



## CARBON FOOTPRINTS: GETTING STARTED

A carbon footprint measures the total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated directly or indirectly by a business, product, or process. It's important to calculate your footprint so you can identify areas to cut emissions, meet regulatory standards, and strengthen your business's commitment to reducing environmental impact.



### SO, WHAT IS A CARBON FOOTPRINT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR MY BUSINESS?

A carbon footprint quantifies the amount of GHGs, measured in carbon dioxide equivalence (CO<sub>2</sub>e), emitted by business activities such as energy use, transportation, and waste. For businesses, a carbon footprint includes emissions from direct operations (Scope 1), purchased electricity (Scope 2), and indirect sources like supply chains (Scope 3).

Calculating your carbon footprint helps identify key areas where you can reduce emissions, save on energy costs, and improve operational efficiency. It also helps build a frame-work for long-term sustainability goals and helps your business to align with global climate targets. With increasing pressure from consumers, governments, and investors, a clear carbon reduction strategy is fast becoming a requirement for all businesses.



## NET ZERO AND SCIENCE BASED TARGETS (SBT'S)

Net Zero and Science-Based Targets (SBTs) play crucial roles in carbon footprinting by providing a framework for reducing emissions.

- **Net Zero:** Businesses commit to reducing their carbon emissions to as close to zero as possible, and only then looking to balancing out any remaining emissions with offset projects like reforestation
- **Science-Based Targets:** These are goals set to align a business's emission reductions with the level of decarbonisation required to meet the Paris Agreement's climate goals (limiting global warming to well below 2°C)

## WHERE DO I START?

### 1. Understand Your Scope:

Identify the emissions sources you need to include. These will be divided into three categories:

- **Scope 1:** Direct emissions (e.g., on-site fuel combustion, company vehicles).
- **Scope 2:** Indirect emissions from purchased electricity, heat, or steam.
- **Scope 3:** Other indirect emissions such as business travel, supply chain, and waste disposal, etc.

### 2. Collect Data:

You'll need specific data to begin your calculations. Key data includes:

- **Energy consumption:** electricity, gas, fuel usage
- **Business travel:** mileage, transport types
- **Waste generation and disposal methods**
- **Purchased goods and services:** supply chain impacts
- **Water consumption and wastewater disposal**

### 3. Choose a Calculation Method:

Use carbon accounting tools or software to input your data and calculate your footprint. Common tools include the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol, UK DEFRA conversion factors or carbon calculators from accredited third-party organisations.

### 4. Analyse Results:

Review your carbon footprint and identify areas for improvement. Look for high-emission activities that can be optimised or replaced with more sustainable alternatives.

### 5. Set Reduction Targets

Establish achievable goals to lower your emissions, including the implementation of energy-saving measures, transitioning to renewable energy, and engaging employees and suppliers in sustainability efforts.



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