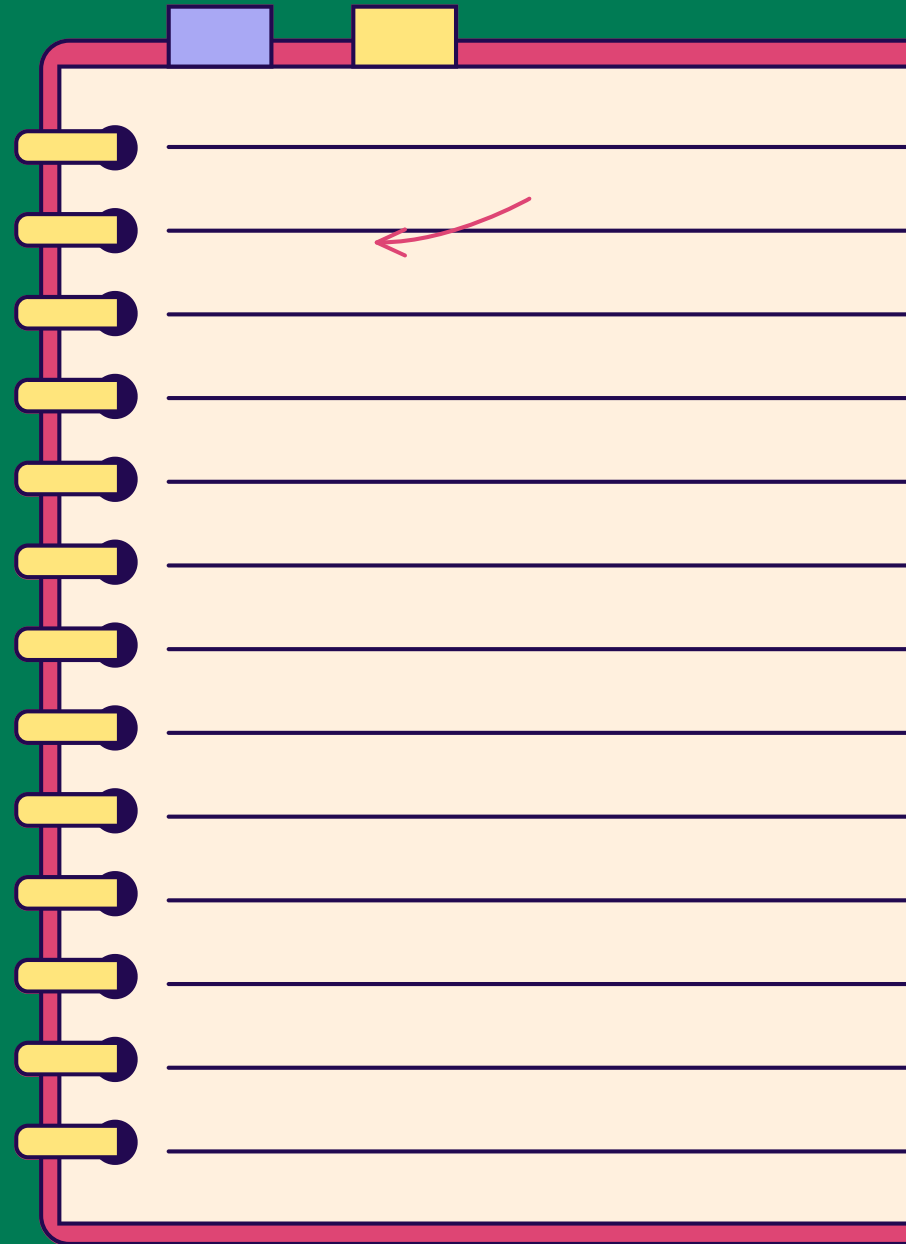


MODULE 16 - THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY  
ON THE ENVIRONMENT

# CHAPTER 1

GOOD HABITS



# INTRODUCTION

Did you know that the annual impact on climate change of the use of digital technology by a European citizen corresponds to 2,259 km by car per inhabitant? Did you know that digital technology now represents 4% of greenhouse gases emitted each year? It is therefore important to know how to protect the environment and reduce our digital pollution.

## **But what is digital pollution?**

Digital pollution refers to all forms of pollution generated by the IT sector: greenhouse gas emissions, chemical contamination, erosion of biodiversity, and even production of electronic waste.

Most of this pollution occurs during the manufacturing of the equipment and not, contrary to popular belief, when it is used.

**Fighting against digital pollution therefore means first of all using fewer IT objects, making them last longer and thus protecting the environment.**

In this module, you will **discover the good habits** that you can adopt and how to better manage your equipment.

# 1 GOOD HABITS



**Unplug** your phone chargers or other wireless devices (tablet, smartphone, etc.) as soon as they are recharged, otherwise they will continue to consume energy.



**Be careful when writing an email**



from most polluting to least polluting



1

## Writing

Yes, this phase pollutes! Indeed, you write your message on a computer that had to be manufactured and which is energy-hungry.

2

## Data transport

The energy used to deliver your email to its receiver is like an electrical impulse traveling through huge cables – on average 15,000 km.

3

## Reading the email

Upon arrival, you once again need a computer and a switched-on screen.

4

## Storage

Contrary to popular belief, this stage is often the least polluting.

If you send your email to several people, you mechanically increase the carbon impact of the email.

The longer you take to write or read your email, the greater the environmental impact. Adding an attachment increases greenhouse gas emissions from transport and, to a lesser extent, storage.

# 1 GOOD HABITS



## Clean your mailbox

- => regularly delete emails that you no longer need
- => unsubscribe from the newsletter
- => set regular reminders to clean your tools

There is a free app to download on your smartphone or computer: **Clean Fox**.

It is an ingenious app that allows you to delete spam, newsletters and unwanted emails from your mailbox, even those that have accumulated there for months or years.

It will be easy to unsubscribe from all the newsletters that clutter you up.

Cleanfox works with all email services: Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, Orange, Free, iCloud, SFR, etc.

It is beneficial for the environment. In fact, an email is responsible for the emission of 10g of CO2 per year.

[Click here for more information and to install it](#)

# 1 GOOD HABITS



**Close** tabs and windows, on your computer as well as on your smartphone because by remaining open they consume energy

For more information on this, [check out this article](#)



**Turn off your devices**, including wifi at night, and **avoid putting them on standby**

*The Energy Star label adopted by the European Commission applies to computers and their screens, printers, scanners, photocopiers, multifunction devices and scanners. It guarantees lower energy consumption of office equipment, whether in operation or on standby, and can be a reference point when making purchases.*



**Avoid the cloud** for long-term and non-collaborative purposes

**Opt for sharing via a drive (shared folder)** and not by email

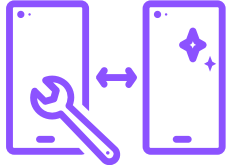
**Favor paper printouts** for documents to be kept for a long time

Why ?

=> to ensure the functioning of the cloud, cables, computer equipment, servers and premises are required, which consume a lot of energy.

=> it is a priori more ecological to print a document to keep for life (for example a pay slip) rather than storing it on an electronic device.

# 1 GOOD HABITS



## Buy a refurbished device

A refurbished device is an electrical or electronic product that has already been used and that is repaired and refurbished to give it a second life. These products checked under warranty offer the same services as a recent and new product at a lower price.

## What's the point?

=> Annual environmental impact reduction of 55% to 91% compared to using a new smartphone.

=> Participation in the circular economy

=> Avoid the extraction of 82 kg of raw materials and the emission of 25 kg of greenhouse gases GHG per year of use, i.e. 87% less than with new equipment.



## Some examples of sites to buy refurbished devices:

Rebuy

Backmarket

Reborn Europe

Telecom companies now also offer refurbished devices



## Use an eco-responsible search engine

For example Ecosia which plants a tree for each search made, or Lilo

For more information, [click here!](#)

# IN SHORT

You get it. Despite widespread myths, it is not the energy consumption of servers that increases the carbon footprint of an email. Nor even the electricity needed to transport it.

It is the depreciation of the manufacturing of the computer or smartphone (the total carbon footprint of the equipment divided by the number of minutes of use during its entire lifespan) and the energy consumption of the equipment that have the greatest impact.

Finally, reducing the environmental impact of your emails means extending the lifespan of your digital devices and reducing their consumption.

