

3 simple ways to reduce business carbon emissions



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Reading time 7 mins

Key Points

- To ensure the sustainability of the industries and economies we're a part of, a continued effort to reduce business carbon emissions must be made
- Reducing carbon footprints isn't necessarily time-consuming or costly, and all businesses can implement simple but effective measures to reduce energy consumption, wastage, and greenhouse gas contributions
- The first step is to conduct an energy audit to get a better understanding of how much energy you're using, where efficiencies can be made, and what the benefits of switching to renewable energy sources are (e.g. cost savings, tax credits)
- Secondly, businesses can implement measures to reduce office waste (e.g. going paperless) and encourage reuse (e.g. repurposing packaging, refurbishing instead of buying furniture)
- Lastly, by rethinking how staff get to-and-from work by encouraging carpooling, public transport, and cycling; or promoting remote work, further carbon emission reductions can be made

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Climate change is an urgent global issue, and we are responsible for reducing business carbon emissions – especially if we wish to ensure the sustainability of the various industries and economies we're a part of. By taking proactive steps to reduce our carbon footprint, we set an example for other organisations and clients/customers—both of whom play a role in reducing emissions. Leading by example to reduce carbon footprints need not be a time-consuming or costly effort and can help businesses save money and build their brand identity:

1. Conduct an energy audit
2. Reduce and reuse waste
3. Rethink company transport

[Climate responsibility](#) aside is the equally important impact our economic activities have on the environment: resource depletion, loss of natural habitats, and pollution, to name a few. Implementing these practices to reduce business emissions also has a secondary and beneficial effect on the natural world: if we consume less, we produce and waste less.

Suggested articles and pages

How to calculate and reduce your product's carbon footprint and environmental impact

Household waste, smart kitchen appliances, and desertification

Renewing our commitment to clean energy and green tech

Taking the challenge out of carbon footprint calculations

As we saw in our previous post on [calculating your product's carbon footprint](#), conducting a Life Cycle Assessment for the entire product development process (e.g. from raw material sourcing to manufacturing, transportation, and end-of-life disposal) is a cumbersome – but necessary – process that for some companies might require restructuring how they do business (e.g. finding alternative materials, redesigning products to facilitate recycling).

But for those who aren't yet ready for that but still want to play their part towards reducing the greenhouse gases contributing to global warming, putting simple but effective measures into place is relatively straightforward.

1. Start with an energy audit

The first step you can take to reduce business carbon emissions is with an energy audit. This will give you a better understanding of how much energy you're using, where you can improve, and how to save energy and money over time. Additionally, conducting an energy audit helps to determine which practices are more environmentally friendly than others. This includes switching from nonrenewable energy sources like natural gas or coal to renewable sources such as solar or wind power.

UK businesses have a variety of [energy audit options](#):

- **On-site business energy audit.** This involves having an expert visit your premises for a day, assessing your equipment (e.g. machinery, lighting, heating/cooling, appliances), and providing an action plan and costing for how consumption can be reduced
- **Over the phone.** Most energy suppliers offer free phone consultations and advice on how to reduce energy waste or move to a green business energy tariff

- **DIY business energy audit.** All businesses can benefit from quick wins that enable them to reduce energy usage, e.g. energy-efficient LED light bulbs, not leaving desktop computers on standby overnight, switching lights off when rooms are not in use

2. Reduce waste and encourage reuse

Another way for businesses to lead by example is to reduce waste and promote reuse wherever possible. This means finding ways to minimise the amount of paper used in the office—such as going paperless with documents or implementing a recycling program—as well as encouraging employees to use reusable containers for lunches instead of single-use ones. If lunches are provided in the office, [cut down on food wastage](#) and buy supplies such as tea, coffee, sugar etc, in bulk.

Companies should also look into ways to reuse materials around the office, such as reusing packaging or repurposing old furniture. Finally, businesses should use eco-friendly products whenever possible, such as biodegradable cleaning supplies or furniture made from sustainable materials.

3. Rethink transportation

Finally, consider how transportation impacts your carbon footprint and work hard to minimise its environmental impact. This could mean shifting away from cars and towards public transportation options like buses or trains whenever possible. It could also mean investing in electric vehicles for company carpools or providing bikes for employees who live close enough for a bike ride to work daily. Better still, you could also encourage teleworking (when feasible) so that office staff don't need to travel at all!

Ready to get proactive and reduce business carbon emissions?

Businesses must proactively reduce their carbon footprints and lead by example on climate change issues. At the same time, it's important to remember that lowering business carbon emissions to levels where we start to notice visible improvements will take time - so don't get discouraged! Moving to [clean energy and prioritising green](#) technologies is a commitment, but by regularly reviewing your business sustainability policies, you'll stay on track and in step with current best practices.

Are you looking for ways to make your business more energy efficient and eco-responsible? Signup for our newsletter for more insights and free templates to help you improve your environmental rating and business sustainability!

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