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# How Many Trees Does it Take to Eat One Car?

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You're out of milk and you have to run by the bank. So, you grab your keys, get into your car, turn the ignition and make a 10 mile roundtrip errand. You've just emitted 9.5 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere.

Most of us are guilty of it, but let's put it into another context. How many trees will it take to absorb the CO<sub>2</sub> emitted from that one trip during one 12 month period?

The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that one ten year old conifer tree that grows at a moderate rate, will sequester 7.4 lbs per year. So, it will take approximately 1.3 conifer trees over the span of 12 months to absorb the CO<sub>2</sub> emitted from that one trip. Ouch!!

The only way to truly (as opposed to purchasing credits) offset that is to plant 1.3 trees every time you travel 10 miles in your car, which would take about an hour OR ride your bike instead of driving, which would also take about an hour. The latter will save on all of the externalized costs associated with burning one gallon of either domestic or imported oil to begin with. Why not stockpile your CO<sub>2</sub> savings and do both?

## Sources:

[www.epa.gov/oms/climate/420f05001.htm](http://www.epa.gov/oms/climate/420f05001.htm)

[www.urbanforestrysouth.org/resources/library/method-for-calculating-carbon-sequestration-by-trees-in-urban-and-suburban-settings](http://www.urbanforestrysouth.org/resources/library/method-for-calculating-carbon-sequestration-by-trees-in-urban-and-suburban-settings)