

Clearing Up the Misconceptions: A Climate Change Q&A



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As much as it is a cause for concern, climate change can also be a confusing topic. Understandably, many people have questions and concerns. If you're looking to get active in the efforts to protect our planet, you might even have some questions about where to start.

Here are some frequently-asked questions about [climate change](#) and global warming, along with expert recommendations on how you can do your part to help:

Climate Change Q&A:

Q. Are humans really affecting climate change and global warming?

A. Some of the most compelling evidence of the effect humans are having on climate change can be found at NASA's [Global Climate Change](#) site. Although the earth's temperatures have naturally fluctuated over time, atmospheric carbon dioxide levels have remained below 300ppm for hundreds of thousands of years.

Today, however, the carbon dioxide levels are higher than they've ever been, following a spike that started around the 1950s. The earth is now warming at a rate that is 10 times faster than normal, and scientific evidence points to a [95% chance](#) that humans are the cause. This is melting the polar ice caps, warming the oceans, and creating extreme changes in temperatures and weather.

Q. How can activists can do more to make a positive impact in their community?

A. Each of us can make a difference in our own local communities. You might consider getting actively involved with an environmental organization or nonprofit, whether through volunteering or making a donation. You could even join in on protests or write your local politicians to let them know you support [environmental regulations](#).

You might also take it a step further and become a leader in your local community. For instance, you could help plant trees or spearhead a recycling movement. There are countless ways to get involved.

Q. Are there any common household products that might be contributing to climate change?

A. Since the [meat and dairy](#) industries have been linked to global warming and climate change, you might consider reducing your consumption. This doesn't mean you have to go vegan or vegetarian (unless you want to, of course). Instead, you could start by trying Meatless Mondays or switching from dairy milk to one of the many milk alternatives that exist today.

Additionally, you might consider eco-friendly clothing choices. Look for brands that have a negative carbon footprint and/or create their clothes from recycled materials. For instance, there are many clothing brands that are helping clean up our oceans by creating fabrics out of recycled water bottles and other plastics.

Q. How can we each do our part to make our homes more green?

A. There are many strategies you can implement to create a "green" or more environmentally-friendly home. For instance, you could start by unplugging your television and your computer when they're not in use. (Did you know these electronics are secret "energy vampires" that still use energy even when they're powered off?)

As mentioned above, you could also mindfully purchase eco-friendly products. Another option is prioritizing home repairs that are better for the environment, such as replacing that leaky faucet. It will save you on your water bill, while also helping the planet.

Q. Isn't it more expensive to go "green"?

A. This is a common misconception. Although switching to environmentally-friendly products might cost a bit more up front, it actually saves you more money in the long-term. For instance, solar panels and energy-efficient light bulbs can actually save you money over time by reducing your energy bills. Additionally, green home improvements can provide [tax incentives](#) while also increasing the resale value of your home.

The climate change data paints a grim picture - but it isn't too late. Although it will take a lot of effort and cooperation, we can all do our part to reverse this trend. It could save our planet - and ourselves.