

# Helpful Hints – Transport

by Melissa Glen

Transport methods contribute greatly to Australia's footprint. The average Australian householder will create nearly six tonnes of greenhouse gas due to transport, representing around 34% of their total greenhouse gas emissions. Being more aware of your transportation methods can make a huge difference.

## Cars

The most environmentally friendly option would be not to have a car, but obviously this isn't practical for many people. There are many ways to try to minimise the effect your car will have on the environment though:

### ➤ Leave the car at home when possible

Opting to use public transport, a taxi, to walk or ride a bike is far more preferable from an environmental perspective, particularly if you would have been the only person in the car.

### ➤ Car pooling & car sharing

Car pooling can often be a viable option for journeys to work or dropping children at school. Car sharing can be great for those who only use cars occasionally and don't want the overhead of owning or leasing a car of their own. It's a type of inexpensive rental scheme where cars (often environmentally friendly) are available for hire by the hour or by the day.

- [www.goget.com.au](http://www.goget.com.au) Sydney & Melbourne
- [www.flexicar.com.au](http://www.flexicar.com.au) Sydney & Melbourne
- [www.charterdrive.com.au](http://www.charterdrive.com.au) Sydney & Melbourne, but in the coming months Brisbane & Gold Coast will also be included.

### ➤ Plan your trips

Figure out the most efficient routes in advance, try to avoid peak hour traffic, can you wait and then combine several outings into the one trip? Think ahead.

### ➤ Research before you buy

Is that huge four wheel drive essential for your inner city living? Consider new car purchases carefully and how it will contribute to your environmental footprint.

The website [www.greenvehicleguide.gov.au](http://www.greenvehicleguide.gov.au) is a fantastic resource provided by the Australian government. Different vehicle models are given an environmental impact star rating, and many factors such as fuel efficiency, air pollution rating, level of greenhouse gas emissions and overall efficiency can be compared.

## Environmentally friendly car options:

<b>Hybrid cars</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ⓐ Combine electric &amp; petrol power for greater fuel efficiency</li><li>ⓐ Battery charges every time you brake and petrol engine automatically turns off when stopped and restarts when you accelerate</li></ul>
<b>Diesel</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ⓐ Emissions = up to 40% less than petrol</li><li>ⓐ Short-term option as it is a non-renewable resource made from mineral oils</li></ul>
<b>Biodiesel</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ⓐ Produced from renewable plant or animal sources &amp; potentially include recycles products</li><li>ⓐ Emissions = very low greenhouse and reduces carbon monoxide by 70%</li><li>ⓐ Non-toxic and biodegradable</li></ul>
<b>LPG or autogas</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ⓐ Emissions = 15% less greenhouse gas &amp; one-fifth of the toxic gases of petrol</li><li>ⓐ It is a much cheaper than petrol, but less efficient as an energy source</li></ul>
<b>Ethanol</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ⓐ 100% renewable source made from grains (corn or sugarcane usually)</li><li>ⓐ Non-carcinogenic emissions</li><li>ⓐ Emissions = 30% less greenhouse gas than petrol</li><li>ⓐ The main concern with ethanol is that production diverts valuable land to grow crops as fuel rather than as food.</li></ul>
<b>Hydrogen</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ⓐ Hydrogen fuel cells use hydrogen to create electricity</li><li>ⓐ Emissions = small amounts of water</li><li>ⓐ Expensive and hydrogen produced currently from non-renewable fuel sources</li></ul>

### ➤ Carbon offsetting

There are various companies and organisations in Australia that specialise in carbon offsetting schemes. For example, Greenfleet is a non-profit organisation and for only \$55 per year they will plant 17 native trees on your behalf, to help absorb the greenhouse emissions that your car produces in one year. For more information go to [www.greenfleet.com.au](http://www.greenfleet.com.au)

### Air travel

- Try to get the most direct flight to your destination
- Offset the carbon emissions from your flight – currently in Australia there is not a compulsory carbon tax on flights, but you can opt to include a carbon tax at the time of purchase.
- Minimise your emissions where possible by travelling short distances by train or bus instead.