

PLATINUM GUIDE

A guide to living and learning sustainably at CSU

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Begin by reading pages 2 & 3...

LIVING SUSTAINABLY

The majority of students and faculty say that CSU's reputation in sustainability was one of the important factors they used to help them make the decision to come to CSU.

The climate crisis is scary and often seems hopeless, but we cannot let these feelings stop us from trying to leave the planet better than the way we found it.

Large complex problems can be tackled through thousands and millions of small tiny steps. This guide is a checklist of small steps that each of us can take to help improve our habits and increase our awareness.

The university uses a more detailed assessment to promote continual improvement. The assessment is called STARS and is a national rating system. CSU was the first university to achieve the top level PLATINUM status. Even as the criteria are getting more challenging, we have retained platinum for four reports in a row, from 2015 - 2023!

LIVING SUSTAINABLY



Scan this
QR code →



I learned about STARS

This guide is designed to help each of us reach a little bit farther to make our community stronger and more sustainable.

DO THIS

- 1 Use a pencil to check the boxes next to each topic that you either do regularly or have learned about.
- 2 Count the number of boxes you checked.
- 3 Turn to page 32 to see your score.
- 4 Explore topics that you did not check to see if you can improve your score.
- 5 Post a selfie with your score to Instagram!

As a land grant institution, we are united behind the science and take pride in being stewards of the land.

Scan me!



I learned about Land Grants

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Colorado State University acknowledges, with respect, that the land we are on today is the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Ute Nations and peoples. This was also a site of trade, gathering, and healing for numerous other Native tribes. We recognize the Indigenous peoples as original stewards of this land and all the relatives within it. As these words of acknowledgment are spoken and heard, the ties Nations have to their traditional homelands are renewed and reaffirmed.

CSU is founded as a land grant institution, and we accept that our mission must encompass access to education and inclusion. And, significantly, that our founding came at a dire cost to Native Nations and peoples whose land this university was built upon. This acknowledgment is the education and inclusion we must practice in recognizing our institutional history, responsibility, and commitment.



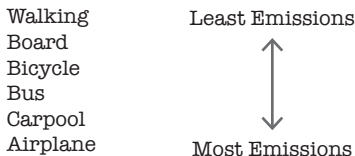
I learned about
Land Acknowledgements



Watch the
video!

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation accounts for at least one third of the carbon emissions into the atmosphere from the U.S. Because there are so many options for transportation, it is one of the easiest ways we can make an impact on our climate by choosing a mix of modes that lowers our overall footprint.



Learn more about what the U.S. Department of Transportation is doing to decarbonize transportation by scanning this QR code.

Scan me!



Minimizing unnecessary trips and planning ahead to combine trips can make a big difference in not only your emissions, but also your bank account.

TRANSPORTATION

BICYCLE

Fort Collins and CSU are a League of American Bicyclists Platinum Bicycle Friendly Community and University. This means that we have excellent paths, lanes, underpasses, overpasses, sharing, and awareness.

Safety

Follow the rules of the road, including using proper lights, bells, hand signals, and dismounting in marked zones. Protect your brain with a stylish helmet.

Maintenance

Cruise over to **The Spoke**, a student run bike repair shop in the Pavilion, to learn how to keep your bike in tip-top shape.

Racks

Use a U-lock to secure your bike frame and one wheel to the rack. Use a second cable lock to secure the other wheel to your frame.



I ride a



Get the
bike map

TRANSPORTATION

BOARD

Skateboards, long boards, boosted boards, scooters, e-scooters, and uni-wheels are fun and an easy way to get around campus. Protect your brain with a stylish helmet.

Map of
board
racks



I ride a



BUS

Many Rams consider the location of bus stops when selecting a place to live. Fort Collins' buses are free for the CSU community with the RamCard. Transfort buses include Around the Horn, the Max, and the FLEX. Buses can accommodate a limited number of bikes. Transfort even has electric buses!

Check the Transfort website for routes and schedules. They have an App for your phone.

Find a
route



I ride a



TRANSPORTATION

CARPOOL

If alternative modes of transportation are not an option for you, consider carpooling with your friends.



I carpool



Learn how to share a parking permit

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Consider switching to an electric vehicle. The campus map shows where the charging stations are on campus. Charging is free, but requires a parking permit.



I drive an



See the EV charging layer on the campus map

AIRPLANE

If you can, select direct flights and purchase carbon offset credits.



I buy



Tips on air travel emissions reduction

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

GREEN WALKING TOUR

Take the Green Walking Tour to learn about some of our impressive buildings and innovative campus features.

Learn as you
walk



I did the tour



POLLINATOR GARDENS

Bees are vital to our ability to grow enough food. The campus map shows the locations of pollinator gardens that are designed to specifically help native bees.

Learn about
Bee Campus
USA



Find a
pollinator
garden



I read a sign at a pollinator garden



BUILT ENVIRONMENT

GREEN BUILDINGS

There are several third-party rating systems for green buildings, and CSU has earned recognition for over 40 of its buildings through LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), Green Globes, and ENERGY STAR.



See which buildings are the most efficient

RENEWABLE ENERGY

CSU has pledged to achieve 100% renewable electricity by 2030. CSU has already installed 43 solar arrays across its campuses. Together, they produce over 16 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity per year. Although this is a lot for a university, we need to install more to reach our goal.



Check out the map of solar panels on campus

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

INSTITUTE FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT (IBE)

IBE focuses on place-based sustainability, the design of healthy buildings, and promoting the concept of green schools, among many other things.

Read the
LENSES
guide



I learned about regeneration



FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

The facilities team has a trove of sustainability data on their website. Learn more about our Climate Action Plan, our Greenhouse Gas Inventories, and our Nitrogen Footprint.

Where can we
improve the
most?



FOOTPRINT CALCULATORS

There are various online calculators where you enter some information about how you are currently living. They ask you details like how your home is heated, how much water you use, and what diet you prefer, among many other questions. It then presents you with graphs of your footprints in different categories as compared to other people.

These calculators are useful in helping you identify areas where you can try to improve.

University of
California,
Berkeley



The Nature
Conservancy



My easiest area to improve:

My harder area to improve:

My most challenging area to improve:



I calculated my



RAMS AGAINST HUNGER

Operating from the office of Student Leadership, Involvement and Community Engagement (SLiCE), Rams Against Hunger offers a menu of services that support students, faculty and staff experiencing food insecurity. Services include a food pantry, a meal-swipe program, pocket pantries, and in-person assistance with navigating federal aid eligibility.



I learned about food insecurity

C.A.N.S. AROUND THE OVAL

Cash and Nutritious Staples or CANS is a long-standing tradition at CSU that collects donations and raises awareness of food insecurity.



I donated



FOOD

EAT LOCAL AND WISELY

Fort Collins has a number of thriving farmer's markets. The Larimer County Farmers' Market takes place in late May to late October on Saturdays, while the Fort Collins Farmers' Market takes place in two different locations on Wednesdays and Sundays from May to November.

Many grocery stores also stock local produce. Consider food's carbon footprint when you make your selections. How much energy does it take to ship grapes from Peru or coffee from Sumatra?

Selecting organic and third-party certified foods is a vote in favor of protecting the health of our pollinators, rivers, farm workers, ocean ecosystem, and ourselves.



I buy local and/or



USDA
Organic
Labeling

SINGLE USE PLASTICS

Grab and go, take out, fast food, and app deliveries are convenient, but rely heavily on single use plastics. **Refuse** single use plastics, such as straws, plastic utensils, plastic bags, plastic cups, etc. Plan ahead and carry a handy set of sturdy eating utensils, travel mug, and water bottle. You can even get tote bags that compress down really small so that you can carry your purchases.

Pack your own lunch in reusable containers. The dining halls are even trying reusable To-Go boxes. If you borrow one, please remember to return it to help this new program succeed.

Coffee pods are single use plastic. You can still use your pod coffee maker by using a refillable pod.

I carry reusable utensils



WASTE

REDUCE

Avoid the impulse to buy items that you don't need, cannot be easily repaired, or come with excessive packaging. Foam mattress toppers are popular but really difficult to dispose of. Research where and how the item you are buying was made.



REUSE

Located on Lake Street, the **Surplus Property** warehouse is a gold mine for good deals on electronics, office furniture, sporting equipment, bikes, and more. Shop at local thrift stores for clothes, furniture, books, and fun!



REPAIR

The clothing and textile industry is second only to oil and gas in its global pollution footprint, and with the mega-consumerist fast-fashion culture we see today, it's no wonder why. **The Patchwork Initiative** is a student-led clothing sustainability collab-

orative with the goals of reducing clothing consumption and growing a culture of clothing restoration.

RECYCLING

It is important to learn and stay on top of what can and cannot be recycled, as the rules change regularly.

Recycling containers can be found at essentially every building on campus. There are containers for newspaper, magazines, office paper, mixed containers, cardboard and paperboard. Please be sure all of your materials have been prepared for recycling according to the guidelines on the following webpage:



If you ask, pizzerias will line the box with wax paper so the box stays clean for recycling.

WASTE

Batteries, ink cartridges, and CFL bulbs

Spent batteries, cartridges and bulbs are collected by most departments on campus. Did you know that battery terminals must be taped to prevent fire before placing in the black buckets?



I recycle



COMPOST

All residence halls and dining centers have brown compost bins located outside. Some academic buildings also have compost bins outside. Please sort and compost all food scraps, paper towels, tissues, coffee grounds, and tea bags accordingly. When in doubt, throw it out! A contaminated bin means the whole bin needs to go into the trash. No bags or recycling allowed.

Meet Oscar!



I compost



Download the
sorting guide

ZERO WASTE TEAM

A student-led group of passionate, sustainability minded humans, the Zero Waste Team is the go-to campus group for all things composting and sustainable waste management. The team works across campus and in the greater Fort Collins community to educate individuals on food waste practices and advocate for better systems of waste reduction at CSU.

I volunteered for the ZWT!



Play the Zero
Waste Sorting
Game!

Write your
score here:

REPORT WASTE

Call the CSU **Facilities Management** Customer Service Center to report energy or water waste, like a broken sprinkler head.



WASTE

FOOD

Avoid the temptation to take more than you can eat in the dining halls or restaurants. Think about how much water and energy were used to produce what's on your plate.

WATER

Take steps to reduce water use. Most shower heads use 9.5 liters per minute! A 7 minute shower uses 66.5 liters of water: try to be more efficient. Turn off the faucet when you brush your teeth. Plan for full loads of laundry.

ENERGY

Take steps to reduce energy waste. Turn off the lights and powerstrips when you leave a room. Set your thermostat lower in the winter and wear a sweater. Use fans instead of air conditioners in the summer. Close curtains or blinds to keep your home cool during hot summer days.

INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

CSU has five institutional learning outcomes with sustainability, equity, and inclusion woven throughout. Sustainability is mentioned in two learning outcomes:

Creativity – “Education for creativity includes the development of an understanding of the ways in which the arts and sciences support expression of the diversity of the human experience and human community, and the development of the ability to apply creative skills in problem-solving; it stimulates the imagination to inform new ways of understanding our place in the world and contributes to innovative solutions addressing the challenges we face locally and globally.”

Collaboration – “Education for collaboration is oriented toward the effective and sustainable stewardship of human, economic, and environmental resources.”

EDUCATION

SUSTAINABILITY LEARNING OUTCOMES

In addition to the Institutional Learning Outcomes, some colleges also have sustainability learning outcomes.

College of Business – “An understanding of the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability and how to measure, report, and manage sustainability in organizations.”

College of Engineering – “The broad education necessary to understand the impact of engineering solutions in a global, economic, environmental, and societal context.”

Minors

- Global Environmental Sustainability
- Sustainable Water
- Sustainable Energy



I took/teach a sustainability course

Environmental Learning Center

Help teach youth about the importance of sustainability and the environment. This natural area along the Poudre River hosts school field trips and summer camps.



I volunteered!

Natural Sciences Education and Outreach Center

Designs mini research experiences for 4th - 12th grade students featuring many current topics, like Pollinators, Wolves, Glaciers, Wild-fire, Hibernators, and many other interesting topics.



I did a STEM Kit!

Native Bee Watch

There are over 900 native bee species in Colorado! With this incredible diversity, these bee watchers observe bees and the plants they are pollinating.



I got trained!

OUTREACH



CoCoRaHS

The Community, Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow program needs you to help monitor precipitation in your backyard.



I got a rain gauge!



Little Shop of Physics

The LSoP features hands-on exhibits on a wide range of fundamental physics topics underpinning issues in sustainability.



I volunteered!



Earth Month

April is Earth Month at CSU! Scan the QR code to see the schedule. Don't miss the Earth Day Festival on the Lory Student Center west lawn.



I attended a session

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

What questions do you have about sustainability? How could you answer your own questions through research?

Do this

- 1 Think of a research question.
- 2 Find a related research opportunity:
 - Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)
 - Maximizing Access to Research Careers (MARC)
 - CVMBS Research Day
- 3 Communicate your results to your peers:
 - Multicultural Undergraduate Research Art and Leadership Symposium (MURALS)
 - Celebrate Undergraduate Research and Creativity (CURC)

I did research!

RESEARCH

CSU GREEN LABS

If you are doing research in a laboratory, learn about ways to make labs more sustainable. For example, hoods not only extract harmful fumes from experiments, but also precious conditioned air from the building. They can use as much energy as a single family house uses in a year!



Learn more about
Green Labs

RESEARCH NEWS

Practically every day there is a news story featuring the amazing research that our students, faculty, and staff are conducting. The **Source** has a sustainability tag which lets you jump to just those stories.



Check out the
amazing research
happening here

PRESIDENT'S SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

This Commission, filled with representatives from all over campus, has the important role of providing the President and Executive Leadership Team a variety of perspectives on sustainability from an environmental, economic, and social justice lens.

Mission

Promote and facilitate the effective integration of sustainability across all aspects of the University.

This broad committee is comprised of administrator, faculty, staff, and student representatives.

Check out CSU's
Green website



I spoke with my PSC representative



GROUPS

SCHOOL OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY (SoGES)

Created to confront complex global sustainability issues, SoGES functions as an interdisciplinary facilitating entity for sustainability research and efforts, reaching across all of CSU's unique colleges. The School offers expert-led sustainability talks, unique events and opportunities for Global Environmental Sustainability courses and minors for students.



Dialog

Many of the events that SoGES hosts promote thought and conversation on various topics in sustainability.

I had a conversation with a friend about sustainability

STUDENT SUSTAINABILITY CENTER (SSC)

Housed in CSU's School of Global Environmental Sustainability, the Student Sustainability Center's mission is to serve as the creative heart and facilitator of sustainability work at CSU. A small, student-run resource hub, the Center focuses on helping support students in developing and scaling innovative, interdisciplinary sustainability projects geared towards bettering CSU and the community.



Join us!

ASCSU

Student government is a great way to help make CSU a better place. There are committees (buildings, technology, and alternative transportation) that advise the CSU administration on how to spend millions of dollars of student fees.

GROUPS

ECO LEADERS

The Eco Leaders Peer Education Program is a group of residential students in the residence halls and Aggie Village that serves as peer educators to raise awareness of sustainability initiatives and encourage environmentally responsible behaviors.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

There are dozens of orgs at CSU that focus on sustainability as a part of their mission. Check out RamLink to find one that fits your interests. Select the Sustainability category from the menu.



I joined a club related to sustainability

HISTORY

This guide was begun as an honors thesis project of a former director of the Student Sustainability Center, Olivia Bruce ('19). Special thanks to Sam Moccia ('23), Sara Van Hatten ('20) Andrew Warnock, Mary Liang, Stacey Baumgarn, and Vicky Jordan for contributing to this update. This guide was made possible by a small grant from the President's Sustainability Commission. The PSC Engagement subcommittee provided encouragement and editorial assistance.

PRINTING

We decided to print this booklet to test if it is an effective way to promote conversation and foster engagement. **Please post a selfie with your score on Instagram using the tag #csuplatinumguide so we can track some data on the effectiveness of this booklet.**

This booklet was made in Portland, Oregon with 100% recycled paper sourced from North America. It was printed using renewable energy. The inks are vegetable-based. One tree was planted for this print run.

SCORE CARD



Platinum
25-32 checkmarks

Score



Gold
17-24 checkmarks



Silver
9-16 checkmarks



Bronze
1-8 checkmarks

Congratulations! You are awesome!
Post a selfie of you holding this page on Instagram and share with #csuplatinumguide