



ENVIRONMENT

Green Browsing©

by Valentine Rinner

Vocabulary & pronunciation study by

Laurent Dufour ©

Words are explained alongside the text

Stressed syllables are underlined and in bold*

Chances are that you're **currently** listening to EnglishWaves either on your **laptop** or iPad with Wi-Fi **Internet**, Bluetooth **earphones** and your 3G **Smartphone** in your pocket. You're part of the 3.5 **billion** Internet users. You have an **email address** or two or even three, and social **media accounts** with Twitter, Skype, **Facebook**, etc. If you're listening to this program you're **probably** conscious about some of the **environmental aspects** of your behaviour in general. Maybe you buy **organic** food to **avoid pesticides**, **recycle** to **reduce waste**, make sure you turn off lights so as not to waste **energy**. But what do you do to **limit** your Internet **ecological footprint**? Most of us are **totally ignorant** about that. We send emails as if they were text **messages**, we **Google search** all day long, we **store** large **amounts** of **data** online... because once you have the **hardware** and the connection it's so easy and quick. We have **cordless** unlimited **browsing** and communication power.

Because of this **instantaneous fluidity**, we are not **familiar** with the reality of what happens behind our quick Google searches, emails and tweets, and what is needed to make them happen. In fact, the **enormous** physical **infrastructures**, **networks** and flows needed to **support** Internet have a **considerable** ecological **impact**.

For example, when you send an email, it is first

chances are (exp.) it is very likely

currently (adv.) at the present time

laptop (n.) portable microcomputer that is small enough to be operated on the user's lap and is designed for use outside an office

organic (adj.) without chemicals

waste (n.) unwanted matter

ecological footprint (n.) amount of the earth's energy that someone uses

to Google search (vb.) to use the computer program that finds information

to store (vb.) to put in a computer memory unit

data (n.) information

hardware (n.) physical and electronic parts of a computer

cordless (adj.) operated without a wire connected to an electrical supply

to browse (vb.) to look at information on the Internet

channelled through the 1 **million** kilometres long **transcontinental** cable network to reach a data centre. Those data centres are buildings that **house thousands** of servers that are used to **handle** and store your email's data along with the other 293 billion emails sent each day. Those data centres **consume** huge amounts of **electricity** and water mainly to keep the servers on all the time and to **prevent** the place from **overheating**. Your email then **continues** its way through the cable network to reach your destination's server where it is **usually** stored for a very long time **amongst** the other **dozen** emails we send and receive each day.

The Internet **industry** today **releases** more than 600 million tons of **greenhouse gases** every year. Half of it comes from the infrastructure and half from **usage**. This **represents** between 2 and 10% of global emissions depending on calculation **methods**. A **figure** that is **equivalent** to that of the **airline** industries, or FORTY **nuclear plants**.

The good news is that there are simple things you can do to **significantly** reduce your Internet ecological impact and at the same time reduce your electricity **bill**. Here are a few:

First of all TURN OFF your Internet box when you leave the house or at night, as well as your phone **for that matter**. Your box **uses up** at least 5 times more electricity than your computer! While you sleep it continues to **communicate** with **external** networks. You don't need that. This simple action has the added **benefit** of reducing your **exposure** to **electromagnetic** waves. And takes about 5 seconds.

Sending data online is a useful thing but storing it is quite useless. So a second easy **habit** to get into is to stop storing useless stuff online. Get a **hard drive** or USB key to store your **important** documents, emails, pictures, etc. and **delete** them from your **mailboxes** or online storage. The Internet cloud isn't some light **virtual** space: it's real hardware. Storing stuff online causes a significant amount

to channel (vb.) to deliver

to house (vb.) to contain, hold

to handle (vb.) to deal with

to prevent (vb.) to keep from occurring

to release (vb.) to emit

greenhouse gas (n.) emission that causes global warming

figure (n.) number

nuclear plant (n.) factory that generates atomic energy

bill (n.) request for payment

for that matter (adv.) what is more

to use up (phrasal vb.) to use all of something

hard drive (n.) part of a computer or separate device that can be connected to a computer in order to read information on a hard disk

to delete (vb.) to remove, erase

of data to be exchanged between your device and the hard drive behind the cloud. Those exchanges can also be **intercepted**. This simple action has the added benefit of **controlling** and **securing** your data. It's in your hands, not in some centre on the other side of the globe.

One last easy **tip** before I **overfeed** you: instead of Googling every morning "weather in Lyon" or "traffic in Paris" have a **bookmark** of your **favourite** websites. It's done **once and for all** and stops wasting your time and the planet's energy by asking servers the very same question every day.

You can find lots of **additional advice**, the website www.backbn.fr is a **reliable** French website. You can **look up** other ones and once you find one you like, bookmark it and **write it down** to physically give it to friends instead of emailing it!

tip (n.) useful piece of information

to overfeed (overfed-overfed) (vb.) to inform to excess

bookmark (n.) address of a web page that is kept on your computer so that you can find it again easily

once and for all (exp.) in a way that will finally solve a problem

reliable (adj.) deserving trust, dependable

to look up (phrasal vb.) to search for

to write down (wrote-written) (phrasal vb.) to note, transcribe

*** Tip!**

Compound nouns (nouns composed of two or more words) are stressed on the first word in the compound:

airline, bookmark, earphones, Facebook, greenhouse, hardware, mailbox, network, website