

# How can you be a more sustainable hosteller?



As travellers we all want to preserve the environments we travel through. These are our top tips on sustainable travel, how you can contribute to preserving our beautiful planet for generations of future travellers.

## 1. Discover the real hostel experience

Look into the area's history, natural environment, customs, legends, advisory notices etc. and engage in local culture, even by simply learning a few words in the local language, it won't go unnoticed! Your trip provides a unique opportunity to explore a new culture and to see the world through a different perspective. Remember that eating local foods, shopping in local markets and attending local festivals are all part of experiencing the culture. Take part in our local and global initiatives and get to know other travellers as well as locals. Check out leaflets and displays at the hostel and ask hostel staff for information on things to do.

## 2. Keep the air clean

Leave the car behind, if only for a day and walk, cycle or use public transport to get around. Your hostel will be happy to provide you with advice. You'll see a lot more and it's cheaper! Flying less and avoiding short-haul flights can help too. Choose sustainable providers – regardless of the means of travel, look for providers that care about the environment and make an effort to reduce their CO2 emissions. Offset! It is hard to avoid emitting any CO2 at all while travelling so always try to offset the remaining impact you have, maybe join in on planting some trees while you're there. Did you know that when you book on [hihostels.com](https://hihostels.com), you can donate a small amount to offset your stay and invest in CO2 emission saving projects in our hostels? Learn more about the [HI Sustainability Fund](#).

## 3. Buy smart

Shop local. Use local products and services, they give you a flavour of the area and help support local communities. Many hostels and regions are fortunate to have some fantastic producers of food, drink, arts and crafts. Before purchasing goods, ask about their origin and check that you can recycle the packaging. Avoid buying products made from threatened natural resources and report poaching and other illegal activities to the local authorities. Thank suppliers for their green measures, or don't be afraid to ask why they don't have a green programme. As a paying customer you can make a huge impact on companies' policies.

## 4. Swap and share

Many hostels have areas where you can leave or swap books, clothes and travel necessities. If you don't need the rest of your toiletries, books or anything else when packing to go home, leave it in the hostel for other guests to use.

## **5. Reduce, reuse and then recycle**

Try to avoid overly packaged goods. Say no to plastic bags and use a reusable one. Carry a water bottle and/or coffee mug and try to avoid (where possible) purchasing plastic bottles or disposable coffee cups. Put clean, squashed aluminium cans, glass, paper, card and batteries in the correct bins. Take items with you which are not recyclable locally (i.e. plastic and tetra packs) but can be commonly recycled in urban areas. Reduce fast-food waste whenever possible, as it creates an enormous amount of waste. Use rechargeable gadgets: batteries, cameras etc. Instead of purchasing small containers of shampoo, take reusable ones. Take only the brochures and maps you will use and return the others to the brochure stand or leave them in the room so they can be reused or recycled. Book flights with airlines that recycle the waste created when serving food and beverages to customers (you can even choose airlines that offset their CO2 emissions). Ask the hostel if anything is unclear about their waste management.

## **6. Become an energy saver**

Reduce energy by switching off lights when you leave the room, turning down heaters that are not needed, closing doors and windows if the heating is on and avoiding leaving appliances on standby. Try to also unplug appliances, such as TVs, as they can use energy even when they're turned off.

## **7. Reduce your footprint**

The reality is that we are not going to stop flying, so when you fly consider offsetting the carbon emissions of your flight and pack light - lighter bags mean lighter planes, which use less fuel. Print only what you need to print. Try to purchase electronic tickets, use online confirmations and save travel documents to your smartphone. Take part in low carbon activities such as trekking, mountain biking, horse riding, kayaking, rafting, caving, snorkelling, swimming, concerts, theatre trips and language and cooking courses.

## **8. Be water wise**

Turn off the tap. The world is facing serious water shortage so you can help by turning off the tap when brushing your teeth or shaving, sharing dishwater with others, using the double flush in toilets and taking shorter showers. Bring your own towel and only wash it when necessary. If you're in unspoiled natural environments you don't need to wash your hair or shave every day.

## **9. Respect the local community**

Make sure you're well informed about any volunteer opportunities – check our network openings here. You need to especially do research when you are intending to volunteer with children. Don't encourage begging. There are other great ways to help local people. Enquire about community funds to support local projects. Make sure you dress appropriately in sacred sites and on beaches and get permission before taking photos of anyone