



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

How to live more sustainably as a college student



@NUIGsustain



nuigalway.ie/sustainability

College life is magical and fast-paced, an adventure around every corner. But it also a time when there is potential to have significant impact on the environment. Coffee on the hour, food on the go, phones to charge, people to meet, places to go, stuff to buy, books to read, papers to write; the list is endless.

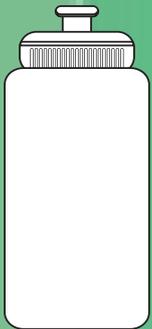
Social media platforms and news channels around the world are dominated by articles about climate change. The language is sometimes alarmist. The earth is heating up at alarming rates, life on this planet is threatened, we all have a role to play, we must do more, we have a responsibility to future generations.

While we know the situation is urgent, the big question is what can I do? What can I do in my everyday life as a student at NUI Galway to tread a little softer on the planet. The good news is lots, there is lots you can do. You don't have to go vegan, stop using shampoo and cycle from Galway to Dublin to make a difference. Here are some small steps you can take in your daily life to reduce your environmental impact and live more sustainably.



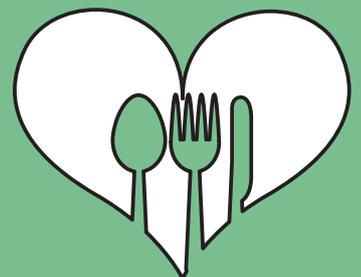
Reuse- Reuse- Reuse

Get yourself a **reusable mug**. There are so many benefits to a reusable mug. The liquid stays warmer for longer, less spills, better for the environment, coffee at a reduced price and a chance to show off your sense of style. Bring it to college, bring it on field-trips, bring it on the train. By using a reusable mug twice a day during the week for a year, you can stop 600 single-use cups entering the waste stream.



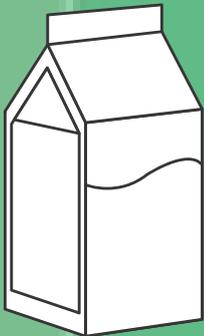
Invest in a **BPA free water bottle**. College is thirsty work; chatting with friends, lectures all day, workouts at the gym, walks along the biodiversity trail, presentations and events. Why not make use of all the water filters around campus? You will avoid lots of plastic waste and save money. Did you know that buying a bottle of water a day costs approximately €450/year

Buy a **lunch box and lunch box size cutlery**. This will encourage you to bring your own meals, avoid purchasing heavily packaged food on the go and eliminate single-use catering disposables. Did you know that there are microwaves available in Smokies, the Hub and Zinc to heat your food?



Shop less, shop smart, shop local

Only buy what you really need. Buy **fairtrade** and **organic** when you can. Fairtrade means the workers get a good deal and the product is produced ethically, local means you are supporting the local economy and reducing product transport miles.



Consider the **packaging** before you make a purchase, e.g. choose loose fruit and vegetables, choose milk contained in a tetra pack rather than a plastic carton. Try to **avoid plastic** packaging which is made with petroleum. **Avoid individually packaged items** e.g. buy a large container of juice to decant into a thermos instead of small individual containers.

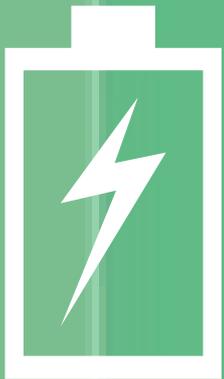
Avoid aerosol cans because you cannot reuse or recycle aerosol containers.



Support neighbourhood businesses by **shopping local**. Buy second hand, and buy vintage. Consider donating your unwanted or previously loved items to local charity shops, make sure the items are clean. Bring a cloth bag when you shop. Ditch the plastic bag.

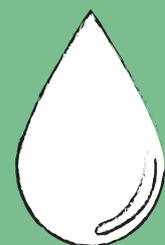
Strive for a 'no waste' lifestyle

Don't throw everything into the first bin you see. Learn what waste goes where. **Recycle right.** Plan meals and make every effort to reduce food waste. In Ireland over **one million tonnes** of food waste is disposed of each year.

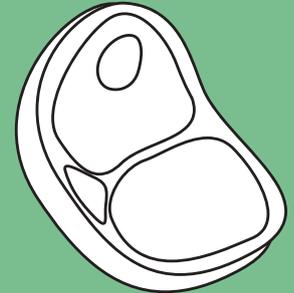


Think about the impact of **wasting energy.** Switch off PC's and monitors, turn off equipment when not in use, switch off lights, don't leave equipment charging all night, choose energy efficient LED light bulbs. Replace old appliances with energy efficient models. Let your hair and your clothes dry naturally instead of running a machine. Adjust your thermostat-switch to lower in Summer.

Conserve water. Take shorter showers. Turn off taps. Report leaks to your landlord. Only put on the dishwasher and washing machine when the loads are full.



According to scientists, **eating less meat and dairy products** is the single biggest way to reduce your environmental impact on the planet. If becoming a vegan or a vegetarian is not for you, become a flexitarian and limit the amount of meat and dairy products in your diet. The EAT Lancet Commission tells us that if we all reduced our red meat intake to a burger a week or a steak a month we would be on target to keeping global warming under the essential 2 degrees. Can you commit to one meat free day a week to lower your carbon footprint?



Cycle, walk, run, bike share. Active travel is good for your health, good for the environment, saves you money and in many instances save you time. Did you know that there are 3 bike share stations on the campus grounds and a bike repair workshop. When travelling long distances, take the train, take the bus or car pool. In Ireland, 20% of our carbon emissions comes from the transport sector and the majority of these emissions are produced by car use. Avoiding the car is a great way to lower your carbon footprint.



Want to learn more?

Look out for a sustainability themed NUI Galway Society, follow @NUIGsustain on Twitter, volunteer at a local community group, attend a seminar/talk or workshop or check out nuigalway.ie/sustainability