

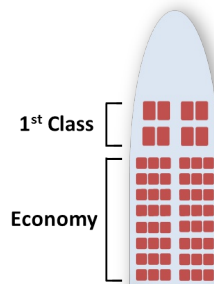
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more effective
than recycling

High Impact Action: Avoid air travel

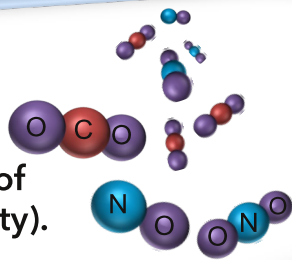
As life becomes faster-paced, it can be worth slowing down to enjoy the journey. What sights and sounds might you miss when you're high in the air?

Carbon calculators will sometimes ask if your seat was economy or first class. You can see in the diagram that someone in economy uses much less room, and therefore takes a smaller share of the flight's carbon footprint. Going first class can double your personal emissions.

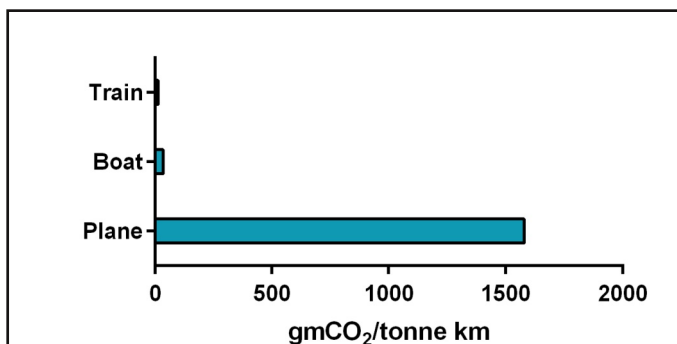


Use webcams to stay in touch with family and take vacations close to where you live instead of flying. Then, when you need to travel, take the train. People get from London to Paris in 2 hours by rail! That's less time than you might spend waiting for a flight. If there aren't high-speed rail options near you then contact government officials or start a petition to get them.

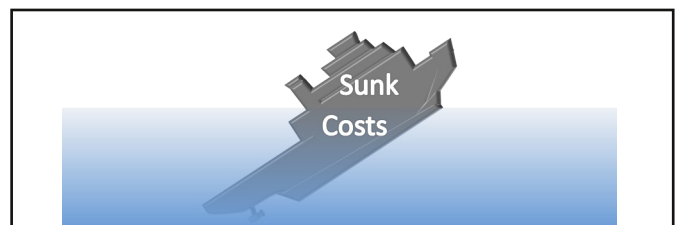
Most of a flight's footprint comes from burning jet fuel (it takes lots of energy to fight gravity). Planes also produce nitrogen oxides which may contribute extra to climate change because they are released in the upper atmosphere. We're not sure how strong their warming effect is, but it's worse than CO₂ would be on its own.



If you have to fly, fly direct and pack light. Takeoffs and landings use extra fuel and moving more weight means making more CO₂. You can also choose to purchase carbon offsets, which means a company will use your money to plant enough trees or install enough renewable energy to cover your emissions.



This graph shows how much carbon dioxide is emitted in order to move one tonne of material a full kilometer using different methods. You can see now why trains are so climate-friendly and why flying is the least eco-friendly way to travel.



Though we might develop low-carbon flight in the future (biofuels, liquid hydrogen) for now we have "sunk costs" in our system. This means airports and planes are designed for fossil fuels, and no one wants to abandon expensive equipment if it still works. If you're waiting for sustainable air travel, don't hold your breath.

