



What is your personal impact on the Earth and its natural resources?

Determine your Ecological Footprint

Your “footprint” is what you leave behind – your impact after you are gone. The way you live your life impacts the Earth’s ecosystems, resources, and organisms. Gather the information listed below and then use it to calculate your “ecological footprint” at myfootprint.org. Record your results and bring them back to class.

A note to help you get started: At your age, you still rely on your family to provide most of the resources that you need on a regular basis. So, your personal ecological footprint is heavily connected with the footprint of your whole family. That’s why – for the purpose of this online quiz and assignment – you should answer from the perspective of your whole family.

You will probably need help from the adults that you live with to answer some of these questions. Also, to respect you and your family’s privacy, you should not share your answers to these questions with others. This sheet is designed just to help you organize and find the information you need in order to get the most reliable results from the online quiz.

Start by thinking about the size of your “household” (yourself and the people you live with). If your family lives all together at one home, then your “household” is made of everyone that lives at that home. If your family lives in separate homes, your “household” includes all of the people in all of your family’s different homes. So, when the online quiz asks questions about your “household,” you should consider all of the people in your family across all of your family’s homes. For example, think about all of the travel that all of your family members do on a regular basis. Think about all of the food your whole family eats, and all of the trash your whole family creates, and all of the products your whole family buys and uses. That’s how you should complete this online quiz.

3. Determine your family’s annual income, based on the following categories:

- \$29,000 or less
- \$30,000 - \$59,000
- \$60,000 - \$89,000
- \$90,000 - \$119,000
- \$120,000 or more
- (If you’re unsure, use the local median: The median household income in the Raleigh-area is about \$67,000.)

5. North Carolina experiences a warm, *temperate climate*.

6. If you live at more than one home, describe the larger of the homes where you live.

7. Most homes in our area use electricity and natural gas.

8. About 7% of the energy used by most North Carolina households comes from renewable sources, such as solar and wind power.

9. This question might take a little bit of math... Think first about your household’s usual mode of transportation – most likely a car. Find out how far you travel each week to get to school and back home, to go to extracurricular activities like sports practices or arts classes, and also running errands like the grocery store or shopping. Then, think about your other household members: How far do adults in your family commute for work? Do you use local buses? Does anyone in your family travel by plane a lot during the year? Try your best to total up all the usual travel and transportation distances for you and your family, in miles, for an entire year.

10. This question includes a long list of things that some families and households might do that will reduce your ecological footprint by using natural resources more carefully. Ask adults in your household to help you know if your family uses any of these options.

11. If you live in the Wake Forest or North Raleigh areas, select “Newer suburb.”

12. Most families do not purchase “carbon offsets,” but they are creative, new way to try to reduce your household’s ecological footprint.

13. Even though humans are considered “omnivores,” most of us eat meat or dairy products with almost all of our meals. That means you should select “Top of the food chain,” unless you and your family members eat a largely vegetarian diet.

- 21. This question includes some ways that households might try to reduce the amount of water that they use for nondrinking purposes, like cleaning and showering. While your family probably does not use any of these “features,” they might try one or two of the “habits.”
- 25. When counting up all of the trash that your family produces in a week, think about all of the member of your family , even when they are away from home, and all of the homes your family lives in.

The final result of your online quiz will be a number of “Earths.” This represents how many times we would use up all of the natural resources on our planet if everyone on Earth lived like you and your household do (if everyone had the same ecological footprint as you). For example, Mr. Edwards’ find result was **7.42 Earths!** What was your “ecological footprint,” according to this source? Write it in the space below:



We would need _____ Earths if everyone on the planet lived the same way me and my household do.

Below your overall result, click the gray button that says “Table View.” Fill-in the chart below with the data it shows, based on your online quiz.

Aspect	Your ecological footprint (in global acres)	National Average (USA) (in global acres)
Carbon footprint		91.43
Food footprint		65.74
Housing footprint		31.58
Goods and services footprint		57.66
<i>My total footprint</i>	<i>(skip this line)</i>	<i>246.41</i>
Cropland footprint		29.61
Pastureland footprint		68.02
Marine fisheries footprint		49.33
Forestland footprint		99.45
My total footprint		246.41
Number of Earths		6.35

Bring your data table back to class, filled-in with your results from the online quiz.