DIGITAL DETOX
HANDBOOK

A Master in Design for Social Impact Initiative

LET'S GET STARTED!

Do you feel like your digital files are getting out of control? Have you subscribed to too many newsletters? Maybe the excess amount of digital content you have on the web is preoccupying your mind?

Don't worry! The Digital Waste Handbook is prepared just for you! This handbook will help you be informed about digital waste and **take small actions to reduce your digital footprint.**

Illustration by Segyo Oh

Digital Waste

When it comes to thinking about the environment and the carbon footprint, we often associate it with the physical wastes in our lives like plastic waste, paper waste or food waste. You may have even talked about electronic waste or e-waste. But there isn't much conversation around digital waste.

There is physical harm being done to the environment through our actions of using phones, tablets, laptops, and/or computers. This Digital Waste Handbook will guide you through the steps of how to reduce your digital footprint. It is a 7-day digital detox that you can do as often as you please!

Definitions:

E-waste / Electronic waste: is a discharge of any electronic devices such as phones, laptops, printers, chargers, etc., often confused with digital waste.

Digital waste: is CO_2 produced from indirect or direct usage from any electronic device.

Carbon footprint: is the impact on the earth by the emission of harmful gases such as CO_2 created by your daily actions.

THE DETOX

Each day of the 7-day digital detox will require around 20-30minutes of your time each day.
You will need the devices you use (phone, tablet, laptop, computer) and access to the Internet. Every day will have a different focus on actions you can take.

Let's start the digital detox!

DAY 1: Unsubscribing to emails
DAY 2: Deleting emails
DAY 3: Cloud Storage
DAY 4: Cloud Storage
DAY 5: Auto-play videos
DAY 6: Facebook posts
DAY 7: Chats

DAY 1: UNSUBSCRIBING TO EMAILS

Did you know that **2.4 million emails are sent every second**? That is equivalent to 0.72 tonnes of CO2 that we are generating every second! Can you imagine the quantity we produce a year just by sending emails?

Source: https://carbonliteracy.com/the-carbon-cost-of-an-email/
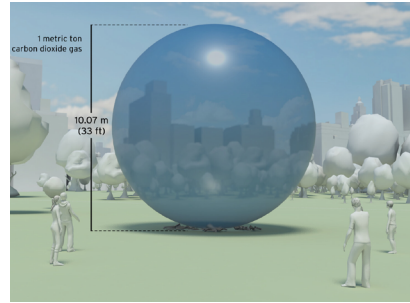
The amount of CO2 doesn't seem that insignificant anymore, right? Today you will be reducing your personal digital footprint by getting rid of all subscriptions that you don't need anymore!

HOW DO I UNSUBSCRIBE?

1. If you don't know where to start you can type in the search bar of your email browser the word "Unsubscribe" and you'll probably find something to delete, maybe the newsletter of Paris College of Art!

2. On Gmail and Outlook, *sometimes* you'll have a button where you can unsubscribe to newsletters easier. It looks something like this:

    <noreply-maps-timeline@google.com> Unsubscribe

3. But if you don't have this button, you can always unsubscribe manually by going to the bottom of the newsletter and press the button "unsubscribe".

4. And our last tip: if you want to make your unsubscribing process more efficient and quick, we recommend platforms such as **Cleanfox.io** or **Unroll.me**

DAY 2: DELETING EMAILS

You probably have emails from years ago that you saved because you might "need it later", but guess what? It's been 5 years since you opened that email, you probably don't need it anymore. Let's delete them!

HOW DO I DELETE MY EMAILS?

For deleting your emails we propose to you to search your mailbox the following words or phrases that are typically related to things you don't need anymore:

☐ Unsubscribe	☐ No subject	☐ Travel	☐ SNCF
☐ Welcome	☐ Confirmation	☐ Promotion	☐ Buy Now
☐ Work, previous	☐ Order	☐ Sale	
university,	☐ Pinterest	☐ Gyms	
☐ High School	☐ LinkedIn	☐ Phone Plans	
☐ No reply	☐ Flights	☐ Netflix	

We recommend selecting all the emails that appeared within your search and deselect the ones that you think you will need later.

On Outlook sometimes you have the option of Sweep the emails of a specific email address.

TIPS

Check your email only thrice a day for 10 minutes each.
Use alternative email providers such as:
- Malinator.com (disposable email address)
- Bugmenot.com (shared logins)
- Guerrilamail.com (erases after 60 minutes)
- 10minutemail.com (erases after 10 minutes)

DAY 3 & 4: CLOUD STORAGE

Let's be honest, there are files in our cloud storage that we don't necessarily need all the time. For the files that we don't need daily, you can move them to a hard drive.

This is a comparison of the amount of energy that it uses to save a file in a hard drive versus cloud storage.

0.000005 kWh

As you can see, the difference is enormous! So think before saving your file in the cloud, and if you are doing it, delete it when you don't need it anymore.

Source: https://medium.com/ stanford-magazine/carbon-and-the- cloud-d6f481b79dfe

3.1 kWh

HOW DO I CLEAR MY CLOUD?

1. Download and save files that you don't need anymore in the cloud.
2. Delete the folder from your cloud.
   * change permissions on shared folders or files
3. Empty the trash of the cloud storage.

For day 4, you can continue deleting your files on your cloud since it might take a while.

DAY 5: AUTO-PLAY VIDEO (SOCIAL MEDIA)

We are sorry, we have to touch your social media! But yes, we also produce CO2 when we spent time on it. So, we are going to give you some tips so that you can reduce the quantity of CO2 that you produce and also save your data and battery!

We will first start by changing the feature of 'autoplay' of videos on your social media:

TWITTER

Desktop Version but also compatible for phone/ tablets (Stop Autoplay Videos on Twitter)
STEPS:
More> Settings and privacy> General> Data Usage > Video Autoplay (Never)

INSTAGRAM

STEPS:
Settings and privacy> Account > Mobile data use > Use less data(On)

FACEBOOK

Desktop Version
STEPS:
General settings > Videos > Auto Play Videos (Off) > Videos Default Quality (SD only)

MORE RESOURCES

• Stop Autoplay Videos on Google Chrome.
• Stop Autoplay Videos on Safari.
• Switching the sound off of Facebook Videos.

DAY 6: FACEBOOK POSTS

Are you embarrassed by the kind of posts you put up in high school? *(we all know we didn't think those through)* Delete your facebook posts and reduce your carbon footprint!! **Delete Facebook Posts that you don't need!!**

*You will need to use Google Chrome for this.

HOW DO I DELETE MY POSTS?

1. Download Plugin: Social Book Post Manager
2. Go to the Activity Log on your Profile page
3. Click the plugin and select which years you want to delete

If are feeling nostalgic: download your facebook data before deleting it off the web and save your memories on a hard drive.

1. *General Settings*
2. *Your Facebook information*
3. *Download your information*

DAY 7: CHATS

We often keep messages on our phones and laptops that we don't need. These messages take up space in large data centers. And data centers consume vast amounts of electricity and emit as much CO_2 as the airline industry!

HOW DO I DELETE MY CHATS?

Here is a list of general messaging platforms to help you get started:

- WhatsApp
- Messages
- Facebook Messenger
- Skype
- Instagram DM
- LinkedIn
- WeChat
- Reddit
- Kakaotalk
- Line

TIPS

Some tips when deleting WhatsApp messages:
- Exit groups you don't participate in any more
- Multi-select chats that you don't need

CONGRATULATIONS!

You've finished your week of digital detox! We hope that you feel lighter and that you have less digital data to worry about. You can set goals for yourself to do this digital detox once a month, once a semester, or once a year, whichever suits you best.

Enjoy the process! Do it with others, or share the handbook with people you think might be interested and treat yourself onceyou've finished a week of digital detox. You deserve it!

MORE RESOURCES:

- A data detox guide
- How to delete 99.9% of your digital footprint from the internet
- How bad are bananas? by Mike Berners-Lee (a book about the carbon footprint of everything!)
- Carbon Visuals
- Carbon literacy
- Internet Live Stats

This handbook was created by Janani Iyer, Daniela Monter and Segyo Oh from the Master of Design for Social Impact program, class of 2020 at Paris College of Art.

P

**Paris College
of Art**