cooking.

For more information see our factsheets on

[Meat Free Mondays](#)

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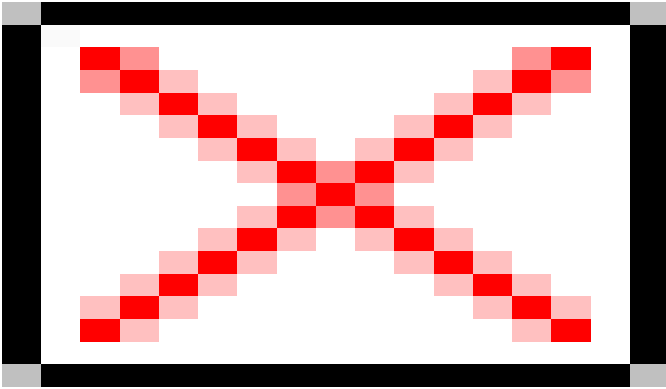
[Future of Food](#)

and The Yippittee issue on

[Food Glorious Food](#)

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Water



Turn on the tap and there it is. Getting water is so easy that you'd be mistaken for thinking that there was an endless supply. But the world has a water shortage. 70% of the world is covered in water - we should call our planet 'ocean' not 'earth'! But most of this water is salt water, leaving only a small percentage of fresh drinking water. Countries including Spain, Italy, Peru, China and South Africa actually import water from exporting countries such as the US, Australia and Argentina. A staggering 1.1 billion people on earth have no access to clean drinking water. This global shortage is predicted to get worse as global temperatures rise.

Every person in the UK uses about 150 litres of water a day - compare this to some countries where they only have 5-10 litres! Poor countries would be shocked to hear that we use drinking water to flush our toilets. There are many simple ways that we can reduce our water use. Let's have a look at how you can help:

How to help:

-

Get your teeth into it

We brush our teeth twice a day and by turning the tap off while we brush we can save 5-10 litres of water. If every adult in the UK did this then we'd save enough water for 500,000 homes. So, kids - let's show them how it's done!

-

Bottle in your loo

What? Put a bottle in your loo? That's right. If it will fit, fill up a lemonade or cola bottle with water and pop it into your loo's water tank. Then when you flush and the water fills back up you'll save a bottle's worth every time.

-

Rain Gain

Collecting rainwater in a water butt in your garden is a great way of collecting and reusing the water to keep plants healthy in the summer.

-

Reuse

Share bath water with your family to reduce costs and water use. Or, set yourself a challenge to cut do

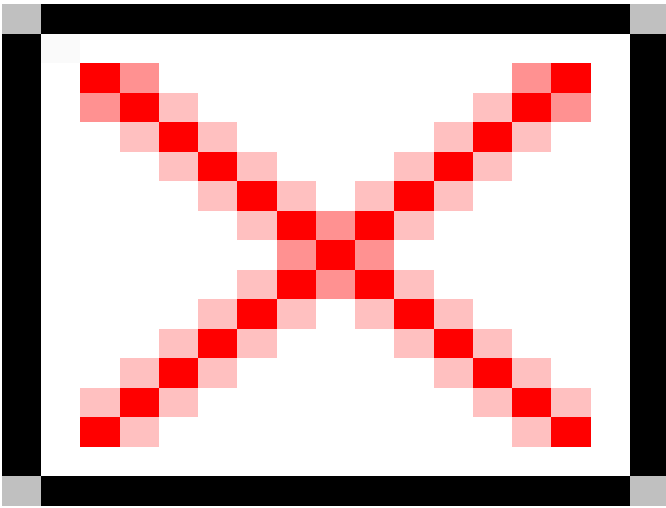
wn your shower time by 1 or 2 minutes.

For more information take a look at our fun free magazine download called

[The Yippittee](#)

- this issue is all about water, where it goes and what happens to it after it disappears down the plughole and more.

Rubbish



Let's start with a fact. Every year the UK produces 280 million tonnes of waste - that's about the same as 700,000 fully loaded airliners. We throw away unwanted food, glass bottles, plastic bottles, cans, wrappers, paper and cardboard. Can you think of anything else?

Many of these things are made up of natural resources such as trees, coal, oil and aluminium and one day some of these resources will be used up completely.

Over the last ten years the whole of the UK has come together to do more about this. 40% of all household waste is now recycled compared to just 11% in 2000. Do you recycle at home and at school? Why recycle? Well, this takes us back to the topic of energy. Recycling glass, paper, cardboard and plastic should save the energy it would take to make new paper, glass bottles and plastic containers

According to RecycleNow, recycling in the UK saves more than 18 million tonnes of carbon dioxide a year ? equivalent to taking 5 million cars off the road. Recycling isn't a new thing either. During World War II, the British people recycled everything they could to help. Toys were made with scraps of fabric and metal pots and pans were melted down to be reused. So, is all our rubbish really rubbish?

Detectives

- We've seen some great projects where schools have collected all of their waste and weighed it every week - the results over 1 school year can be shocking! Why not see how much your school, class or family chucks out and try and set targets to reduce the waste.

How to help:

Thinking more about what we waste helps to protect the environment by saving energy, reducing pollution, cutting costs and preserving our natural resources.

-

Sort it out!

Not all of our recycling is taken by helpful dustmen. Unwanted or leftover food such as tea bags and potato peelings can be added straight to a compost heap. Plenty of minibeasts will be on-hand there to help! Little insects help break down food and plant matter and make it into scrumptious soil that plants, trees and other animals love. Many local councils now include compostable waste in their recycling collections.

-

Recycle Bank

Some councils don't collect plastics or cardboard but there is always somewhere nearby with big recycling banks where you can take them.

-

Save trees

Save trees by recycling your own paper. Paper with a clean side can be made into notepads with a simple staple or a hole to tie a piece of string. These are great for doodles and notes. If you are buying paper, buy recycled paper.

-

Fashion Statement

Give any unwanted clothes to charity shops or to a Salvation Army recycling bank. A lot of our unwanted clothes go to the homeless to keep them warm or alternatively, the clothes are sent to developing countries. There's always someone who will want that knitted jumper!

-

Would you like a bag?

If you can carry your shopping home without a bag then carry it home. If you can't why not take a bag you already have with you. Re-using bags is the cool way to shop!

•

Packaging

Packaging is a big problem for the environment because once the product is open you don't need it and it's thrown out or, if it's lucky, recycled. So avoid buying products that have a lot of paper and plastic around them.

For more information on waste download this free magazine

['What a load of rubbish'](#)

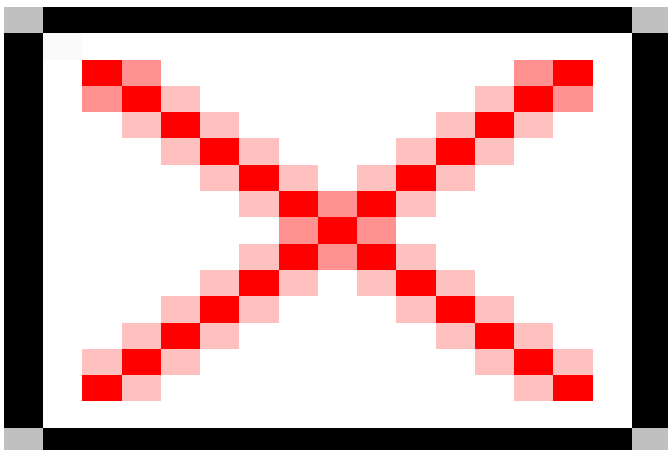
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For more facts and figures on waste visit

[DEFRA](#)

's website.

Rainforests (Deforestation)



Rainforests are valuable habitats. About half of all the species of animals and plants in the world live in rainforests and thousands of rainforest plants contain substances that can be used in medicines. The tribal people of the forests have great knowledge of them. Rainforests are also important because the huge number of plants and trees there provide us with oxygen through a process called photosynthesis and help to regulate the world's climate and atmosphere. This is why they are often referred to as the 'lungs' of the earth.

Yet despite their value, an area of rainforest the size of Britain is destroyed every year, and this is called deforestation. One and a half acres are cleared every second, an area about the size of a football pitch. Rainforests now only cover 6% of the world as we cut down the trees for materials such as paper and wood and use the land for farming and crops.

Sometimes they're burnt down to make space to grow soya which is an animal feed and to grow palm oil. Palm oil is a bio-fuel used as an alternative to petrol and diesel, as well as being in 33% of products in your local supermarket! Everyone can do their bit to help reduce the need for deforestation, just follow our tips below.

We have lots of resources on rainforests. Check out these factsheets for more information -

[Rainforests](#)

,
[Rainforest Animals](#)

,
[Rainforest Tribes](#)

and download our free fact-filled and fun magazine for free -

[Conservation Education](#)

You can also download our cool online magazine on

[Rainforests](#)

for free.

How to help:



Good wood

Tropical hardwoods such as teak and mahogany are grown in rainforests and take hundreds of years to grow so avoid any products made with these woods. It is better to have products made with pine, beech, ash or oak. These trees don't come from the rainforest and can be more easily replaced as they grow a lot faster.



Flowers

Orchids are popular in florists, but many come from the rainforest. The UK imports millions of flowers every year and despite checks some orchids may have been taken from the wild. Check that any o

orchids have been grown in Britain or the EU before buying.

-

Protected Pet?

Some parrots and macaws are unfortunately still being imported into the country to be sold as pets. If you want a parrot as a pet, make sure it has been hatched in Britain.

-

Save trees

Save trees by recycling your own paper. Paper with a clean side can be made into notepads with a simple staple or you can punch a hole to tie sheets of paper together with a piece of string. These are great for doodles and notes. If you are buying paper, buy recycled paper, whether it is writing paper or toilet paper!

[Mongabay](#)

is an excellent website with hundreds of resources about rainforests. Here are some of their tips:

Some steps for saving rainforests and, on a broader scale, ecosystems around the world can be abbreviated as TREES:

-

T

Teach others about the importance of the environment and how they can help save rainforests.

-

R

Restore damaged ecosystems by planting trees on land where forests have been cut down.

-

E

Encourage people to live in a way that doesn't hurt the environment

-

E

Establish parks to protect rainforests and wildlife

-

S

Support companies that operate in ways that minimize damage to the environment

