

# ECOCHALLENGE.ORG



## PARTICIPANT TIPS

### Maximize Your Success and Impact



powered by  
**Northwest  
Earth Institute**  
DISCOVER CHANGE, TOGETHER.

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# OVERVIEW

## NORTHWEST EARTH INSTITUTE

**We envision a world where EcoChallengers live every moment with the hunger and power for positive action.**

We believe the solutions to Earth's biggest challenges lie in the power of collective action. By taking action in our own lives and through the communities, schools, and organizations we are part of, we can contribute to a world of impact. For 25 years, NWEI has been "inspiring people to take responsibility for Earth." We have helped over 200,000 people around the world take many small steps that lead to big changes for the planet.

**EcoChallenge is the way to live out your desire to better our world.**

EcoChallenge gives schools, organizations, and communities the tools and inspiration to accomplish their sustainability engagement and action goals. Our digital platform elevates solutions, facilitates action, and visualizes impact. Participants and teams engage in fun and friendly competition while creating new habits that benefit communities and the planet. By incentivizing and celebrating both effort and impact, EcoChallenge gives aspiring leaders the resources and confidence to take on the world's biggest challenges.

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN YOUR ECOCHALLENGE

**Congratulations on taking on EcoChallenge!**

We are excited to measure our collective impact throughout the next few weeks. EcoChallenge helps you to create change that is good for you and for the planet. However, changing our habits is difficult, even when we believe we should and want to make a change.

Our brains are wired to work as efficiently as possible, and habits help them do that. Habits require minimal awareness and are often difficult for our conscious mind to control. But we know you can do it -- you have the power to make positive change.



**BEHAVIOR CHANGE FOR SUSTAINABILITY:**  
Northwest Earth Institute's Approach

By Lacy Cagle and Veronica Hotton



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**BONUS RESOURCE >>**

Behavior Change  
White Paper



# PARTICIPANT TIPS FOR SUCCESS

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Here are some tips to help you be successful in choosing and completing your EcoChallenge actions, as well as ways to convert them into long-term lifestyle changes.

Please contact [support@ecochallenge.org](mailto:support@ecochallenge.org) if you need further assistance. Good luck!

## ? HOW DO I DECIDE WHICH ECOCHALLENGE ACTIONS TO COMMIT TO?

**Choose actions that connect to your values.**

Family, simplicity, spirituality, community, and nature are examples of values that might motivate you to choose to act. By consciously connecting your actions to your values, you will be giving yourself that extra push to keep going if it gets difficult or inconvenient to make it through the three week EcoChallenge.

**Choose actions that require a little stretch from you, but are still achievable.**

For example, maybe you aren't going to go from never biking to biking 50 miles a day. But what if you commit to biking to places within three miles of where you live? Going from a mostly carnivorous diet to a vegan diet might be too big of a stretch, but what about committing to one meatless meal a day?

**Choose actions that you can establish as new habits in your life, or that get you a couple steps closer to your ultimate goal.**

EcoChallenge is not only about taking action during the event, it is about creating new habits that can be sustained well beyond the challenge. Consider this as you select actions.

## ? HOW MANY ACTIONS SHOULD I CHOOSE?

**According to the best behavior change research, changing one habit at a time is the ideal for lasting habit change.**

If you try too many things at once, you'll be overwhelmed and have difficulty achieving any of them. We recommend choosing one daily action, and one to three one-time actions. If a few actions are well-aligned or support each other, then combine them into one goal in your life. For example, committing to using muscle power for all of your trips around town, choosing specific trips and distances to go by bike, and advocating for better bike infrastructure are three actions that support each other and are well-aligned.



# PARTICIPANT TIPS FOR SUCCESS

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## WHAT ELSE SHOULD I CONSIDER TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN MY ECOCHALLENGE?

### Plan Ahead

Consider what you need to do to be prepared for your EcoChallenge on the day that it starts. If you are going to eat vegan meals, look up recipes and make sure you have all the ingredients on hand. If you are going to support women-owned businesses, do the research ahead of time so that you don't have to scramble to figure out where to buy your lunch or your pet food when you run out.

### Create a Community of Support

Change is most fun and most successful when done in a supportive social environment. Build and nurture your community of support by creating or joining a team of people who care about the same things you do. Encourage your co-workers, friends or family to get involved, and support each other both online and in face-to-face interactions. Use the EcoChallenge Participant Feed to post updates on your progress and encourage others in theirs. Your community will help you get through the rough patches and applaud you when you succeed.

### Reflect on Your Actions

Moving your EcoChallenge action from a new behavior to an ingrained habit is easier if you take the time to reflect on why you have made this goal for yourself. Why is this action important to you? How does it connect to your deeper values? What is the next step? What is your ultimate goal? Reflecting on questions like these help you to keep your motivation up and achieve your goals during and after EcoChallenge. Each action you choose will prompt you to answer a reflection question -- that's a good place to start in thinking more deeply about your values and motivation. As shared above, the Participant Feed is a great place to both reflect and interact with other people's thoughts and reflections.

### Celebrate Your Successes

One of the best parts of a challenge is celebrating success! Keep yourself motivated by planning small rewards for yourself at certain milestones or intervals throughout EcoChallenge. These could be as simple as posting your success to your Feed or social media, or rewarding yourself with a solo walk or a bubble bath. Try to keep your rewards aligned with your values -- for example, vegging out in front of the TV isn't as good a reward as having dinner with friends or going to bed 30 minutes early. Recognizing small successes is key to staying focused on your challenges so that you can make it to big successes. You've got this!

### Keep it Going

Think about ways you can keep your actions going in your life after EcoChallenge is over. Consider ways to apply what you have learned and make adjustments to be successful in this new habit(s). While EcoChallenge might be over for right now, your opportunity for learning, action, and impact are not.





# POWERED BY NORTHWEST EARTH INSTITUTE

## WE BELIEVE EVERY PERSON HAS THE POWER TO CREATE POSITIVE ACTION.

There's no shortage of information about the serious challenges facing our planet – and although most people say they would like to do more, they don't know where to start.

That's where we come in.

## WE BELIEVE CHANGE SHOULD BE FUN.

For over 20 years, NWEI has helped make change more possible, more social, and yes, more fun by helping people connect with their communities and take action, together.

## WE BELIEVE THE LITTLE THINGS MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE.

NWEI was founded in 1993 with a simple objective: to give people a framework to talk about our relationship with the planet and to share in discovering new ways to live, work, create and consume. And (as more than 175,000 NWEI participants worldwide have discovered since then) it turns out that within that simple objective is a recipe for powerful change.

When you break big issues into bite-sized pieces, and talk through them with the people who matter to you, you discover insights and inspiration. You learn, together. You build a personal network of shared stories and support that makes it easy to take action. In short, you become part of a community for change.

## WE BELIEVE IN CHANGE THAT WORKS FOR YOU.

From the beginning, we have been committed to meeting people where they are. We don't tell you what to think, or buy, or do. And we believe no change is too small — in fact, those tiny choices we make every day, by rote or by habit (paper or plastic? take or toss? borrow or buy?) are exactly where change is most possible and powerful.

Through our discussion courses and the EcoChallenge, we help people discover shared learning, shared stories and shared action.

## WE DISCOVER CHANGE, TOGETHER. SEE MORE AT [NWEI.ORG](http://NWEI.ORG).



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